



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

## Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Foreign Affairs

Other Relevant Information

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Back issues

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Oral Answers

#### Business of the House

*col 431 Lucy Powell (Labour Co-op):* ... I welcome the new funding and protocols that have been announced to enhance MPs' security and defend our democracy. We have seen a huge rise in antisemitism, Islamophobia, hate and the intimidation of elected representatives, especially since Hamas's barbaric attack on Israel on 7 October. ...

We have discussed these issues many times, but does the Leader of the House not agree that it is incumbent on all of us to be mindful of our language and conduct?

*col 432* When we see racism, antisemitism or Islamophobia in our own ranks, we must take action, however difficult the consequences, and we must be clear in calling it out. To that end, I hope she will take this opportunity to say what is very clear for all to see, that the comments of the hon. Member for Ashfield (Lee Anderson) about the Mayor of London were racist and Islamophobic.

*col 433 The Leader of the House of Commons (Penny Mordaunt):* ... The hon. Lady raises the issue of the hon. Member for Ashfield (Lee Anderson). I know she will want to hear one word from him, but yesterday he provided us with 1,000 words. I read his piece in the *Express* and it is some distance from the view he expressed in the original interview. I think what he wrote in the *Express* is his genuine view. We might have to accept that those 1,000 words are the closest we will get to the

one-word apology that others seek. The hon. Lady has understandably chosen to scold him; I would rather ask him to consider all the good he could do, whatever political hue he ends up being, in these particular times with the trust and following he has built up. She asks what action the Government have taken to combat these issues; I point her to the work of the defending democracy taskforce, the work I have done in this place on combatting conspiracy theories and the new systems we have set up. ...

Which party's actions have made it more likely that an antisemite will be sworn into this House next week? Which party last week trashed the understanding and foundation of trust upon which this place needs to operate? *[Interruption.]* ... There are many good people in the Labour party; there are many good people who have also been driven from it. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-02-29/debates/7D2EBABB-632C-48C7-A8DF-AFDA7FA7DFAD/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-981E0ACF-09AF-4FB9-AD4D-FFC087C42ADF>

*Lee Anderson's article in the Express, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/1871463/lee-anderson-comment-sadiq-khan-islamophobia>

### **Business of the House**

**Rehman Chishti (Conservative):** Last week, the Government-funded organisation Tell MAMA published its latest data on anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia incidents. That data showed that there had been 2,000-plus incidents in four months—an increase of over 300%. Between that time and now, there has been no statement from the Government on tackling Islamophobia. Last week, there was a statement from the Government on tackling antisemitism; can the Leader of the House clarify to me when the Government will make a statement on tackling Islamophobia, noting those latest data? I am sure she agrees with me, and with every Member of this House, that we should do everything we can to ensure that all our faith communities are treated fairly and equally.

**Penny Mordaunt:** I agree with my hon. Friend's comments—that is a duty on us all. He may wish to know that I have also asked for a meeting with the Government's envoy for freedom of religion or belief, my hon. Friend the Member for Congleton (Fiona Bruce), and the Minister responsible to look at what more we parliamentarians can do to ensure that all communities and faith groups feel properly supported in these times. I will make sure that the relevant Department hears what my hon. Friend has said today.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-02-29/debates/7D2EBABB-632C-48C7-A8DF-AFDA7FA7DFAD/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-FFAC7D46-16F0-4CCB-9706-355D7D65E06E>

*The Tell Mama data referred to above can be read at*

<https://tellmamauk.org/greatest-rise-in-reported-anti-muslim-hate-cases-to-tell-mama-since-oct-7th/>

## **House of Commons Written Answers**

### **Islamophobia**

**Anneliese Dodds (Labour) [16017]** To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will take steps to appoint an independent adviser on tackling Islamophobia.

**Anneliese Dodds (Labour) [16018]** To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will hold discussions with the Minister for Women and

Equalities on the potential merits of appointing an independent adviser on tackling Islamophobia.

**Lee Rowley:** We continue to work closely with community groups, charities and schools to inform our position on tackling racially and religiously motivated discrimination as a whole – including anti-Muslim discrimination.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/16017>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/16018>

### **Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group**

**Anneliese Dodds (Labour)** [16019] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what policy recommendations his Department received from the Anti-Muslim Hatred working group since 2019; and whether he is taking steps to implement them.

**Anneliese Dodds (Labour)** [16020] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will publish (a) minutes of each quarterly meeting of and (b) all annual reports prepared by the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group since 2019.

**Lee Rowley:** This Government is committed to tackling the scourge discrimination in all forms, including anti-Muslim discrimination head-on through a coordinated cross-departmental effort. From ensuring the safety of worshippers to community engagement and supporting the victims, swift action has been taken to address anti-Muslim discrimination and institute safeguards. For example, Tell MAMA has been provided with nearly £5 million between 2016 and 2023 to monitor and combat anti-Muslim hatred.

We are taking a broad approach to religious discrimination which will develop on the work of the previous Working Groups; seeking the views and perspectives of British and international experts in this field to explore how religious discrimination is experienced by British communities, and how it affects different faiths and individuals. This engagement will explore the breadth and depth of religious hatred and will consider the question of terminology and definitions for hatred across and within religious communities, including anti-Muslim discrimination. In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of internal discussions are not normally disclosed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/16019>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/16020>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Muslim Council of Britain**

**Stephen Timms (Labour)** [15545] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the basis for his policy of non-engagement with the Muslim Council of Britain is.

**Stephen Timms (Labour)** [15546] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with which organisations, other than the Muslim Council of Britain, the Government has a policy of non-engagement.

**Lee Rowley:** The Government, under successive administrations, has a long-standing policy of non-engagement with the Muslim Council of Britain. Previous MCB leaders have taken positions that contradict our fundamental values and these have not been explicitly retracted.

The Government is committed to engaging with a broad range of leaders and organisations across many different communities and civil society groups. Engagement with communities can strengthen our democracy, our policymaking and our society.

However, as highlighted in the Independent Review of Prevent, where best practice is not followed engagement can create risks. It may inadvertently provide a platform or legitimacy for groups or individuals who oppose our shared democratic values and institutions, and allow them to gain greater influence, including in the eyes of those communities to whom they aim to promote their narratives.

In its response to the Independent Review of Prevent, the Government committed to ensuring it neither funds, works or consults with extremism-linked groups or individuals. DLUHC is working closely with the Home Office and key cross-government partners, including the Commission for Countering Extremism, to implement this recommendation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-26/15545>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-26/15546>

*The Independent Review referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e26968d3bf7f17385a3421/Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_Prevent.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e26968d3bf7f17385a3421/Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf)

*The Government response referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e2399de90e07625faf56c6/The\\_response\\_to\\_the\\_Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_Prevent.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e2399de90e07625faf56c6/The_response_to_the_Independent_Review_of_Prevent.pdf)

## House of Commons Home Affairs Committee

### Report: Policing of protests

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/43477/documents/216201/default/>

## Downing Street

### PM address on extremism: 1 March 2024

In recent weeks and months, we have seen a shocking increase in extremist disruption and criminality.

What started as protests on our streets, has descended into intimidation, threats, and planned acts of violence.

Jewish children fearful to wear their school uniform lest it reveal their identity.

Muslim women abused in the street for the actions of a terrorist group they have no connection with.

Now our democracy itself is a target.

Council meetings and local events have been stormed.

MPs do not feel safe in their homes.

Long standing Parliamentary conventions have been upended because of safety concerns. ...

Britain is a patriotic, liberal, democratic society with a proud past and a bright future.

We are a reasonable country and a decent people. ...

Immigrants who have come here have integrated and contributed.

They have helped write the latest chapter in our island story.

They have done this without being required to give up their identity.

You can be a practising Hindu and a proud Briton as I am.

Or a devout Muslim and a patriotic citizen as so many are.

Or a committed Jewish person and the heart of your local community

and all underpinned by the tolerance of our established, Christian church. ...

But I fear that our great achievement in building the world's most successful multi-ethnic,

multi faith democracy is being deliberately undermined.  
There are forces here at home trying to tear us apart.  
Since October 7th there have been those trying to take advantage of the very human angst that we all feel about the terrible suffering that war brings to the innocent, to women and children to advance a divisive, hateful ideological agenda.  
On too many occasions recently, our streets have been hijacked by small groups who are hostile to our values and have no respect for our democratic traditions. ...  
Threats of violence and intimidation are alien to our way of doing things: they must be resisted at all times.  
Nearly everyone in Britain supports these basic values but there are small and vocal hostile groups who do not.  
Islamist extremists and the far right feed off and embolden each other.  
They are equally desperate to pretend that their violence is somehow justified when actually these groups are two sides of the same extremist coin. ...  
Both loathe the pluralist, modern country we are.  
Both want to set Briton against Briton to weaponise the evils of anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred for their own ends.  
The faith of Islam, peacefully practised by millions of our fellow citizens is emphatically not the same thing as the extremist political ideology of Islamism which aims to separate Muslims from the rest of society. ...  
They want us to accept a moral equivalence between Britain and some of the most despicable regimes in the world. ...  
When these groups claim that Britain is and has been on the wrong side of history, we should reject it, and reject it again. ...  
Our place in history is defined by the sacrifices our people have made in the service of our own freedom and that of others.  
And when these groups tell children that they cannot - and will not - succeed because of who they are  
When they tell children that the system is rigged against them or that Britain is a racist country  
This is not only a lie, but a cynical attempt to crush young dreams, and turn impressionistic minds against their own society.  
I stand here as our country's first non-white Prime Minister, leading the most diverse government in our country's history to tell people of all races, all faiths and all backgrounds it is not the colour of your skin, the God you believe in or where you were born, that will determine your success but just your own hard work and endeavour. ...  
Yes, you can march and protest with passion  
You can demand the protection of civilian life  
but no, you cannot call for violent Jihad.  
There is no "context" in which it can be acceptable to beam antisemitic tropes onto Big Ben in the middle of a vote on Israel/Gaza.  
And there can be no cause you can use to justify the support of a proscribed terrorist group, like Hamas.  
Yes, you can freely criticise the actions of this government, or indeed any government: that is a fundamental democratic right.  
But no, you cannot use that as an excuse to call for the eradication of a State – or any kind of hatred or antisemitism.  
This week I have met with senior police officers and made clear it is the public's expectation that they will not merely manage these protests, but police them.  
And I say this to the police, we will back you when you take action.  
But if we are asking more of the police, we in government must also back up that call with action.  
To that end, this month the government will implement a new robust framework for how it

deals with this issue.

To ensure that we are dealing with the root causes of this problem and that no extremist organisations or individuals are being lent legitimacy by their actions and interactions with central government.

You cannot be part of our civic life if your agenda is to tear it down.

We will redouble our support for the Prevent programme ...

We will demand that universities stop extremist activity on campus. ...

The Home Secretary has instructed that if those here on visas choose to spew hate on protests or seek to intimidate people we will remove their right to be here. ...

It is not enough to live side-by-side, we must live together united by shared values and a shared commitment to this country.

And I want to speak directly to those who choose to continue to protest: Don't let the extremists hijack your marches. You have a chance in the coming weeks to show that you can protest decently, peacefully and with empathy for your fellow citizens.

Let us prove these extremists wrong and show them that even when we disagree we will never be disunited from our common values of decency and respect. ...

We can make this a country in which we all feel a renewed sense of pride.

This is our home.

