



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Downing Street

#### **The King's Speech 2023**

... It is mindful of the legacy of service and devotion to this country set by My beloved Mother, The late Queen, that I deliver this, the first King's Speech in over 70 years.

The impact of Covid and the war in Ukraine have created significant long-term challenges for the United Kingdom. That is why my Government's priority is to make the difficult but necessary long-term decisions to change this country for the better. ...

My Government is committed to tackling antisemitism and ensuring that the Holocaust is never forgotten. A bill will progress the construction of a national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens.

My Government will act to keep communities safe from crime, anti-social behaviour, terrorism and illegal migration. ...

At a time when threats to national security are changing rapidly due to new technology, my Ministers will give the security and intelligence services the powers they need and will strengthen independent judicial oversight. Legislation will be introduced to protect public premises from terrorism in light of the Manchester Arena attack. ...

My Ministers will work closely with international partners to support Ukraine, strengthen NATO and address the most pressing security challenges. This includes the consequences of the barbaric acts of terrorism against the people of Israel, facilitating humanitarian support into Gaza and supporting the cause of peace and stability in the Middle East. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-kings-speech-2023>

#### **The King's Speech 2023: Background Briefing Notes**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/654a21952f045e001214dcd7/The\\_King\\_s\\_Speech\\_background\\_briefing\\_notes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/654a21952f045e001214dcd7/The_King_s_Speech_background_briefing_notes.pdf)

## The King's Speech sets out 21 Bills for the coming session:

- **Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill**

*England, Scotland, and Wales*

The Bill is intended to strengthen animal welfare, including banning live exports, ensuring high welfare standards in UK slaughterhouses, and preventing export to countries which have lower welfare slaughterhouse conditions.

- **Arbitration Bill**

*England, Wales, and Northern Ireland*

The Bill is intended to modernise the law on arbitration, including clarifying the law governing arbitration agreements, empowering arbitrators to expedite decisions on issues that have no real prospect of success, and introducing a statutory duty on arbitrators to disclose circumstances which might give rise to justifiable doubts about their impartiality.

- **Automated Vehicles Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to enable the safe deployment of self-driving vehicles, including setting rigorous safety standards, ensuring clear legal liability, and protecting the consumer.

- **Criminal Justice Bill**

*England and Wales. Some provisions will also apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland*

The Bill is intended to reform the criminal justice system and give the police the powers necessary to keep people safe, including tackling violence against women and girls, cracking down on the crimes and anti-social behaviour, and ensuring that criminals spend longer in prison.

- **Data Protection and Digital Information Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to maintain high standards of data protection while improving data access and reducing burdens on businesses and researchers. It will include improving data delivery, establishing a framework for secure digital verification services, and strengthening and modernising regulation.

- **Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to introduce a new regulatory regime in digital markets, and tackle consumer rip-offs and bad business practices.

- **Draft Rail Reform Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to facilitate punctual and reliable services, simpler tickets, and a modern and innovative railway.

- **Economic Activities of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to ensure that the UK has a consistent foreign policy, and that public bodies do not pursue their own foreign policy agendas.

- In 2021, Lancaster City Council voted to express its support for the BDS movement's demands and wrote to its Pension Fund urging them to divest from companies active in Israeli settlements.
- Incidents of antisemitism, recorded by the Community Security Trust (CST), rise in correlation to escalations of violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. This has been further demonstrated by a huge rise in reported antisemitic incidents following Hamas's attack on Israel - the Metropolitan Police recorded an over 1000% rise in antisemitic incidents compared to the last year. When public bodies decide to boycott or divest from Israel in response violence, they legitimise and drive antisemitism.
- Sanctions policy should be determined by the UK Government.
- The Bill forms part of the UK's wider package to tackle antisemitism.

- **Football Governance Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to establish an Independent Football Regulator to address issues of financial sustainability and ensure fans' voices are listened to.

- **Holocaust Memorial Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to ensure the Holocaust is never forgotten and antisemitism is driven out of our society. The barbaric attack by Hamas on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023 and the rise in antisemitism in the days and weeks after serves as a reminder that we must never give up doing so. It will include enabling the building of the planned Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre next to the Houses of Parliament.