So let us go forward together, confident in our values and confident in our future.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-address-on-extremism-1-march-2024>

TOP

## Holocaust

### House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Business of the House

*col 434* **Peter Bottomley (Conservative):** ... Will the Government make a statement next week on revisionism and who is the lead designer of the national Holocaust memorial and proposed learning centre? One of the Government's nominees as chair of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation was quoted in the *Jewish News* yesterday saying that Ron Arad is the person responsible. Every Government comment, from 2016 onwards, has acknowledged quite rightly that the main designer is Sir David Adjaye OM—a name that cannot normally be mentioned because of problems I do not want to go into on the Floor of the House. Could Ministers refer Lord Pickles to the press notices that went out in the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation's name in 2016, 2018 and every year since, because we must get the facts right and not change them?

**The Leader of the House of Commons (Penny Mordaunt):** ...He has successfully put on record his concerns about that aspect of the Holocaust memorial. I will ensure the Secretary of State has heard what he has said, and he can raise it directly with him on 4 March. ...

*col 450* **Peter Bottomley:** On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. In my question to the Leader of the House about the announcement of the winning designer of the holocaust memorial project, I referred to the year 2016, but I should have referred to 2017 or 2018. I am sorry to have to correct the record. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-02-29/debates/7D2EBABB-632C-48C7-A8DF-AFDA7FA7DFAD/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-9E59FCF5-6D6D-4C0E-8B02-88A64BBAD4AC>

*The Jewish News article referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/daniel-libeskind-rethink-uk-holocaust-memorial-site-westminster-architect/>

Press releases from the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, referred to above, can be read at [https://www.gov.uk/search/all?organisations\[\]=uk-holocaust-memorial-foundation&order=updated-newest&parent=uk-holocaust-memorial-foundation](https://www.gov.uk/search/all?organisations[]=uk-holocaust-memorial-foundation&order=updated-newest&parent=uk-holocaust-memorial-foundation)

## Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

### **Launch of UK presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance: Statement by Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon**

... The United Kingdom is truly honoured to take on the presidency of this important Alliance ...

We look forward to carrying the torch forward, with all of you, our 34 friends from around the world, taking vital steps forward in education, in remembrance and in research, to ensure the Holocaust, the darkest moment in human history, remains seared in our collective memory.

When we look at recent events, the hate against communities, and the attacks of October 7th last year, that fuelled further conflict in the Middle East, and the tragic loss of innocent lives, has also seen the global surge of hate, the global surge in antisemitism.

This demonstrates in starkest terms the need for the world to truly learn the lessons of the Holocaust.

The need for us to renew our vow: Never Again. And then do all we can to mean it.

The theme of the UK presidency will be 'In Plain Sight'.

Because, let me be frank, the Holocaust did not take place in some hidden dark corner. It took place 'In Plain Sight'.

We will bring into focus all those who played a part, be they perpetrators, rescuers, or indeed bystanders.

We will shine a spotlight on the circumstances that led to the Holocaust, and the nature of society that allowed the murder of six million Jewish men, women and children, simply because of the faith they followed, simply because of who they were.

With each passing year, what is factual is there are fewer survivors left to share their precious testimonies, to tell their stories directly, to educate.

It is therefore vital that their testimonies are preserved for future generations. And that we continue to protect the facts of the Holocaust. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/launch-of-uk-presidency-of-the-international-holocaust-remembrance-alliance>

TOP

## Israel

**See also the Home Affairs Committee Report "Policing of Protests", and the Prime Minister's "address on extremism" that are included in the Home Affairs section above, and**

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon's statement at the launch of UK presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance that is included in the Holocaust section above, and**

**the Lords statement and Q&A "Situation in the Red Sea" that is included in the Foreign Affairs section below.**

### Israel and Palestine

**Lord Hain (Labour):** To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Prime Minister of Israel ruling out a two-state solution with the Palestinians.

**The Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon):** My Lords, we support a two-state solution. As I said only the other day, that guarantees security and stability for both Israelis and Palestinians. Our position has not changed. My right honourable friend the Prime Minister was clear in his recent call with Prime Minister Netanyahu that a viable two-state solution is the best means to achieve lasting peace. With our allies, we must provide the practical and enduring support to bolster the Palestinian Authority, and the PA itself must take much-needed steps to reform. Importantly, Israel must act to release frozen funds, halt settlement expansion and hold those responsible for settler violence accountable.

**Lord Hain:** My Lords, although many of us join the Government in long backing a two-state solution, how realistic is this now, when Prime Minister Netanyahu has firmly ruled it out, Gaza has been reduced to rubble and Israel is expanding its illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, including east Jerusalem, to over three-quarters of a million settlers? What alternative is Israel offering if not permanent siege and oppressed status for the Palestinians? Should we not be considering other options—perhaps a negotiated confederal state, with security and self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** ... this is not the first time I have heard suggested alternatives. Given the current situation and the crisis that has gripped the Middle East, from the abhorrent events of 7 October to the tragedy of the ongoing conflict itself—and, of course, given the rights of the Palestinians—it is clear that we must seize the moment. In my career as a Foreign Office Minister, this is perhaps the first time we have seen not just one country or two standing up, or just me standing up at the Dispatch Box, but real live diplomacy and activity. That is not just between the Israelis, the Palestinians, the Americans, us and the Europeans; the region itself is seized by this moment. Through the tragedy of every life lost in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank—every Israeli and every Palestinian life lost—the strongest legacy we can provide is a viable vision and a two-state solution.

**Baroness Goldie (Conservative):** My Lords, between 2015 and 2019, the United Kingdom ran a very worthy Middle East peace process programme. It was led by the Foreign Office and supported by the MoD and the then Department for International Development. Will my noble friend the Minister tell us whether there are any plans to revive elements of that programme? ...

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** ... Currently, we are working with key partners on the five points that my noble friend the Foreign Secretary has outlined, but I will be pleased to meet her to see how, as these plans develop, component parts of what we already have can also be very much part and parcel of those discussions.

**Baroness Smith of Newnham (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, the Minister gave a very positive response to the noble Lord, Lord Hain, seeming to think that this is a turning point in Israeli-Palestinian relations. However, can he explain to the House how he thinks we are going to get to the point of a two-state solution, given the situation as outlined by the noble Lord, Lord Hain?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** ... We are engaging because this is about the moment, from this tragedy. There are challenges on both the Israeli and the Palestinian sides, and I have alluded to them already. What is very clear is that this is a moment in time—there is a window and we can shift the dial, and that is where our focus should be.

**Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench):** My Lords, Israel's rejection of a two-state



solution comes as no surprise. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is on record as saying that Palestinians should be treated like their historical enemies, the Amaleks—kill every man, woman, child and infant in the cradle. The Justice Minister says: “Palestinians are like animals and should be treated as such.”

Does the Minister agree that we should not allow the cruel, genocidal behaviour of the regime in Israel to fan anti-Semitic attitudes toward hard-working and peaceful Jews in this country?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My Lords, I do not agree with the noble Lord, and I will tell him why. I know Israel well; it is a country that I have visited. There are many in Israel who, whether or not they are religiously driven from the teachings of the Torah, which I have also studied, recognise the importance of faith providing a solution here. Those with conviction of faith can provide the opportunity to come together and respect each other. This is one Abrahamic family; Jerusalem is the centre to three great faiths. Now is not the time for hate to come forward but for real recognition of tolerance and respect. That is where our focus is. I speak for the British Government, not the Israeli one.

**Lord Collins of Highbury (Labour):** My Lords, the noble Lord, Lord Cameron, the Foreign Secretary, said that we needed to give hope to the Palestinians. One of the ways of doing this is not to wait until the end of the process to recognise Palestine but to ensure that their voice is heard in those negotiations to seek the solution that my noble friend was talking about. The commitment to a two-state solution, ensuring that both sides are properly represented, is the key to solving the nightmare that we are in at the moment.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** ... everyone is now engaged on this agenda. It is a priority not for one or two countries but for everyone. We recognise, and Israelis recognise, that stability and security for Israelis means stability and security for Palestinians. It means leadership among Israelis and the Palestinians. That is what we are focused on. On the recognition point, my noble friend has outlined a clear pathway to ensure that a political horizon is provided for the Palestinians. ...

**The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford:** ... Last year, it was reported that the Government of Israel were considering plans to build a national park on the Mount of Olives. Will the Minister say what assessment has been made of the impact of these proposals on the Christian holy sites in this area and the holy sites of other faith communities? What impact would such a project have on the prospect of Jerusalem as a shared capital for Israeli and Palestinian states?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** ... The position is very clear: settlements are illegal, whether they are in east Jerusalem, the West Bank or elsewhere in the Occupied Territories. The United Kingdom’s position is very clear on this. What must prevail is the real sense that Jerusalem itself is a beacon for three important faiths, which is an important opportunity to seize. We need to recognise rights of access, and the reverence attached to that, but, equally, central to that is ensuring security and stability for Israelis and Palestinians, for Arabs, Jews, Christians and Muslims. That is the way in which we will find a solution. Inshallah, that is what we are focused on.

**Lord Leigh of Hurley (Conservative):** As chairman of the Jerusalem Foundation UK, I agree with my noble friend’s last remarks. I point him to the letter in the *Financial Times* today, which explains that a two-state solution was imposed on Sudan, where there is now the most vicious civil war. Will the Foreign Office, in calling for a two-state solution, now start talking to interested parties about the nature of it—specifically, whether it will be a democracy, whether there will be a military, and whether there will be access to ensure that there are no tunnels? All these issues must be first addressed before calling for a two-state solution.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** ... That is why my noble friend the Foreign Secretary has been clear that, first and foremost, we must stop the current fighting. That will

allow aid to go in and hostages to be released. However, where I disagree with my noble friend is that I think that a two-state solution is the viable option. The rights of people need to be protected and the rights of Palestinians need to be recognised. This is enshrined in international law through the UN Security Council, which of course created the State of Israel. It is important that we work directly with all partners, including Israel and the Palestinians. Democracy is a fundamental objective to ensure that the rights of all citizens—Israelis and Palestinians—are strengthened and protected.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2024-02-29/debates/0DDD908A-8BF4-4E5C-991E-EAE92B93F588/IsraelAndPalestine>

*The letter referred to above by Lord Leigh of Hurley can be read at*

<https://www.ft.com/content/c9dff414-eb7a-4d3c-bb15-82fda02fbdde>

## House of Commons Written Answers

### National Security

**Kieran Mullan (Conservative)** [15390] To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department is taking to strengthen national security.

**Alex Burghart:** The Cabinet Office leads and coordinates the UK's national security crisis response through the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR), and national security policy through the National Security Council structures. This includes the National Cyber Strategy, National Security and Investment Programme, and the Biological Security Strategy, all of which the department is taking essential steps to deliver.

Key successes in 2023 included publishing the Integrated Review Refresh, passing the National Security Act, launching the Emergency Alerting service, and delivering the Atlantic Declaration and risk elements of the AI Summit. So far in 2024, we have launched a new Strategic Dialogue on Biological Security with the US and continued to coordinate the response to the conflict in Gaza and Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-22/15390>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### Israel: Travel Restrictions

**Afzal Khan (Labour)** [15344] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, which individuals from Israel have been banned from entering the UK.

**Afzal Khan (Labour)** [15345] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, whether he plans to take further steps to sanction those responsible for settler violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

**Andrew Mitchell:** The UK continues to take a strong stance against settler violence. Extremist settlers, by targeting and attacking Palestinian civilians, are undermining security and stability for both Israelis and Palestinians

On 12 February, the Foreign Secretary announced sanctions on 4 extremist Israeli settlers who have committed human rights abuses against Palestinian communities in the West Bank. Those now subject to a UK asset freeze, travel and visa ban include Moshe Sharvit, Yinon Levy, Zvi Bar Yosef and Ely Federman. These measures are part of wider UK efforts to support a more stable West Bank, which is vital for the peace and security of both Palestinians and Israelis.

We continue to urge Israel to take stronger action to stop settler violence and hold the perpetrators accountable. We will consider additional actions, including further

sanctions, as necessary. The UK continues to work with allies and partners, including across the region, to find a path towards a sustainable ceasefire and permanent peace.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-22/15344>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-22/15345>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-extremist-settlers-in-the-west-bank>

### **Israel: Arms Trade**

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [15734] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the statement by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled Arms exports to Israel must stop immediately: UN experts, published on 23 February 2024.

**Andrew Mitchell:** We are aware of this statement. The Government operates a robust and thorough assessment of licence applications against the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria and we will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with that Criteria, including where there is a clear risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of International Humanitarian Law.

We are monitoring the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories very closely. All our export licences are kept under careful review and we are able to amend, suspend or revoke extant licences, as well as refuse new licence applications if they are found to be inconsistent with the Criteria.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-26/15734>

*The statement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/02/arms-exports-israel-must-stop-immediately-un-experts>

*The Criteria referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-12-08/hcws449>

### **Israel: Air Force**

**Kenny MacAskill (Alba)** [15776] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2024 to Question 12729 on Israel: Air Force, if he will publish the (a) date, (b) time of arrival and departure and (c) next destination of each Israeli Air Force operated plane.

**James Heapey:** It is our longstanding Defence policy to not comment on third country flight information. The Diplomatic Flight Clearance policy is a robust practice and the basis on which a foreign partner may or may not be granted permission to utilise UK air bases is dependent on the nature and purpose of their activity, which is assessed in line with Defence internal policy.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-26/15776>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-01/12729>

### **Israel: Occupied Territories**

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [14919] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, what assessment he has made of the potential implications for his policies of the advisory proceedings on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem at the International Court of Justice.

**Andrew Mitchell:** The Government supports a two-state solution that guarantees security and stability for both the Israeli and Palestinian people. The UK voted against the United Nations General Assembly resolution because we did not believe that a request to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for an Advisory Opinion constituted the appropriate mechanism to bring the parties back to dialogue. It is also the position of the UK that it is inappropriate, without the consent of both parties, for the Court to deliver an Advisory Opinion in what is essentially a bilateral dispute. Our written and oral statements to the Court reflect this position. The UK is clear, however, that we respect the role and independence of the ICJ. We will consider any Advisory Opinion if and when it is issued by the ICJ.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-20/14919>

*Information about the request for an Advisory Opinion referred to above can be read at <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/186>*

### **Israeli Settlements**

**Alan Brown (SNP)** [15936] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, whether he has had discussions with his Israeli counterpart on the recent announcement on Israel's intentions relating to the construction of additional settlement units in the West Bank.

**Andrew Mitchell:** The recent announcement of plans to build over 3000 new settlement homes in the occupied West Bank is deeply concerning. The UK position on settlements is clear and longstanding. They are illegal under international law. We have repeatedly called for Israel to halt settlement expansion.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/15936>

### **Gaza: Israel**

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [15993] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, pursuant to the Answer of 16 February 2024 to Question 14379, what the timescale is for his Department's review of its assessment of Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law.

**Andrew Mitchell:** We are monitoring closely the situation in Israel and the Occupied-Palestinian Territories. We regularly review advice about Israel's capability and commitment to International Humanitarian Law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/15993>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-16/14379>

### **Hamas: UNRWA**

**Alan Brown (SNP)** [15935] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, what recent discussions he has had with his counterpart in Israel on the potential involvement of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) staff in the attacks in Israel by Hamas on 7 October 2023.

**Andrew Mitchell:** We are appalled by allegations that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) staff were involved in the 7 October attack against Israel. We are pressing the UN Office of Internal Oversight and Catherine Colonna, who is leading the independent Review Group appointed by the UN Secretary-General, to produce a rapid interim report. We have urged Israel to cooperate fully with the investigation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/15935>

## Gaza: Israel

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [15994] To ask the Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, whether he has made an assessment of the potential implications for his Department's policies of the statement by Human Rights Watch entitled Israel not complying with World Court order in genocide case, published on 26 February 2024.

**Andrew Mitchell:** There is a desperate need for increased humanitarian support to Gaza. Israel must take steps, working with other partners including the UN and Egypt, to significantly increase the flow of aid into Gaza including allowing prolonged humanitarian pauses, opening more routes into Gaza and restoring and sustaining water, fuel and electricity. We have reiterated the need for Israel to open more crossing points into Gaza, for Nitzana and Kerem Shalom to be open for longer, and for Israel to support the UN to distribute aid effectively across the whole of Gaza.

We have trebled our aid commitment this financial year and we are doing everything we can to get more aid in and open more crossings. On 21 February, the UK and Jordan air-dropped life-saving aid to the Tal Al-Hawa hospital in northern Gaza. Four tonnes of vital supplies were provided, including medicines, fuel, and food for hospital patients and staff. We are clear that an immediate pause is necessary to get aid in and hostages out, and then we want to build towards a sustainable, permanent ceasefire, without a return to the fighting.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-02-27/15994>

*The statement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/26/israel-not-complying-world-court-order-genocide-case>

## House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee

### UK's engagement with the Middle East and North Africa

**Q221 Gershom Gorenberg:** ... I am an Israeli journalist and historian. I am the author, among other books, of two successive histories of Israeli settlement in the occupied territories.

**Dr Khalidi:** My name is Rashid Khalidi. I am the Edward Said professor of modern Arab studies at Columbia University. I studied in the UK, and I have written eight books, three or four of which deal with Palestinian history.

**Miri Eisin:** ... I am Israeli. I am a retired colonel. I served in the Israeli intelligence community and then as the Israeli Prime Minister's international media adviser. I teach narratives at Reichman University. I teach a lot of Rashid Khalidi's books.

**Q222 Chair (Alicia Kearns, Conservative):** ... How do we reconcile Zionism with Palestinian nationalism to ensure that we end up with a peaceful resolution?

**Gershom Gorenberg:** The basic starting point is the reality of today: there are two national groups located in the same land, each with very different but valid claims to that as being their homeland, and neither is going anywhere. Therefore, the political necessity is to find a way for those two national movements to achieve at least some of their goals and national self-determination while recognising the rights and existence of the other.

**Miri Eisin:** ... it is also about calling out on both sides what I am going to call the spoilers—the forces, which can be very violent, that are against these aspirations. Calling them out is also a part of how you arrive at a resolution.

**Q223 Chair:** Do you think the international community has failed as yet to call out these spoilers?

**Miri Eisin:** The international community has very clearcut ideas of what should be done, but I think there is a difference between what should be done and what can be done. ...

Each side, in its own way, does not usually view what I am going to call spoilers as being spoilers. It is not about the international community in that sense; it is really about how each domestic side views it ...

**Dr Khalidi:** It is important to bring in something that is generally ignored: the balance of forces. There are two national projects, obviously. One of them has always been backed by the world's most powerful states ... The other has never been able to achieve any of its national objectives, partly for reasons to do with great powers, partly for reasons having to do with the desire of the Zionist movement to take over all of Palestine, and partly because of its own failures. But I think it is incumbent on the international community, which played an enormous role in creating this problem, to help to bring about a solution. ...

**Q224 Graham Stringer (Labour):** ... are there any lessons that can be learned from the failure of the Peel plan in trying to build to a two-state solution?

**Miri Eisin:** To me, the Peel plan at its heart is what we talk about when we talk about two states. As Rashid said, the British from their outside viewpoint looked at this and said, "Two different nations." The British also supported something that I like: the idea of Jerusalem being something that belonged to the world—though maybe not in the Peel commission, which said it was to belong to Great Britain. ... I say this as an Israeli who is very aware that the Jerusalem issue is one of the things that Israelis do not know how to compromise on, and we need to. ...

The additional aspect is that partition is a compromise, not a Disney happily ever after. ... I am a very proud Zionist who is very liberal and absolutely wants two states, and I have done for my entire life. There are other Zionists who want the whole thing. ...

**Dr Khalidi:** ... one of the problems with the Peel commission—with every one of the proposals for partition, but the Peel commission in particular—is that it initiated the idea that in order to have the compromise that Colonel Eisin talked about, enormous harm had to be done to the Palestinians. It came up with the idea of transfer, which in this case meant the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians—200,000 Palestinians—from what was to have been a Jewish state in 1937. ...

What has actually happened has been put forward in the name of compromise, but it has involved enormous harm to the majority population of Palestine, whether that was in 1937 with the Peel plan, which of course never eventuated, or in 1947 with the United Nations General Assembly partition, which would have created a Jewish state almost half of whose population was Arab. That necessitated, in effect, the transfer—the expulsion—of those people. That is a problem that the Peel plan in fact initiated and which we have been living with ever since the expulsion of people from their homes in 1948 and again in 1967, and the kind of dispossession and expulsion we see now in the Gaza strip.

**Gershon Gorenberg:** ... it is important to stress this idea that we are not looking for a utopia. ... We are looking for the least bad arrangement, rather than perfection.

Secondly, in relation to 1948, I would note that the result of the partition enacted by international fiat, but with no international involvement to ensure that it was carried out, was in fact the flight and expulsion of most of the Palestinian-Arab population of what became Israel. On the other hand, the Israeli archival record shows clearly that the plans of the Zionist leadership at the beginning of the state were that the Arab population would stay put—in fact, the administrative plan for the state of Israel found in the Israeli state archives shows that there was planning, including how to take care of the educational, medical and other needs of the Arab population of all the towns and villages that were supposed to be included in the Jewish state. ...

**Q225 Bob Seely (Conservative):** ... as an outsider I see one side that thinks that it is too powerful to have to compromise and a weaker side that is so embittered that it is almost impossible to compromise with any sense of dignity left ...

**Dr Khalidi:** I would agree that there is an enormous imbalance, but the enormous

imbalance is partly due to the power of Israel itself, obviously, and to the big fat thumb of the United States and the international community ... supporting Israel to the hilt. The Palestinians feel that they are not only up against one of the most powerful armies in the world, but up against the United States, Great Britain, Germany and all the countries that support and arm Israel, that fund the settlements in the occupied territories and that issue veto after veto in the UN Security Council. ...

The international community has issued statements with absolutely no power behind them. If occupation is illegal, end occupation. If settlements are illegal, stop funding them and stop arming the people who defend them. ...

**Miri Eisin:** ... I think that perhaps this is one of those biggest gaps. ... the oddest part—and I say that it is odd—of the Israeli psyche is that we do not think of ourselves as powerful. We think of ourselves not as weak, but we have a need, in that sense, to have our strength versus what we perceive as our enemies—not just the Palestinians ... Our strength is not just about the occupation, the West Bank, the Gaza strip or East Jerusalem. It is about our entire location and surroundings. It is a very deep sense, which I think the international community does not recognise. ...

We do not perceive ourselves as strong. We do not perceive ourselves as having a strength that comes from the outside. Au contraire, if anything, right now we need to be strong on our own. The saying in Hebrew is that, in the end, we are going to be standing alone. It is very Jewish: “Im ein ani li mi li”—if I do not have myself, who else do I have? ...