- Incidents of antisemitism, recorded by the Community Security Trust (CST), rise in correlation to escalations of violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. This has been further demonstrated by a huge rise in reported antisemitic incidents following Hamas's attack on Israel - the Metropolitan Police recorded an over 1000% rise in antisemitic incidents compared to the last year.
- This sits alongside the Government's wider package to tackle antisemitism and remembering the horrors of the Holocaust.

- **Investigatory Powers (Amendment) Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to give the security and intelligence services the powers they need to respond to threats to national security, and strengthen independent judicial oversight.

- **Leasehold and Freehold Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to reform the housing market by making it cheaper and easier for leaseholders to purchase their freehold.

- **Media Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to ensure that viewers and listeners across the UK can continue to access public service television and radio content as technology

changes. It will include removal of a threat to the freedom of the press, better protection for children by applying similar standards for TV to the streaming giants, and providing greater access to subtitles, audio description, and signed interpretation.

- **Offshore Petroleum Licensing Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to strengthen the United Kingdom's energy security, and reduce reliance on volatile international energy markets and hostile foreign regimes.

- **Pedicabs (London) Bill**

*England and Wales (but will apply only in Greater London)*

The Bill is intended to deal with the issue of unlicensed pedicabs in London.

- **Renters (Reform) Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to provide greater security and certainty of quality accommodation for renters, while helping landlords get their property back swiftly when needed, such as evicting anti-social tenants or those repeatedly in rent arrears.

- **Sentencing Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to ensure tougher sentences for the most serious offenders and increase the confidence of victims. It will include mandating courts to impose a Whole Life Order in cases for which a Whole Life Order is currently the starting point, ensuring rapists, and those convicted of the most serious sexual offences, receiving a determinate sentence, serve every day of their custodial term behind bars, and introducing a presumption in favour of a suspended sentence for custodial sentences of twelve months or fewer.

- **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill**

*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to improve the safety and security of public venues and keep the British public safe from terrorism, including requiring certain venues to fulfil necessary but proportionate steps according to their capacity to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack and reduce harm. The duties that premises will have will depend on the size of the venue. Premises and events with a capacity of 800 or above will be in the enhanced tier, while premises with a capacity of 100 to 799 will be in the standard tier.

Before the Bill is introduced, the Government will hold a consultation on the standard tier to ensure the Bill's measures strike the right balance between public protection and avoiding undue burdens on smaller premises such as village halls, churches and other community venues.

- **Tobacco and Vapes Bill**

*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to tackle the single biggest entirely preventable cause of ill-health, disability and death: smoking, and will create a smokefree generation by restricting the sale of tobacco so that children currently aged

fourteen or younger can never be sold cigarettes, and to restrict the sale and marketing of e-cigarettes to children.

- **Trade (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for TransPacific Partnership) Bill**  
*UK-wide*

The Bill is intended to promote trade and investment with countries in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for TransPacific Partnership. The UK is the first European member of the Partnership.

- **Victims and Prisoners Bill**  
*England and Wales*

The Bill is intended to improve the experience of the criminal justice system for victims and restore confidence. It includes introducing an Independent Public Advocate (IPA) which will work on behalf of victims of major incidents, reforming the parole system, and creating an automatic suspension of parental responsibility from a person who is convicted of murder or voluntary manslaughter of the other person with whom they share parental responsibility (“Jade’s Law”).

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## Israel

### Trades Union Congress

#### **Wales TUC calls on Welsh Government to back ceasefire**

The Wales TUC has today written to the First Minister calling on him to lend his support to calls for a ceasefire in the middle east. ...

Wales TUC is deeply concerned by the escalating violence and unfolding humanitarian crisis. We support the UN call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and strongly urge the international community to make all efforts to ensure that international law is upheld and all civilians are protected.

The TUC has unequivocally condemned the brutal attacks and murder of Israeli civilians by Hamas. We call for the immediate, unconditional release of all hostages unharmed.

Neither the killing of Israeli civilians by Hamas nor the collective punishment of the people of Gaza by the Israeli government will do anything to end the occupation or bring about peace.

The current siege of Gaza, which comes on top of a 16-year air, sea and land blockade, has cut off food, water, electricity and fuel supplies. This is leading to a humanitarian disaster. The UN has stated that such measures amount to a form of collective punishment which is prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention. ...

Like us, I know that you will be alarmed by the escalation in antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism in the UK and oppose those who are using these events to stir up division. We stand in solidarity with all working people, their friends, families and communities and opposes any attempt to divide us.

In asking you to call for a ceasefire, we recognise that international affairs are not a devolved issue and that the Welsh Government has little influence in this area. Nevertheless, we believe that it is vital that Wales lives up to its commitments of international solidarity and does whatever it can to push for peace.

**To read the letter in full see**

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/wales-tuc-calls-welsh-government-back-ceasefire>

### **Gaza 'Becoming a Graveyard for Children', Warns Secretary-General, Calling for Humanitarian Ceasefire**

... The nightmare in Gaza is more than a humanitarian crisis. It is a crisis of humanity. The intensifying conflict is shaking the world, rattling the region and, most tragically, destroying so many innocent lives.

Ground operations by the Israel Defense Forces and continued bombardment are hitting civilians, hospitals, refugee camps, mosques, churches and UN facilities — including shelters. No one is safe. At the same time, Hamas and other militants use civilians as human shields and continue to launch rockets indiscriminately towards Israel.

I reiterate my utter condemnation of the abhorrent acts of terror perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October — and repeat my call for the immediate, unconditional and safe release of hostages held in Gaza.

Nothing can justify the deliberate torture, killing, injuring and kidnapping of civilians. The protection of civilians must be paramount.

I am deeply concerned about clear violations of international humanitarian law that we are witnessing. Let me be clear: No party to an armed conflict is above international humanitarian law.

Gaza is becoming a graveyard for children. Hundreds of girls and boys are reportedly being killed or injured every day. More journalists have reportedly been killed over a four-week period than in any conflict in at least three decades. More United Nations aid workers have been killed than in any comparable period in the history of our organization. ...

The unfolding catastrophe makes the need for a humanitarian ceasefire more urgent with every passing hour. ...

Today, the United Nations and our partners are launching a \$1.2 billion humanitarian appeal to help 2.7 million people — that's the entire population of the Gaza Strip and half a million Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. ...

And let's be clear: the Rafah crossing alone does not have the capacity to process aid trucks at the scale required. ...

Without fuel, newborn babies in incubators and patients on life support will die. Water cannot be pumped or purified. Raw sewage could soon start gushing onto the streets, further spreading disease. Trucks loaded with critical relief will be stranded.

The way forward is clear. A humanitarian ceasefire. Now.

All parties respecting all their obligations under international humanitarian law. Now.

This means the unconditional release of the hostages in Gaza. Now.

The protection of civilians, hospitals, UN facilities, shelters and schools. Now.

More food, more water, more medicine and of course fuel — entering Gaza safely, swiftly and at the scale needed. Now.

Unfettered access to deliver supplies to all people in need in Gaza. Now.

And the end of the use of civilians as human shields. Now.

None of these appeals should be conditional on the others. ...

I remain gravely concerned about rising violence and an expansion of the conflict. The occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is at a boiling point.

Let us also not forget the importance of addressing the risks of the conflict spilling over to the wider region. ...

I am deeply troubled by the rise in antisemitism and anti-Muslim bigotry. Jewish and Muslim communities in many parts of the world are on high alert, fearing for their personal safety and security. ...

The images of suffering are heart-breaking and soul-crushing. But, we must find a way to hold on to our common humanity.

I think of civilians in Gaza — the vast majority women and children — terrified by the

relentless bombardment. ...

I think of all those tortured and killed in Israel nearly one month ago and the hostages — abducted from their homes, their families, their friends while simply living their lives.

Ten days ago, I met with some of the family members of those hostages. I heard their stories, felt their anguish and was deeply moved by their compassion. I will never relent in working for their immediate release. ...