**Gershom Gorenberg:** ... In the Israeli perception ... yes, there is an alliance with the United States, but there is a very strong awareness of powerful enemies in the region that strongly affect the balance—in particular today, Iran and its allies—which reduces the sense of protectiveness or power.

The second thing is that I agree with Miri Eisin about the psychological level. The best formulation of this was the title of a book by historian Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*. The phrase “righteous victims” could apply to the consciousness of both sides. ... historically, there are flaws in all that, both in the “righteous” and in the “victims” part, but I think that any international player coming into the situation has to deal with ... the actual power situation and the perceptions or self-consciousness of the group involved. ...

**Q226 Dan Carden (Labour):** ... in the context of the history of this conflict, how important is the settler movement in the West Bank? In a future resolution of the conflict, can the settlers remain where they are?

**Gershom Gorenberg:** The settlements are obviously a crucial factor. I would not isolate them, as some have, and make them into the only factor. ...

The claim that it is impossible for the number of Israelis living in the West Bank to return to Israel proper ignores the experience of other countries. ... For the settlers, or a large portion of the settlers, in the West Bank to return to Israel is a possibility that must be entertained, and is not a reason to give up on the idea of a peace agreement based on territorial compromise.

**Dr Khalidi:** ... The settler project is not just a project of an extreme wing of the Israeli political establishment; it is the Israeli state since the Allon plan—since 1967. The objective has been clothed in the mantle of security, but it was always ... to make handing over this territory impossible. In recent decades, it has become more than that. It has become the spearhead of an effort to do what Ze’ev Jabotinsky said way back in the 1920s: to transform Palestine into the land of Israel—to make real on the ground a reality whereby there is really only one sovereign people. If they obey Israeli laws and do what the Israelis say, the Palestinians can live around that area, which constantly expands.

Some 60% of the West Bank is under Israeli control. There are 700,000 Israeli settlers between the occupied West Bank and occupied Arab East Jerusalem. They are not there simply to prevent the Palestinian state from being established. They are there to establish the complete hegemony of the Jewish people over the entirety of what is called the land

of Israel. ...

**Q227 Dan Carden:** ... can you tell us about the origins and the development of Palestinian nationalism?

**Dr Khalidi:** Palestinian nationalism, ironically, develops pretty much at the same time and under many of the same influences as Zionism and every other nationalism in the Middle East. My great-great-great grandfather, and probably those of my two distinguished co-representative speakers ... our grandparents—did not think of themselves as Israelis or Palestinians. They thought of themselves in entirely different senses. They thought of themselves as Jews. They thought of themselves as Muslims or Christians.

These national identities are entirely recent. People thought of a place called Palestine, and Falastin existed in people's minds, but the idea of Palestinian identity as your primary focus of identity is a late 19th/early 20th century idea, as is Zionism. Both claim ancient roots, of course, and both claim ties to the land, but they are, ironically, rather similar national movements. ...

Jews were kicked out of England in the 12th century, out of France in the 13th century, and out of Portugal and Spain at the end of the 15th century. That is in part what Zionism is a response to. Palestinian nationalism has other roots, but both of them are relatively recent national projects ...

**Gershon Gorenberg:** ... First, regarding the settlements and the project of the settlements, I would agree that this was and continues to be a major project of the state, not just of extreme political elements. ... In fact, the prime advocates ... of settlement in the occupied territories were those who were identified as most left-wing in the Government, whose conception was that the mandatory borders and the partition borders were an imperialist imposition dividing up the Jewish homeland. ...

I would not agree that that was always the view of all Zionist leaders. I think it is worth looking back, for instance, to 1949. The first motion of no confidence in the first Israeli Government followed the signing of the armistice agreement with Transjordan. The right wingers, led by the leader of a then small minority party, Menachem Begin, challenged this concession of part of the homeland. Ben-Gurion said, "We were faced with a choice between the whole land without a Jewish state"—that is to say, without a Jewish majority—"or a Jewish majority without the whole land. We chose a Jewish state without the whole land." ...

One of the things that is interesting about the history of the conflict is that the process of Jewish immigration into Palestine or Eretz Israel actually began throughout the 19th century in a slowly developing pattern. The early immigrants—many of them coming from elsewhere in the Islamic world—wanted to live in that land, but preceded the idea that this was a political project to gain sovereignty. ...

**Q228 Chair:** ... the PA Government resigned over the weekend. What does a future Palestinian leadership look like, when you look to the next few months? How are the Palestinian nationalist ambitions realised?

**Dr Khalidi:** Any Palestinian Government that does not represent the entirety of Palestinian opinion and is not ultimately the result of a democratic process will essentially represent funders, donors and great powers. I am afraid that is where we may be going ... The Palestinians have often suffered from a democratic deficit. There have not been elections since the presidential election in 2005 and the parliamentary election in 2006. This is partly the fault of the Palestinians themselves and the PA leadership, and it is partly the fault of powers that should be pushing for a democracy rather than encouraging the kind of autocratic regime that has developed in the PA. ...

Palestinians do not particularly like sitting down with Israelis, whom they may consider war criminals, but they have no choice. Those would be the generals, the officials, and the elected members of the Knesset or the Government, whom the Israeli people have chosen.



That is the way it is and the way it has to be, but with the Palestinians, unfortunately, that is not allowed to be the case. To my way of thinking, that is a problem. A Government is about to be formed, but it will not be based on any kind of democratic process. It will therefore lack legitimacy, so the deal that it may cut—if it does, in fact, do that—will not have the support of the Palestinians, because they were not consulted.

**Q229 Henry Smith:** ... What do you believe the Israelis and the Palestinians have in common ...

**Miri Eisin:** ... I think that both peoples ... have multiple identities, and within us the capabilities to change. ... I may not like the present evolution of Hamas—to me, going much more extreme than they were in the past ... but looking towards the future, both sides have a capability to change, which is very important in any kind of conflict.

I think that both of them want to live within the land. That common ground means that we need to reach out and talk to each other. ...

In Israel right now, the presence in the last four and a half months has made what I would call central Israelis, the ones who were for two states and were willing to reach out—the voices that we hear right now are much less nuanced, and this conflict is about having nuance. If you have multiple identities, you are not just Israeli: you are Israeli, you are yes-or-no Zionist, you are Jewish, you are Arab. There are so many different identities that we bring to the table. ...

But in the commonalities right now, both sides need to sideline their extremists. We each have extreme voices. I still strongly believe that in Israel, in a democracy, we may not do enough, but I think that we do a lot against the extreme voices. We try to call them out. We were out on the streets for 10 months talking about the extreme voices within our own society. What we need to do is to have those common voices come together and talk. ...

**Q230 Henry Smith (Conservative):** ... obviously there are a lot of external actors over the situation, whether that be Iran and its support for Hamas or, as was discussed a few moments ago, the United States ... Are those external forces part of the solution or part of the problem? ...

**Miri Eisin:** ... Between the river and the sea—the term being used so often right now—are 15 million people. In addition, you have diasporas and refugees that are outside that. ... As an Israeli, I look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as one that needs to be resolved between these two people. ...

I am going to say again that for me right now the war that is going on, a war of Israel against Hamas, is horrifically impacting not just in the Gaza strip ... but right now, as we are speaking, this morning and throughout the day, Hezbollah is attacking deep inside Israel, and it is as if everybody is ignoring that as an outer force. Go into their website right now, the al-Manar Hezbollah website. They state it clearly in a way that you will not necessarily hear, not even from Hamas right now—that call for our immediate destruction. It is written in English ...

Palestinian Islamic Jihad is very much an Iranian proxy. It is not necessarily a large group. Hamas is very Palestinian; it is a clearcut voice. Sadly, it calls for my annihilation. I thought until October 7 that there was the possibility to arrive there. As Professor Khalidi said before, if we do not talk to them, who else are we going to talk to? But I do not feel that I can talk to them right now. ...

**Gershon Gorenberg:** ... public opinion on each side is also extremely volatile, particularly during wartime. ... War tends to bring people to more hard-line positions. ... The possibility of actually achieving an agreement tends to increase support for such an agreement.

The most extreme example I can give you of this is what happened following the previous cataclysm of the 1973 war and its aftermath. Before Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, Sadat was talking about making peace with Israel, and Israeli polling showed that 85% of Israelis thought that he was not sincere in saying that. The week after his visit, a follow-up poll

showed that 85% of Israelis thought that Sadat was sincere in seeking peace. The difference in these numbers, in my mind, was connected not to the specific symbolic act of the visit, but to whether peace seemed like a possibility. ...

**Dr Khalidi:** ... if we want to create an atmosphere for anything better than what we are seeing, we have to stop this war. The shilly-shallying and dilly-dallying of the international community on this is, frankly, appalling. The fact that the war cannot be brought to an end by the countries that arm—I don't expect Iran to end the war. I expect the United States to end the war. I expect the United Kingdom to help in that process. ...

That is the first thing I would say. This war should be stopped now; and obviously, prisoners and hostages should be released and the starvation, immiseration and the use of horrible means to cause famine in Gaza has to be ended. The United Kingdom has a fleet. The United States has a fleet. Why can't supplies be landed on the shores of Gaza—they have to be checked by Israel? They are coming from US or UK naval stores. This is a humanitarian catastrophe caused by Israel. It has to be ended. ...

You can look at how optimistic Palestinians were in the early 1990s. ... Palestinians were extremely optimistic about the possibilities of peace and of a Palestinian state. I would argue they were prevented from having a Palestinian state and that turned them in another direction. That is why the second intifada was as brutal and violent as it was—because Palestinians were convinced that they were not going to get what they had understood at the beginning of the '90s they were going to get. ...

**Q231 Bob Seely:** ... To what extent does religion, either on its own or as a marker of identity, play a role in the current but also the historical conflict between Israel and the Palestinians?

**Gershon Gorenberg:** Religion is clearly a major aspect of the conflict and a major piece of identity on each side, despite the strong secular elements in the history of both national movements. But I would also say that the division between religion and nationality, or national identity, is very difficult to make in stark, simple terms. Elements of Jewish religious identity remain even in the most secular perceptions of Israeli Jewish identity and nationalism has become integrated in the religious identity of hard-line extremists. Jerusalem, which is one of the critical issues in the conflict, is both a national and religious symbol on both sides. ...

It also needs to be understood that religion itself is not a static force. Religion has, in effect, become more extreme as a result of the national conflict. ... Religious traditions are storehouses of contradictions and of opposing texts. When the mood is extreme, the most extreme texts can be pulled out of the national or religious attic and used to prove that there is no possibility whatsoever of compromise. Under other circumstances, other texts can be pulled out. ...

**Q232 Bob Seely:** If I understand you correctly, you are saying that when it comes to Israel and Palestine, one shouldn't interpret it as just Jews versus Muslims. Does that also work for the dynamic between Israel and Iran?

**Gershon Gorenberg:** ... when one looks at Iran, the ideological element in the Iranian pursuit of greater power and hegemony in the region is obvious, but with a longer view of history, one must understand that Persia as a power in our region goes back far longer than the Islamic revolution of 1979. Persian aspirations to reach the Mediterranean are much, much older than that. ...

**Miri Eisin:** ... Any time something happens—if you call an event the al-Quds or al-Aqsa Flood or Tufan, if that is what you call it, and you say the words “al-Aqsa” and “al-Quds”, you are not just talking about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. You are not just talking about something that is local; you are making a statement that will touch a nerve for 2.2 billion Muslims in the world. ...

Israel took responsibility, took authority, conquered Jerusalem, applied Israeli law to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is beyond the jewel in the crown. On the one hand, it could be this

amazing aspect, but to say all the different terms for Jerusalem, both in Arabic and in Hebrew—"al-Quds", "al-Aqsa", "Yerushalayim"—means that religion is in the room. We cannot disconnect it.

It goes beyond the immediate Israeli-Palestinian conflict and who gets the honour of being sovereign over the holy places. It is something that ignites the world. Iran is the one that put together in this Islamic regime the al-Quds day ... It is in the religious realm of Ramadan. It is specifically the al-Quds/Jerusalem day. It is now used as a very strong political element: as a Palestinian political element worldwide, as a Muslim one against, again, the Israeli rule over Jerusalem. ... it goes way beyond the immediate conflict of Israel-Palestine. It goes into the realm of belief, of religion, of al-Quds/Jerusalem as a city. Yerushalayim—I mean, what do you do in that sense with that holy city and who gets the honour of being sovereign there? ...

**Dr Khalidi:** ... religion is important. It has always been part of what is at stake here. ...

If you go back and look at the role of religion, it played a role in 1929 and it played a role in other periods in history, but it has grown more and more important, especially in recent decades, as a result of a failure to end this conflict. The international community, which helped to create this conflict, has an obligation to bring it down, to end it. ...

The other thing I would say is that for all of its exploitation of religion and for all of the importance of religion to the Iranian regime—it is an Islamic Republic, after all—I see Iran as a state operating on the basis of *raison d'état* or national interest. It is playing a game in the Middle East that I do not think is entirely or even largely driven by religion. It is obviously able to use religious tropes in different ways with its different allies all over the Muslim world. If this conflict could be ended in a just and sustainable manner, it would remove any possibility of its exploitation for religious purposes.

The last thing I want to say is about Jerusalem and the kind of creeping takeover that turned a mosque in Hebron into a place of Jewish worship and Muslim worship. The takeover of the Haram al-Ibrahim in decades past is something that people see happening in the Haram al-Sharif—the al-Aqsa mosque—today. I was there less than a year ago, and the beginning of Jewish prayer there, which had never happened previously, is an enormous provocation to Muslims worldwide. ...

The way to deal with this is first of all to end this conflict, which the international community has an obligation to do, since it helped to create it; and secondly to stand up to the kind of moves that are being made systematically by Israeli Governments to slowly but surely erode the protections for worship by Muslims and expand this area into a jointly shared prayer area.

We are not talking about the Kotel plaza or historical areas of Jewish worship; we are talking about the Haram al-Sharif and the area around the Dome of the Rock. That area has now become a contested area in religious terms, essentially because of actions taken by this Israeli Government and earlier Israeli Governments. ...

**Q233 Henry Smith:** ... What are the panel's thoughts about a three-state solution, about a confederation, and about the West Bank returning to Jordan and Gaza returning to Egypt? ...

**Miri Eisin:** ... two states is something that I would call a compromise—a historic compromise, not a happily ever after. It is a historic compromise that I also support because one state is either one Palestine, the Hamas version—I am not alive then; I do not like that version—or one state where Israel is the Jewish dominant force and the Palestinians are either second-class citizens or transported, as Professor Khalidi said, and I oppose that completely.

As I am a very proud Zionist, and I think the idea of having one Jewish nation state is as relevant in 2024 as it was from the 19th century and onward, I arrive at two states as the compromise. One state either is not democratic and Jewish, or it is not Jewish and you lose that Zionist idea, or it is everybody killing each other. ...

Why “three state”, or four? The separation of the Gaza strip from the Palestinian Authority in 2007, when Hamas took over, has put us in this present situation ...

How do you put the Gaza strip back into it? I think that the Gaza strip needs to be a part of future Palestine. Egypt never wanted it, does not want it and will not want it in the future. Egypt did not allow in Palestinian refugees in 1948. It has built up, right now, several very big walls—not that you cannot get over a wall—to ensure that no Palestinians can get there again. It is not about the Gaza strip being part of Egypt. It never was: Egypt always separated it. But how do you arrive at getting back into a connection between the Gaza strip and the West Bank/East Jerusalem area? ...

**Dr Khalidi:** ... Egypt does not want the Gaza strip, never considered it part of its territory and will not in the future ... The same is true for Jordan; King Hussein separated Jordan from the West Bank. I have not seen any indication that Jordan would under any circumstances accept taking the West Bank or any other part of what was Mandatory Palestine. ...

Personally, I feel that whether we are talking about a one-state, two-state or confederal or cantonal solution, the most important thing is that everybody has absolutely equal rights ... The last thing I will say ... is that anyone who talks to me about a two-state solution has to talk to me about ending the occupation and removing the settlements that were created to prevent a two-state solution. ...

If you are not ending occupation and ending Israeli security control ... you are not talking about a state. You are talking about a Bantustan or an Indian reservation ...

You have to end the occupation, and people do not talk about that. People do not talk about settlements when they talk about a two-state solution. This airy-fairy discussion of two states does not come to grips with the reason that we do not have a two-state solution. That is because you have 70,000 Israeli settlers. That is because you have a permanent occupation, a 56-year occupation; three generations of Palestinians have grown up under it. ...

**Gershon Gorenberg:** ... I agree with Colonel Eisin that the proposal of one state is a proposal for continued conflict. The one-state idea solves the issue of borders and leaves all the other issues, including settlements, holy places, refugees and so on to supposedly be worked out by a Government in which Jews and Palestinians are virtually equal. That is not a proposal for an end of the conflict, but a proposal for continuing the conflict in a different form. A two-state agreement, in fact, requires the end of the occupation. ...

Finally, regarding the idea of a confederation, a confederation is an agreement between two sovereign states. The EU is a confederation. The confederation is not an alternative to a two-state agreement, but a variation on it. It is perhaps a very positive variation on it, but it cannot be discussed as being something other than a two-state outcome. ...

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**Q234 Dr Baskin:** I am Dr Gershon Baskin. I am currently working for a UK NGO called International Communities Organisation. We work in conflict zones with failed peace processes, so I am very much in the right place.

**Samer Sinijlawi:** I am ... a Palestinian political activist from East Jerusalem and the chairman of the Jerusalem Development Fund.

**Alistair Burt:** I am Alistair Burt, a former Member of Parliament in the UK. I was Minister for the Middle East for five years, on and off, between 2010 and 2019. I am still engaged in travelling and talking about the region and working with a number of NGOs there.

**Q235 Royston Smith (Conservative):** Alistair, how far do you think the Abraham accords and perhaps the potential for Saudi-Israel normalisation have improved the prospects of a resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

**Alistair Burt:** There were positive aspects to the Abraham accords, and other aspects. The positive ones were that they gave a projection of a Middle East that could look

different—a Middle East in which Israel was plugged in firmly as part of a new economic region, very much to the benefit of both Israel and the Gulf states that were engaged with it. ... There was also a security aspect to it in relation to the Gulf states' relationship with Israel, which had been going on for many years but not necessarily as publicly as it became.

However, it was not the answer, for two reasons. Firstly, and mainly, it ignored the Palestinian issue. It gave a sense that the future of the region could be sorted without dealing with the Palestinian issue. That did a couple of things. In Israel, it reinforced a view among certain Israeli politicians that they had been right all along. The Palestinian issue was marginal, it could be put to one side, it could be managed and controlled, and they would have a good relationship with Arab states regardless. ...

... the Saudis had always made it clear that the Palestinian issue had to be an element of it. It seemed to me that it waxed and waned a bit—sometimes it was very important; sometimes it was slightly less important—but now it is clear that in any future normalisation between Israel and the neighbouring states, the Palestinian issue now has to be part of the resolution. ...

**Q236 Royston Smith:** Do you think the 7 October massacre, and the subsequent awful, terrible war that we are seeing unfold, has made a two-state solution more or less achievable? ...

**Dr Baskin:** ... while over the past years the two-state solution was thought by many, including myself, to no longer be viable, the October war has brought the two-state solution back to the international table, and to the Israeli and Palestinian table as well, even though it is very difficult for Israelis and Palestinians to confront it because we are dealing with two traumatised peoples.

It is clearer than ever that while it was generally thought that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict needed to be resolved between the Israelis and the Palestinians alone ... that is no longer the case. This war, as we have seen, has gone beyond the borders of Israel and Palestine, and it affects regional security, international shipping, and global security in general. ...

The two-state solution is back, up front and centre, and there is probably no other credible resolution to this conflict.

**Samer Sinijlawi:** We need to learn something from the Abraham accords and the experiences of the United Arab Emirates. More importantly, if we are judging the possibilities of the Saudis coming on board, especially now after the crisis of 7 October and the war in Gaza, the Saudis are becoming the rescue boat for both Israelis and Palestinians. ...

We need to listen carefully to what the Saudis say, and we need to believe what they say. They say that without a clear recognition of a Palestinian state on the borders of '67, with East Jerusalem as the capital, they are not interested in being part of any kind of process. This is their condition, not only because it is based on the Arab Peace Initiative, but also because the war in Gaza is becoming a domestic issue ...

The two-state solution could be saved by a critical-mass recognition of the state of Palestine, especially by the UK and USA. ...

This recognition cannot be more easy and straightforward, since the state of Palestine designates territory and population, and has significant international recognition, which fulfils the attributes of statehood according to international law. In fact, today, we have 30 countries that have diplomatic missions in Ramallah, and more than 130 states recognise the state of Palestine. The UN recognised the state of Palestine as a non-member observer state. ...

First, the UK, and the USA of course, should not condition this recognition to Israel's consent; second, they should keep the borders of the state of Palestine to be determined in negotiation based on United Nations Security Council resolution 242; and third, this recognition should lead to concrete steps, including inviting the state of Palestine to

establish an embassy in London and transforming the consulate general of the UK in East Jerusalem to be the embassy of Palestine. ...

**Alistair Burt:** ... 7 October has changed everything. There is no going back to 6 October. There is no going back to a faux status quo, where the situation could be managed and would just drift on. No Arab state is going to put money into rebuilding Gaza if it is going to be destroyed again in two or three years with a further outbreak of the conflict, and no one I have spoken to can see a possibility of resolving the issues in Gaza without also including West Bank occupation, East Jerusalem and Jerusalem. ...

The awfulness of 7 October has changed everything ... it is very easy here not to fully understand the degree of trauma that is affecting both Israel and Gaza. The degree of trauma in Israel is immense. Talking to friends there, people can barely think about anything but security. This is not the time that rational decisions are going to be made about the long-term future, which means other people have to be involved in that process. It is the same in Gaza, for obvious reasons, as we see happening every day. But also, in this country, we must not underestimate, either, the impact on the Arab world, which has been immense. There is only one narrative in the Arab world and it is not about 7 October; it is about occupation. ...

I think that opens up new opportunities for the United Kingdom and for friends both of Israel and the Palestinians and the Arab world to reach the conclusion that we have not been able to do in the past and to play a part. It is not for us to decide: there must be a determination by the Israelis and Palestinians themselves. ...

**Q237 Bob Seely:** ... I completely understand and accept the argument that the two-state solution is back on the agenda, in part because of the horribleness of what has happened. The argument is that if you recognise a Palestinian state now, you are effectively reacting to Hamas's violence, and therefore diplomatically now is not the time to recognise a Palestinian state. ...