One mother movingly shared with me her desolation over her abducted son, Hersh. She also spoke outside the Security Council — and on the subject of confronting hatred, she said: “When you only get outraged when one side’s babies are killed, then your moral compass is broken and your humanity is broken.”

Even in her utter despair, she stood before the world and reminded us: “In a competition of pain, there is never a winner.” ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm22021.doc.htm>

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## **Speakers Voice Alarm at Rising Gaza Death Toll, West Bank Settler Violence as Fourth Committee Debates Israeli Practices in Occupied Lands**

**... UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East Kamal Alizada (Azerbaijan)** ... said that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has proved itself a lifeline for Palestine refugees, especially in these days of profound crisis, dangerous instability and grave suffering. Israel is carrying out indiscriminate attacks across the Gaza Strip, including on refugee camps and UNRWA schools and facilities where 640,000 Palestinian civilians are sheltering. ...

Also condemning Israel’s illegal settlement campaign as well as attempts to forcibly displace or transfer Palestinians, either within the occupied territories or to neighbouring countries, he added that the illegal blockade imposed by Israel, now in its sixteenth year, has imposed untold humanitarian, social and economic suffering on the more than 2.3 million Palestinian children, women and men there. ...

**Muhammad Abdul Muhith (Bangladesh)** ... described the killing of 72 UNRWA personnel and damaging of 47 UNRWA installations in Gaza “a collective failure”. Israel’s dreadful atrocities have “crossed all limits”, he said, pointing to the indiscriminate and disproportionate bombardment of Gaza and the killing of more than 9,000 people since 7 October. ...

**Diamane Diome (Senegal)** ... said ... The tightening of the Gaza blockade, which has already dragged on for 16 years, “risks transforming what was already an open prison into a cemetery for over two million Gazans”. ...

**Hasanain Hadi Hasan Al-Dahlaki (Iraq)** ... condemn[ed] the barbaric aggression launched by the Israeli occupation forces. ... Noting that the Palestinian people are living under a barbaric bombardment, he said it is unacceptable to cut off supplies of water, food, fuel, electricity and medical assistance to a population under siege. ...

**Mohannad Baghdadi (Syria)** ... condemned the continued barbaric Israeli aggression killing more than 10,000 people in Gaza, including humanitarian workers. Israel was and remains the primary reason of the continued plight of the Palestinian people, he said, adding that that country obstructs the work of UNRWA and directly targets the Agency in Gaza. ...

**Sarah Ahmed Ahmed Al-Mashehari (Yemen)** ... deplored in the strongest possible terms the heinous attacks on Gaza Strip. “This is an unprecedented challenge to all international rules and laws.” ...

**Yusnier Romero Puentes (Cuba)** condemned the killing of innocent people as a result of the current escalation, which attacks viciously, without distinction of ethnicity, origin,

nationality or religious faith. “Nothing can justify the serious violations of international humanitarian law” committed against Gaza, as Israel transgresses each and every UN resolution. ...

**Marthinus Christoffel Johannes Van Schalkwyk (South Africa)** ... said that it is shocking that a Member State is committing attacks against UN personnel and infrastructure. UNRWA staff are humanitarians who are selflessly helping civilians who are being subjected to unwarranted attacks and collective punishment. ...

**Hassan Mohammed A. Alamri (Saudi Arabia)**, thanking UNRWA's staff for their courage and sacrifice in the face of Israel's war machine, recalled that UNRWA was created in the wake of the great tragedy of the Nakbah, which forcibly displaced Palestinians from their lands. Condemning the targeting of civilians in refugee camps, including recently the Jabaliya camp, he said that Gazans are taking shelter in mosques, hospitals, churches and schools, including the Agency's schools which the occupying Power has continued to bomb. ...