**Samer Sinijlawi:** I have been facing this argument from lots of Israelis. My answer is as follows: if you recognise a Palestinian state now, you don't give a prize to Hamas, because Hamas doesn't have a two-state solution on its agenda; you are giving a prize to moderate Palestinians, just like me, who are ready to live in coexistence with Israel, side by side. ...

**Q238 Bob Seely:** ... if you do it with the boundaries that you want, isn't that going to badly damage the UK's relationship with Israel, which is clearly important to this country?

**Samer Sinijlawi:** Well, then you need to decide. If you really support the two-state solution, you need to take some steps towards it. ...

**Alistair Burt:** The Hamas attack of 7 October was not in pursuit of a Palestinian state. It was an act of terror, and it was to pursue Hamas's ideology of the elimination of Jews. Recognising a Palestinian state is not connected with that in any way. ...

**Q239 Alistair Burt:** ... What David Cameron has done has changed the nature of a potential recognition. It had always been assumed that recognition would come towards the end of a negotiated process. In effect, that put the power in the hands of those who were negotiating and, I put it to you, particularly those who did not want a Palestinian state at all. If you make sure your negotiations are not going to end, you are never going to get the recognition of a Palestinian state. ...

**Q240 Bob Seely:** Right, so Hamas and the Netanyahu Government, effectively.

**Alistair Burt:** I don't consider Hamas a state entity that can take part in negotiations such as this.

**Bob Seely:** Well, there are two people who don't want a two-state solution: Hamas, who want the destruction of Israel—

**Alistair Burt:** And certain elements in Israel.

**Bob Seely:** And the Netanyahu Government.

**Alistair Burt:** That's right. Bringing the potential for recognition at an earlier stage in the

process as a catalyst rather than a conclusion changes the nature of how that decision would be made and what would follow from it.

**Dr Baskin:** I want to respond to the notion that this would be a prize for Hamas. Hamas can be defeated militarily, and perhaps Israel can ensure that Hamas cannot govern in Gaza, but defeating the idea and ideology of Hamas is done by making Palestine real for Palestinians. Palestinians need to understand that they can begin to live for Palestine and don't need to die as martyrs for Palestine ...

In order to counter Israeli claims that this is against Israel, I would, at the same time as recognising the state of Palestine, call on the nations of the world who have yet to recognise the state of Israel to do so. ...

**Q241 Henry Smith:** ... what realistically needs to happen? Is that an end to the settlements in the West Bank and, indeed, Israeli settlers leaving those places in the West Bank? In terms of the other challenge, who should be representing the Palestinian state? ...

**Dr Baskin:** First, I think it is important to realise that Prime Minister Netanyahu's days are numbered. It is not tomorrow, and maybe not the day after tomorrow, but we are at the end of the Netanyahu era and Netanyahu's ability to block the future negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians ...

The current Palestinian Authority Government has resigned. Samer will speak to the need to push President Abbas to the side to be a ceremonial President. The Palestinians need representative leadership that is acceptable in the West Bank and Gaza. ...

In future, negotiations need to take place on a regional basis, not a bilateral Israeli-Palestinian basis—the table is too unbalanced for that. ...

**Q242 Chair:** ... Does Palestine need, essentially, a Mandela figure? ...

**Samer Sinijlawi:** It is clear that all the recent polls in the last 10 years have showed that 90% of the Palestinians would like to see President Mahmoud Abbas leaving political life. They consider the current regime in the West Bank as a corrupt regime. They accuse the current regime of President Abbas of being one that violates human rights. He has cancelled the Legislative Council and he has control of the judicial system, so there is a lot of criticism from the Palestinian side. ...

Now, it is not the time for elections, because Gaza will not be able to participate in any national elections until we bring back life to Gaza. We need to find a way to allow Mr Abbas to transfer himself into being an honorary President ... and hand over all his power to a Prime Minister who can form a Government that can unify Palestinians ...

There are a lot of names that can unify the Palestinians. ... Dr Nasser Kidwa, Mohammed Dahlan—Mohammed Dahlan doesn't want to take any position, but he can help a lot. Dr Nasser Kidwa is a diplomat. He is from Fatah. He is accepted by the street, in the West Bank and in Gaza. He can be the perfect person to form such a Government.

**Dr Baskin:** He is also the nephew of Yasser Arafat. ... the nephew of Yasser Arafat is also symbolic.

**Alistair Burt:** ... For there to be a Mandela, there has to be a de Klerk, and we don't see that either. ...

... a series of parallel conversations need to be going on. First and foremost, you have to end the conflict ... You end the conflict; you return the hostages.

Secondly, you have to consider what will happen to Gaza the day after. Everybody we have spoken to in the region says that in order to deal with the day after in Gaza, you have to have a horizon that is longer term, because that is the way to get the agreements you need on Gaza. Thirdly, you have the discussion about the longer-term future of Gaza—not just the immediate authority but the longer term. Fourthly, that has to be as part of the overall settlement, which will involve the West Bank and East Jerusalem as well as Gaza. These can't be sequential, because we don't have the time; they have to be parallel. ...

Don't neglect civil society, either. Civil society should play a large part in this. ... remember

that 20% of the population of Israel are Arab Israelis. One of the things that hasn't happened post 7 October has been the intercommunal violence that we saw in 2021. There are those who are living together in those communities, self-policing at the moment to make sure there is no trouble ...

**Q243 Fabian Hamilton (Labour):** ... if there is a two-state solution, with Israel and Palestine living together, how do you think conflict could be prevented between them? Is it realistic to suggest that a state of Palestine should be demilitarised? If so, how could it really be independent? What about an international peacekeeping force at the start? ...

**Dr Baskin:** ... First of all ... there needs to be a legitimate and accepted Palestinian governance in Gaza and the West Bank ... That government would be inviting a multinational Arab-led force to Gaza. We have indications that several of the Arab nations would agree to come in if they were invited by the Palestinians. They would need a limited mandate of one or two years maximum, of course, during which time they would help to create stability and security. That would also enable Israel to withdraw from Gaza, and that has to happen; the longer Israel stays in Gaza, the more we can be 100% sure that there will be armed insurgency.

On the question of a demilitarised Palestinian state, in all negotiations that have taken place between Israel and the PLO over the past 30 years, the Palestinians accepted the idea of a non-militarised Palestinian state. They would have an effective police force, would need to deal with issues of terrorism and co-operate with Israeli intelligence, but it would not be a militarised state in the sense of having an army with offensive capabilities.

I think this is acceptable to most Palestinian negotiators and it can be explained to the Palestinian public as well. There is essentially no one to defend themselves against with an army. As the late Faisal al-Husseini used to say, "It would be a waste to spend our resources on a Palestinian tank when we really need to put them into developing a Palestinian computer."

We will need some kind of international third-party roles along the Jordan river—perhaps on both sides of the river—along the borders between Gaza and Israel and between Gaza and Egypt. We can talk about different kinds of forces, but they are going to have to be temporary because in the end the Israelis and Palestinians have to provide security for each other. If Israel does not allow the Palestinians to have freedom and dignity, Israel will not have security; if the Palestinians do not allow Israel to have security, they will not have freedom and dignity ...

**Samer Sinijlawi:** ... it is a matter of urgency that we should now create a mechanism of security arrangements inside Gaza and on the borders with Israel to allow this war to stop. For us, it is so urgent. Each hour counts, because currently we have 200 victims a day in Gaza. A child is killed every six minutes in Gaza. ...

The only way is that a reputable, acceptable Palestinian political body—Government—that is accepted by the Palestinian street and by donors and countries like Saudi Arabia calls and asks for an Arab force to come at the beginning, gradually take the keys to Gaza from the Israelis, and then deliver it to the new Government. In this process, we can create a security mechanism that can guarantee and satisfy the security needs of Israel. It is very simple: 7 October would not have happened if there were 30 Israeli tanks and some Apache helicopters on the borders with Gaza. There was no army there.

So in one way or another, everybody learned some lessons from 7 October. The Israelis cannot take away their security arrangements, in addition to the Arab force on the other side of the borders. More importantly, if the Palestinians start feeling a hope—a light at the end of the tunnel—then the dynamics and depression among Palestinians, which are the weather for violence, will disappear.

We need also to work very hard on the education system on both sides, and we need to fight the incitement that exists both on the Palestinian and on the Israeli side. ...

**Q244 Fabian Hamilton:** ... Do you think that in this—hopefully not hypothetical but soon



to be real—two-state solution, Palestinians will feel secure if they are demilitarised? Would that also be an opportunity for the Israelis, not to demilitarise, but at least to tone down some of the immense force that they have?

**Alistair Burt:** ... we are some way from that. Remember Miri's comments in the session that we have just heard. As far as I am concerned, she described accurately the sense in which, at the end of the day, Jews feel alone. Who stands with them? Who is going to provide their security if they do not themselves? ...

I think the external threat is still there for both. As long as there are states talking about the destruction of the state of Israel, Israel is going to want to be protected, and it is entitled to feel that. Equally, there are dangers from within, extremists who exploit. ...

**Q245 Fabian Hamilton:** Is it true to suggest that for many decades—certainly the past 20 years—that the extremes in both Israel and Palestine have dictated the agenda for the more moderate elements? ...

**Alistair Burt:** ... Israeli politics has got more extreme. The elections of November 2022 demonstrated that, and the addition in Cabinet of those who are extreme and, indeed, Jewish supremacists, to a degree of risks. The fact that some would say that Judea and Samaria are at war with the state of Israel. ... There is also the rise in support for Hamas in the Arab world, because they are seen to be the resisters. As for the Palestinian Authority, the sense among Palestinians has waned because the Palestinian Authority had not been seen as being able to protect Palestinians from the IDF or the settlers. ...

**Q246 Chair:** Alistair ... You said earlier it was miraculous that we have not seen conflict within communities in Israel, given that 20% of the community are of Arab background. Lots of people lost faith in the concept of a one-state solution before 7 October. As you said, 7 October does change everything.

Essentially, how would we have, long term, a state where you do not see conflicts? ...

**Alistair Burt:** I do not know ...

**Samer Sinijlawi:** ... If the two-state will not be activated or implemented before the end of this year, you should say goodbye to that option. The younger generations of Palestinians think more of the one-state option. We have a limited time window, and we have this current political elite generation that is able to negotiate and settle into a two-state solution. Most Palestinians would welcome a two-state solution, and welcome a one-state with equal rights solution. What they refuse is the current two-floor state solution, in which the Israelis are on the noble floor and the Palestinians are on the servant floor. ...

I am 52 years old and was born in Jerusalem. Until now, I am not a citizen of any state. Israel does not guarantee me citizenship and Israel is preventing the creation of a Palestinian state where I can be a citizen. ...

**Dr Baskin:** I think that the one-state democratic option is perhaps the utopian solution, but we live very far away from utopia. We have been killing each other for more than 100 years over a territorial expression of our identity, in which both people claim the same territory and claim that they give their identity to that territory and take their identity from it. ...

But we need to imagine a two-state solution that is built on bridges and co-operations, and not two states that are built on fence and walls that separate contact between people. ...

We are talking about reaching two states, like in Europe, that live side by side and trade with each other and share research, economy, education and so on. ...

The last thing that is really important to say is that I think we all have to take ourselves a lot more seriously. We have been talking about two states. We have been talking about the illegality of Israeli settlements. We need to turn those statements that we believe in into action. The occupation needs to be rolled back. There are solutions for dealing with 75% to 80% of the settlements by annexing part of the territory and doing land swaps on a one-to-one basis. There are ways to deal with the future of Jerusalem because it is a very segregated city. There are ways of dealing with the holy places. ...

**Q247 Chair:** ... on the state of Israeli politics right now ... does it really allow for a two-

state solution, or are we doing what I think is happening in whispered diplomatic corridors and talking about a post-Netanyahu two-state solution? ...

**Dr Baskin:** We are talking about a post-Netanyahu situation and probably a post-Mahmoud Abbas situation as well. ...

Israel has gone through political upheavals. We saw 40 months of massive demonstrations and hundreds of thousands of Israelis taking to the streets against the proposed judicial revolution by the Netanyahu Government. That is beyond us. When we get back, when the reservists come home and we have a pause in the war—hopefully a ceasefire very soon—we are going to see those massive demonstrations even bigger on the streets of Israel. Eighty per cent of Israelis hold Netanyahu directly responsible for what led us to 7 October. We will have a post-Netanyahu era in the not too distant future.

**Chair:** What you say is interesting because, again, when Rabin was assassinated, Arafat felt he had lost his partner in this. That point about actually not only talking about post-Netanyahu but ... also about post-Abbas is really important in terms of having that partnership.

**Q248 Royston Smith:** Which countries do we think are best placed to play a part in any future resolution? ...

**Dr Baskin:** ... we are talking, first, about the region. We have the countries that are at peace with Israel. Egypt, Jordan, the Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco all have very important roles to play. The Saudis have a crucial role to play because of the emergence of their power and the reforms that are going on ...

Of course, the United States has to be involved in the process, together with the European Union. On a personal basis, I would say that we do not want American mediators at the table. They have done a horrible job in trying to negotiate this conflict in the past, but we need them to organise the guarantees that are necessary. The European Union has to stop being a payer and be a player. The UK has a crucial role to play because of historic consequences. ...

Lastly, it is very important to find a way to get China involved in the reconstruction of Gaza, because no one in the world knows how to build infrastructure faster, more efficiently and cheaper than the Chinese. ...

**Samer Sinijlawi:** I think the global south is irrelevant in the Middle East. Normally, I would say that the leadership should be from the US towards achieving a breakthrough. But these days, after the amazing steps that David Cameron has been showing the whole world since he assumed his new position, I think that, for the first time, the UK is a step ahead of the Americans. ...

**Q249 Chair:** ... I just want to talk about Jerusalem. ... it is an overlooked-at area. ...

**Alistair Burt:** ... Danny Seidemann and Terrestrial Jerusalem were visiting a number of capitals over the last 18 months, long before 7 October, and the concerns that were building up were about the West Bank and about Jerusalem—particularly al-Aqsa and the issues that were arising there. We thought this was very much underestimated by those who were watching the situation, and that's still the case.

I have a good phrase from Terrestrial Jerusalem—it is from 2018, but it is as pertinent today—that says: “Past experience, both distant and recent, teaches us that Jerusalem is a stable, viable city when allowed to speak in its multiple voices. However, when there is an attempt to exclusively possess Jerusalem in the name of some higher order, the city erupts, often sending shock waves throughout the region and beyond.” ...

Jerusalem remains key. Al-Aqsa—the pressure is on there. We have heard voices, in particular Itamar Ben-Gvir, and what he has said about the exclusive use in Jerusalem. These are all dangerous things. When the eyes of the world are on Gaza, we must not neglect what is happening in Jerusalem. ...

**Dr Baskin:** ... We have to recognise that what the Jews call the Temple Mount and the Muslims call al-Aqsa is the nuclear raw nerve of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Every time

there has been a major eruption, it has been because someone has tried to change the status quo there. ...

**Samer Sinijlawi:** I hate to see Jerusalem divided. Even in a two-state solution, I think Jerusalem should be united. Now, it is divided. It should be a city for two peoples and a capital for two states, and it should be the capital for the three religions. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/14351/html/>

*A very brief summary of the Peel Plan, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://embassies.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/Maps/Pages/The-Peel-Commission-Plan-1937.aspx>

*UNSCR 242, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/IP%20S%20RES%20242.pdf>

## House of Commons International Development Committee

**“In war we expect the deaths to be men of fighting age. In Gaza they are overwhelmingly women and children” - IDC reports on the humanitarian situation in Gaza**

Since the Hamas terrorist atrocities of 7 October 2023 ... the vast majority of the population of Gaza, including those working for international aid agencies, have been unable to leave. Instead the population has followed sequential instructions to move out of areas designated for “clearance” by Israeli military air, sea and ground offensives, under what is described by the WHO as “constant bombardment”. The UN OCHA reports that over 1.7 million Gazans - 75 per cent of the population - have been internally displaced, and very many of those will not have homes to return to once the fighting stops. Well over half of the population are now reported as sheltering in the last designated “safe space” at Rafah, on the border with Egypt. ...

NGOs and UN organisations have explained how their operations are severely limited by the scale of destruction in Gaza. The deconfliction system is not working and aid workers have been killed and injured in their duties. At the time the Committee visited, it was taking 20-25 days for a truck to travel the 30 miles from the Egyptian Red Crescent warehouse in Al Arish into Gaza. NGOs spoke of almost ‘malicious’ bureaucracy, which saw trucks turned back for carrying just one item potentially perceived as for dual use - although it was not explained what that one item was, nor why it was rejected.

Current border restrictions will make it impossible to avert a famine ... The UK Government must make it an absolute priority to get sufficient amounts of food – “massively” more than at present - into Gaza. ... This means Israel opening up existing crossings, providing a more streamlined entry system and communicating about why goods are being returned. UNRWA is by far the biggest provider of aid and wider public services in Gaza, as well as its functions in the West Bank, and the Committee urges that that the serious and disturbing allegations against some of its workers are investigated and quickly resolved so that its funding can be restarted and its critical work can resume. The Committee is clear that unless there is a lasting ceasefire, the unprecedented - in the view of expert evidence from senior and seasoned international humanitarian professionals - catastrophe in Gaza will continue to escalate. Any ceasefire of less than 30 days would not allow enough aid in, nor give time for medical and aid workers to get the required visas. ...

Sarah Champion MP, Chair of the International Development Committee, said: “In war we expect the deaths to be men of fighting age. In Gaza they are overwhelmingly women and children, this raises questions and serious concerns.

“The Committee heard compelling evidence that breaches of international law are taking place, on both sides. We received no reassurance that healthcare workers, medics or

facilities are being proactively protected. Not even a fraction of the needed aid is entering Gaza to prevent famine, and there is no way that can even begin to happen in the current conditions. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/98/international-development-committee/news/200175/in-war-we-expect-the-deaths-to-be-men-of-fighting-age-in-gaza-they-are-overwhelmingly-women-and-children-idc-reports-on-the-humanitarian-situation-in-gaza/>

**Report: Humanitarian situation in Gaza**

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/43593/documents/216534/default/>

## House of Commons Library Briefing

**UK and international response to Houthis in the Red Sea 2024**

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9930/CBP-9930.pdf>

## Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

**Deaths of people in Gaza waiting for an aid convoy: Foreign Secretary's statement**

The deaths of people in Gaza waiting for an aid convoy yesterday were horrific. There must be an urgent investigation and accountability. This must not happen again.

We can't separate what happened yesterday from the inadequate aid supplies. In February only half the number of trucks crossed into Gaza that did in January. This is simply unacceptable.

Israel has an obligation to ensure that significantly more humanitarian aid reaches the people of Gaza. We have identified a series of bottlenecks that need addressing: Israel must urgently open more crossings into Gaza; eliminate bureaucratic obstacles; enable aid operations in Gaza; and ensure there is a robust de-confliction mechanism in place to protect ordinary Palestinians, NGOs, medics and others providing aid.

This tragedy only serves to underscore the importance of securing an immediate humanitarian pause. A sustained pause in the fighting is the only way to get lifesaving aid in at the scale needed and free the hostages cruelly held by Hamas.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-statement-the-deaths-of-people-in-gaza-waiting-for-an-aid-convoy>

## United Nations

**Secretary-General Appalled by Tragic Human Toll of Conflict in Gaza, Reiterates Call for Humanitarian Ceasefire, Release of All Hostages**

... The Secretary-General is appalled by the tragic human toll of the conflict in Gaza, in which more than 30,000 people have now reportedly been killed and over 70,000 injured. Tragically, an unknown number of people lie under rubble.

The Secretary-General condemns the incident today in northern Gaza in which more than 100 people were reportedly killed or injured while seeking life-saving aid. The desperate civilians in Gaza need urgent help, including those in the besieged north where the United Nations has not been able to deliver aid in more than a week.

The Secretary-General reiterates his call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and the unconditional release of all hostages. He once again calls for urgent steps so that critical humanitarian aid can get into and across Gaza to all those in need.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22144.doc.htm>

## Security Council Press Statement on Incident Surrounding Humanitarian Assistance Convoy in Gaza Strip

... The members of the Security Council express deep concern regarding reports stating that over 100 individuals lost their lives with several hundred others sustaining injuries, including people with gunshot wounds as observed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in an incident involving Israeli forces at a large gathering surrounding a humanitarian assistance convoy south-west of Gaza City. The Council members take note that an Israeli investigation is underway.

They extend their sincere condolences to the families of the victims and wish a swift and complete recovery for those who have been injured.

The Council members stress the need to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

In this regard, they reaffirm that all parties to conflicts must comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable.

They call for all parties to refrain from depriving the civilian population in the Gaza Strip of basic services and humanitarian assistance indispensable to their survival, consistent with international humanitarian law.

In this regard, they express grave concern over the estimation from the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) that all 2.2 million people in Gaza would face alarming levels of acute food insecurity.

The Council members reiterate their demand for parties to the conflict to allow, facilitate and enable the immediate, rapid, safe, sustained and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance at scale to the Palestinian civilian population throughout the Gaza Strip and for the full implementation of resolutions 2712 (2023) and 2720 (2023).

The Council members urge Israel to keep border crossings open for humanitarian aid to enter Gaza, to facilitate the opening of additional crossings to meet humanitarian needs at scale, and to support the rapid and safe delivery of relief items to people in all of the Gaza Strip.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15608.doc.htm>

*The Integrated Phase Classification referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1156749/>

*UNSCR 2012, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2712\(2023\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2712(2023))

*UNSCR 2720, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2720\(2023\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2720(2023))

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### **Gaza: Worst famine fears realised as 10th child reportedly ‘starves to death’**

“The official records yesterday or this morning said there was a tenth child officially registered in a hospital as having **starved to death**,” said UN health agency spokesperson Christian Lindmeier. “A very sad threshold...(but) the unofficial numbers can unfortunately be expected to be higher.”

The development followed media reports overnight that four children had died in northern Gaza’s Kamal Adwan Hospital, in addition to six other youngsters who died on Wednesday at the same facility and at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

The deepening food insecurity crisis in the enclave – which UN aid coordination office [OCHA](#) said had left one in four facing catastrophic levels of food insecurity – prompted renewed international alarm on Thursday, when [more than 100 Palestinians were apparently killed](#) and hundreds were injured trying to get aid from a relief convoy stopped at a roundabout southwest of Gaza City. ...

OCHA spokesperson Jens Laerke meanwhile insisted that before the conflict “people had food; people were able to produce their own food.”

Today, finding food within Gaza itself, whether from farming or fishing, “is almost impossible”, Mr. Laerke continued. ...