**Gershon Kedar (Israel)** noted that in previous years, his delegation has expressed many concerns over the UNRWA mandate and the many flaws and irregularities in its activities. This year, however, in the wake of the barbaric terrorist attack on southern Israel on 7 October — in which around 1,400 Israelis and foreign nationals were brutally murdered and 240 people, including babies, were taken hostage — these issues are superseded by an altogether much more significant issue, namely “the exploitation of humanitarian and other forms of aid to the Palestinians, specifically in Gaza, by terrorist organizations”. Such exploitation has been extensive, routine and well-documented, he noted, yet Israel's warnings that such aid could and would be used by terrorist organizations were not taken seriously. “Every single element of humanitarian and economic aid to Gaza has been exploited by Hamas and Islamic Jihad to further their murderous aims and despicable activities,” he said.

Without such exploitation, he continued, Hamas would have been less able to carry out its attack, and fewer Israelis, Jews, Christians and Muslims alike would have been slaughtered and taken hostage. The international community had advocated for the entry of concrete, cement and steel into Gaza with assurances of civilian use only, with methods established to ensure that. However, a significant amount was stolen by Hamas and used to build hundreds of kilometres of military tunnels, including under schools, hospitals and mosques. He further noted that Hamas stole fuel on 13 October, as admitted by UNRWA in a tweet, “which for some reason was very soon deleted”. He also referred to incidents in which UNRWA teachers celebrated the 7 October attack. Humanitarian aid has been important for the well-being of Palestinian civilians, but too often it has been a significant resource for Hamas' murderous aims. When the present conflict has concluded, Israel will do everything necessary to ensure that no aid to Gaza will be siphoned off for illegitimate uses, he said. ...

**James George Pulay Gibbon (United Kingdom)** expressed sincere condolences for the UNRWA staff members killed in Gaza since 7 October. ... For UNRWA to fulfil its role, collective efforts are needed for aid to get in safely. He expressed support for humanitarian pauses that can help aid deliveries and, crucially, allow hostages and international citizens to leave. “We also need to ensure that the UN are fully supported to rotate out their staff so they can maintain staff resilience and mental health.” Since the Hamas terrorist attacks on 7 October, the United Kingdom has committed over \$36 million in additional humanitarian aid to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. ...

**Christopher P. Lu (United States)** affirmed that there is simply no replacement in Gaza for the critical role of the UN and especially UNRWA ... Noting that the Agency is unlikely to be able to pay salaries in November and December, he said that the United States is working with Israel, Egypt and the UN to urgently scale up provision of assistance. ... he said that the United States is seriously concerned about the slate of draft resolutions on the question of Palestine proposed in the Fourth Committee every year, as final status



issues should be decided by the parties and not the General Assembly.

**Mohammad Ali Jardali (Lebanon)** ... condemned in the strongest words the criminal Israeli aggression against Gaza and its people. The Israeli war machine has killed more than 10,000 Palestinians, injured more than 20,000, most of them women and children and destroyed more than half of Gaza on top of its citizens. ... He added that Palestinians are persecuted on a daily basis in the West Bank at the hands of the occupying Power and Israeli settlers with total impunity. This destruction cannot be perceived as collateral damage. ...

**Dmitry S. Chumakov (Russian Federation)** said that UNRWA activities are particularly important amid the unprecedented escalation in violence in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Humanitarian aid provided by international organizations to the Gaza Strip covers less than three per cent of the demand. ...

**Gabriele Caccia, Permanent Observer for the Holy See**, said that the unprecedented escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine has resulted in deplorable levels of suffering. The Holy See reiterates its condemnation of the terrorist attack on 7 October by Hamas against the Israeli population that brutally killed 1400 people, wounded many others and witnessed the taking of hostages. At the same time, the Holy See is concerned at the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip which has resulted in the loss of thousands of innocent Palestinian lives, including many children, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. The suffering is indiscriminate, he said, calling for the absolute protection of each and every civilian. It is also imperative that no one targets hospitals and medical facilities, refugee camps, schools and places of worship. Humanitarian corridors must be kept open to allow aid to reach the entire population, he said, adding that a settlement based on the two-State solution requires a cessation of current hostilities. ...

**Peter Mohan Maithri Pieris (Sri Lanka)** introduced the fifty-fifth report from the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (document A/78/553), saying that ... Since the tragic killing of Israeli civilians and foreign nationals on 7 October, Israel has bombed Gaza relentlessly. "By mid-October, Palestinian mothers were writing their children's names on their bodies in the hope that if their children are killed in an Israeli airstrike, their remains might be identified," ...

"Just as Israel's occupation does not justify the attacks of Hamas on 7 October, Hamas's actions on 7 October does not justify Israel's war." The Government of Israel's dehumanization of Palestinians and consistent violations of international law contributed substantially to this moment. Hate speech and incitement for violence by the most senior representative of the State of Israel cannot be accepted today, he said, recalling that in March this year, Israel's Finance Minister, Bezalel Yoel Smotrich, a settler leader, called for a West Bank village to be wiped out. The National Security Minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, has meanwhile spent the last fortnight handing out weapons to settlers in the occupied West Bank. These ministers are not representative of all Israelis, nor does the commander of Hamas represent all Palestinians in Gaza, he said, adding: "Israeli settlers have thrown the olive branch to the ground."

**Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**, introduced three reports of the Secretary-General, noting that the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is growing more dire by the hour, with more than 10,022 people, mostly civilians, killed in Gaza, including 4,104 children, 2,641 women and more than 25,000 injured. Under international humanitarian law, disproportionate strikes may amount to war crimes, she said, adding that more than 1.4 million residents of Gaza are reportedly displaced due to protection concerns and the destruction of homes. The humanitarian system in Gaza is facing a total collapse, with Israel's complete siege of the Gaza Strip cutting off essential supplies to the civilian population, amounting to collective punishment.

... The ongoing military offensive in response to the abhorrent attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups on Israel on 7 October comes in a wider context of the now 56-year-old occupation and the 16-year closure and blockade of Gaza, she said. ...

Introducing the Secretary-General's report titled "Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem" (document A/78/502), covering from 1 June 2021 to 31 May 2023, she noted that two major escalations of hostilities between Israeli and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza occurred, from 5 to 7 August 2022 and from 9 to 13 May 2023 respectively, which resulted in a total of 84 Palestinians killed in Gaza, including 24 children. The report also notes an escalation of the use of unjustified lethal force by Israeli security forces against Palestinians across the West Bank. ...

Introducing the second report, titled "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan" (document A/78/554) ... she noted that the current Government has endorsed a policy to expand long-term control over the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which may amount to steps towards annexation. ...

Introducing the third report, titled "The occupied Syrian Golan" (document A/78/529), she noted that it called on Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan, and in particular desist from the establishment of settlements. ...

**The observer for the State of Palestine** said that it is tragic that on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world is seeing a horrific escalation of an endless Nakba that includes colonial occupation, ethnic cleansing, apartheid and, now, an unfolding genocide. How can it be that a country that wilfully breaches international law and blatantly refuses to abide by its Charter obligations is allowed to remain a Member State of the United Nations, she asked. ...

**Feda Abdelhady-Nasser, Observer for the State of Palestine**, said that last week in Gaza, there was no space left in hospital morgues and not enough body bags for the scale of the carnage. ... "By the time we leave this room, the toll will only be higher, as Israel presses on with its genocidal onslaught." More mothers will write their children's names on their limbs so they can be identified if killed in the next bomb blast. More fathers will attempt to carry their children to safety, only to be bombed as they run south. More children will be orphaned, and some will be rendered "WCNSF", meaning "wounded child, no surviving family", a new acronym created for solely for Gaza in these past weeks, she said.

Even as global calls for a ceasefire grow louder, Israel is undeterred, ignoring the General Assembly's unequivocal demands, certain that the feeble calls for "humanitarian pauses" will give it the time and space to kill and destroy as it wishes, she said. Also highlighting the violence of Israeli occupying forces and extremist Jewish settlers in the West Bank, she said that Israel is stepping up its collective punishment and coercion, while extremist settlers and officials are warning of "a greater Nakba" and making genocidal threats against Palestinians. Just yesterday, an Israeli Minister proposed dropping a nuclear bomb on Gaza, she said, adding that "no Palestinian is safe under this inhuman occupation". ...