According to UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, the quantity of aid supplies reaching Gaza in February was just half of January’s total, “and we know that January was not enough at all”, the WHO spokesperson said.

Just [last week](#), the Council heard briefings from top humanitarian organisations, including medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières, which reported that a pattern of attacks by Israeli forces against hospitals and other civilian buildings, together with humanitarian personnel and convoys, was “either intentional or indicative of reckless incompetence”. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147112>

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### **Gazans eating wild plants to survive**

... out of desperation, some Gazans have resorted to selling wild plants with little nutritional value in the markets of their devastated enclave. ...

Their journey begins in the open fields every morning in search of these plants, which include cheeseweed – known locally as khubeezeh – which have been eaten by Palestinians as side dishes for generations. Now, they have become a major food source for Gazans. ...

Residents of Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza say that cheeseweed prices have risen sharply since harvesting them has become common practice. In the period before the war, edible wild plants were free to anyone who wanted to pick them, but now people are forced to buy them, with food stocks critically low and humanitarian assistance scarce. ...

There is produce available for those who can afford it, thanks to the ingenuity of the local wartime economy. But, resorting to wild plants as a staple points to the dire need and lack of nutrition that most now feel across Gaza. ...

... people who sell cheeseweed just want to make an income and work.

“There is no source of income, they have been sitting at home for five months and they want to make money. They want to feed their kids, and they also need goods like diapers, milk and other things. They have responsibilities. They say to themselves ‘I’m going to make a living by selling cheeseweed or anything else, even if it’s grass.’”

... cheeseweed is the cheapest thing on the market and is widely available. Other food items are simply out of reach. “If we want to buy a bottle of cooking oil today, it costs about 20 shekels (\$5.56). ...

The UN food and agriculture agency (FAO) says that over 46 per cent of land for growing crops in the Gaza Strip has been destroyed as a result of the war, and 97 per cent of its water is unfit for human consumption.

According to reports by the UN relief agency for Palestine refugees, UNRWA, the aid entering Gaza provides for the needs of no more than three per cent of its population.

Before the start of this latest conflict, 500 trucks of commercial and humanitarian supplies entered Gaza every day. Today, that number has dwindled to an average of 98 trucks this month ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1147077>

## UN Women

### **9,000 women have been killed in Gaza since early October**

As the war on Gaza approaches its five-month mark, Gazan women continue to suffer its devastating impact. While this war spares no one, UN Women data shows that it kills and injures women in unprecedented ways. ...

- An estimated 9,000 women have been reportedly killed by Israeli forces in Gaza to date. This figure is likely an underestimate, as many more women are reported to be dead under the rubble.
- Every day the war in Gaza continues, at the current rate, an average of 63 women will continue to be killed.
- An estimated 37 mothers are killed every day ...
- More than 4 out of 5 women (84 per cent) report that their family eats half or less of the food they used to before the war began, with mothers and adult women being those tasked with sourcing food, yet eating last, less, and least than everyone else ...
- ... Gaza's entire population of 2.3 million people will be facing acute levels of food insecurity within weeks – the highest ever recorded as Gaza is on the verge of starvation.
- Nearly 9 in 10 women (87 per cent) report finding it harder to access food than men ...
- 10 out of 12 women's organizations surveyed in Gaza reported being partly operational, providing essential emergency response services. Despite their extraordinary efforts, less than 1 per cent of funding raised through the 2023 Flash Appeal has gone to national or local women's rights organizations. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/03/press-release-9000-women-have-been-killed-in-gaza-since-early-october>

TOP

## Foreign Affairs

### Ministerial Statement and Q&A

#### **Situation in the Red Sea**

***The Ministerial statement in the House of Commons was read in the Lords.***

*col 1150* ... Since 19 October, the Houthis, aided and abetted by Iran, have launched a ruthless and reckless campaign of attacks against commercial shipping. These attacks are not solely limited to commerce; our military vessels are also in the Houthi crosshairs. The Royal Navy, the US Navy and most recently the French navy have also been targets. Vessels owned by Chinese and Bulgarian companies and crews from India, Sri Lanka and Syria have been targeted indiscriminately, making a mockery of Houthi claims that this is all about Israel. ...

*col 1151* Freedom of navigation underpins not only our security but our prosperity. Around 80% of traded goods are carried over the seas, as are about 90% of the goods arriving in the United Kingdom. These necessities on which we depend arrive through a small number of critical waterways, so upholding these precious freedoms is essential for the preservation of life. ...

On occasion, in response to specific threats and in line with international law and the principle of self-defence, we have tackled the Houthi threat head on. Since 11 January,

we have conducted a number of precision strikes against Houthi targets. ...

Although we have eroded the Houthis' capacity, their intent to prosecute indiscriminate attacks against innocent vessels remains undiminished. ...

*col 1152* We have given the Houthis ample opportunity to de-escalate, but once again, the Houthi zealots have ignored our repeated warnings. As a result, we have once again taken action to defend ourselves against these intolerable attacks. ...

Intelligence analysis indicates that the strikes were successful, and that the sites we attacked were being used by the long-range drones that the Houthis use for both reconnaissance and attack missions, including at a former surface-to-air missile battery site several miles north-east of Sanaa. ...

On planning these strikes, as is normal practice for the RAF, operations were carried out meticulously, and consideration was given to minimising any risk of causing civilian casualties. ...

We are determined to end the illegal flow of arms to the Houthis, using whatever levers are available, including enduring diplomatic engagement, and determined to continue to intercept illegal weapons and the shipping that helps to feed that supply. We are cutting off the Houthis' financial resources, to further degrade their capacity to conduct attacks ... Despite the best efforts of the Houthis, we also continue to provide humanitarian help to people in the Middle East. This year, we will send some £88 million of humanitarian support to Yemen, which will feed 100,000 Yemenis every month. The UK has recently worked closely with our Jordanian partners to air-drop life-saving supplies directly to the Tal al-Hawa hospital in northern Gaza.

*col 1153* The Houthis could stop this barbaric behaviour any time they want. Instead, they callously choose to continue their reckless acts of aggression, causing harm not just to innocents, but to their own people in Yemen. ...

**Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent (Labour):** ... His Majesty's Opposition accept that the weekend's airstrikes were legal, limited and targeted to minimise the risk of civilian casualties. ...

Research from the British Chambers of Commerce this week showed that 55% of UK exporters have now been impacted by the disruption of shipping to the Red Sea. Among UK firms more broadly, 37% have seen the effects of Houthi strikes, with manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers more likely to be affected. This is having a direct impact on our economy and cannot be tolerated. ...

*col 1154* There is no excuse for the current attacks by the Houthi rebels on international maritime activity. There is an onus on us to protect freedom of navigation, which is why we support the efforts of the UK Government and, as always, thank our service personnel for their bravery, professionalism and dedication.

**Baroness Smith of Newnham (Liberal Democrat):** ... can the Minister tell the House at what point His Majesty's Government would feel it appropriate to come to this Chamber or, more likely, the other place to talk more fully about engagement in the Red Sea and attacks on Houthi targets? There are questions about parliamentary scrutiny of military intervention. For limited strikes, it is clearly right that the Government say, "This happened two nights ago", but at what point does the number of limited strikes cumulatively become something that Parliament really should be addressing and able to scrutinise more fully? ...

It is clearly welcome that the attacks so far appear to have been targeted, precise and proportionate. They have taken out Houthi targets, Houthi drone bases and so on but ... what is the Government's intent? Is it to degrade the Houthi capabilities, which is clearly welcome, or is it to deter? If it is trying to degrade, which the Government are saying has been successful, is that going to be a long-term degradation or are the Houthis simply going to look to their Iranian backers for further military support? ...

*col 1155* **The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (The Earl of Minto):** ... We



continue to take action that is necessary, limited, legal and proportionate in terms of self-defence, freedom of navigation and protecting lives. Our aim remains to disrupt and degrade Houthi capabilities to put an end to this persistent threat ...

*col 1156* These carefully targeted sites—and they really are carefully targeted—are attacking deeply buried weapons storage, launch sites, ground-control systems and radars, which are the four things that will stop these attacks. ...

The idea that the Houthis are attacking only ships that are proving to be in support of something going on in Gaza is completely spurious. They attack whatever they like ...

Finally, I will respond to the question of when these individual strikes become something more of a sustained campaign. It is a very difficult question to answer and it is not an easy one to grasp, because we do not quite know what level of effect these strikes are having on the overall capability of the Houthis. ... There is no doubt that we have degraded the Houthi capability and we will continue to urge the Houthis, and those who enable them, to stop the illegal and unacceptable attacks on UK commercial and military vessels, and on those of our partners in the Red Sea and the wider region. Beyond that, it is very difficult to see how a broadening of this action may evolve.

*col 1157* **Lord Hannay of Chiswick (Crossbench):** ... What consideration are the Government giving to further action at the United Nations? Are they, for example, seeking to put together a majority in the UN Security Council, calling on all member states to stop supplying weapons to the Houthis and stop helping them in their illegal actions? ...

**The Earl of Minto:** ... I am sure I need not point out to your Lordships that the Houthis pay scant regard to anything that the United Nations says. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2024-02-29/debates/DD01B0C4-9BFE-4291-8290-79D4EB74EB56/SituationInTheRedSea>

*The findings of the British Chambers of Commerce research referred to above by Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent can be read at*

<https://www.britishchambers.org.uk/news/2024/02/scale-of-red-sea-disruption-revealed/>

## House of Commons Oral Answer

### Business of the House

**Jim Shannon (DUP):** ... On Sunday past, a mob in Tunisia burned a synagogue in the city of Sfax. Thankfully no one was injured. Will the Leader of the House join me and others in denouncing this attack and calling for closer monitoring of the issues relating to freedom of religion or belief?

**The Leader of the House of Commons (Penny Mordaunt):** We again thank the hon. Gentleman for what he does every week, which is to shine a spotlight on the situations that are going on around the world that would not normally get this level of attention. ... on each occasion, I follow up with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to ensure that our people in-country realise the importance of these matters to us in this place, and I thank him again on behalf of us all for raising them.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-02-29/debates/7D2EBABB-632C-48C7-A8DF-AFDA7FA7DFAD/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-4E7D8188-D645-4CFF-B305-81BBD1C86EF7>

TOP

## Other Relevant Information

### Muslim Council of Britain

**British Muslims – Striving for Fairness: 2021 Census findings with a focus on social mobility**

<https://mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/MCB-Striving-For-Fairness-Full-Report.pdf>

[TOP](#)

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

### UK Parliament

#### **Arms Trade (Inquiry and Suspension) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3567>

#### **\*\* Criminal Justice Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3511>

Amendment Paper

[https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-04/0155/amend/criminal\\_rm\\_rep\\_0304.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-04/0155/amend/criminal_rm_rep_0304.pdf)

#### **Disestablishment of the Church of England Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3539>

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

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

#### **The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023 [Draft]**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2023/9780348253191/contents>

#### **Genocide Determination Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3535>

#### **Genocide (Prevention and Response) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3521>

#### **Holocaust Memorial Bill**

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

#### **International Freedom of Religion or Belief Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3564>

#### **Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3596>

## **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>

**TOP**

## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 2 days**

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Enhanced Dataset [England]** (closing date 5 March 2024)

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/clinical-audits-and-registries/female-genital-mutilation-datasets/female-genital-mutilation-fgm-enhanced-dataset-overview-of-2024-consultation>

**Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill - Standard Tier** (closing date 18 March 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/martyns-law-standard-tier-consultation>

**TOP**

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