**Mary Clune, representative of the European Union** ... reiterated that the European Union condemns terrorist attacks by Hamas, urges for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, supports Israel's right to self-defence and is concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza. She called on Israel to halt continued settlement expansion, underscoring that these practices are illegal under international law. She further voiced concern about the deteriorating situation in the occupied West Bank and called for efforts to de-escalate. The European Union urges all Palestinian factions to engage in good faith in the reconciliation process, to adhere to previous agreements, renounce violence and terrorism and recognize Israel's right to exist, she said, urging to restore a political horizon towards a two-State solution.

**Ms. Al Rashdi (Oman)** ... expressed concern over the developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory due to the extremely dangerous Israeli escalation. She called for calm and for the release of prisoners and hostages and for humanitarian access. ...

**Ahmed Mohamed Ezzat Ahmed Elshandawily (Egypt)** ... said that the calls for a ceasefire and for upholding international humanitarian law have fallen on deaf ears as Israel continues its unabated aggression against the Palestinians. Even before 7 October, Israel was engaged in a disturbingly consistent pattern of violations and practices contrary to its obligations under the international law and United Nations resolutions. ...

**Ms. Al-Mashehari (Yemen)** ... underlined “the centrality of the Palestinian cause for the Arab and Islamic nation as a whole”. The Arab Peace Initiative stipulates that comprehensive peace with Israel and normalization of relations must be preceded by an end to the occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories and the guarantee of Palestinians’ inalienable rights, including self-determination, right of return and reparations. Stability in the region cannot be achieved without a just solution to the Palestinian cause. She further emphasized the need to protect the occupied city of Jerusalem and its holy sites and to defend against efforts by the occupation to change its demographic and its Arab, Islamic and Christian identity.

**Abdulaziz M. Alwasil (Saudi Arabia)** ... said that the Arab Group condemns in the strongest terms large-scale Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people, including the use of internationally-banned weapons against the Gaza Strip and the deliberate targeting of women, children and the elderly in the air strikes and land incursions. He also condemned the targeting of places of worship, infrastructure, schools and hospitals and called for the perpetrators of the crimes to be held accountable. ...

The Arab Group condemns attempts under false pretexts to eliminate the Palestinian cause or to force the displacement of the Palestinian people either within their territories or to neighbouring countries, he continued. ...

**Alper Sezer (Türkiye)** said ... Collective punishment and attempts at forced displacement of people are unacceptable and they must stop. Israel’s expansion of illegal settlements, forced evictions, mass displacement and extrajudicial killings in the Occupied Palestinian Territory — all carried out with impunity — are the underlying causes of this cycle of violence ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/gaspd796.doc.htm>

**Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/78/553)**

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/a-78-553-auv.docx>

**Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/78/502)**

<https://undocs.org/en/A/78/502>

**Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan (A/78/554)**

[https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/palestine/A\\_78\\_554\\_AUV.docx](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/palestine/A_78_554_AUV.docx)

**The Occupied Syrian Golan (A/78/529)**

<https://undocs.org/en/A/78/529>

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## Other Relevant Information

### European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

**Antisemitism in 2022 - Overview of Antisemitic incidents recorded in the EU**

[https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/fra-2023-antisemitism-update-2012-2022\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2023-antisemitism-update-2012-2022_en.pdf)

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

**Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3475>

**Holocaust Memorial Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421>

**Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-draft-bill-overarching-documents>

### Scottish Parliament

**Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 10 days**

**Management of burial grounds, application for burial, exhumation, private burial and restoration of lairs: regulation in Scotland** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/regulation-burial-scotland/>

**\*\* closes in 10 days**

**Statutory inspection of burial authorities, cremation authorities and funeral directors** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/statutory-inspection-burial-authorities/>

**\*\* closes in 10 days**

**Funeral director licensing scheme for Scotland** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/licensing-funeral-directors-scotland/>

**Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) [Northern Ireland]** (closing date 24 November 2023)

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/consultations/relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse-consultation>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438