



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Union of Jewish Students (UJS)

Dear Vice-Chancellors, students' unions, and university leadership across the UK and Ireland,

We've had enough.

We write to you as current and former Jewish students who have endured and witnessed an unprecedented surge in antisemitism on our campuses over the past eight months.

October 7th will forever haunt the collective memory of the Jewish people. For some of us, this marked the point at which we learnt of the murder of our loved ones by Hamas. For others, this marked the point at which our loved ones were kidnapped and taken hostage. Yet, for all of us, this marked the point at which an unimaginable escalation in campus antisemitism began.

On October 7th, antisemitism once again became a permissible form of hatred.

While our cousins in kibbutzim in Israel still cowered from Hamas terrorists, our peers celebrated and glorified the proscribed group's attack. "Globalise the intifada", they shouted, shrugging their shoulders at the 1200 murdered Israeli men, women, and children who were being laid to rest. "Resistance is justified", they chanted, callously ignoring over a hundred hostages who to this day languish in terror tunnels.

And this hatred continues. Emboldened by Hamas' brutality, our peers declared open season on Jewish students. As we were punched, spat on, and sent death threats, we became increasingly fearful to be openly Jewish on campus. Our kippot were covered by baseball caps and our Magen David necklaces were tucked under our tops.

People we once called our friends called for us to be driven from our campuses. They daubed graffiti on our homes, broke into our accommodation, and drew swastikas in university toilets. We felt alone in our halls of residence as our flatmates joining this barrage of hate. Our lecturers, who should have been looking out for us, instead justified the unjustifiable. They mocked us when we told them we were vulnerable, and they denied our lived experiences. Our educational institutions have become beacons of hatred.

And so, after eight months of this hate, we tell you that we've simply had enough. We've had enough of being society's punching bag, absorbing its anger and hatred. We've had enough of constantly feeling on edge as we walk through our campuses. And we've had enough of our university leaders equivocating, unable to condemn the pervasive bigotry in the institutions that they govern.

The future of Jewish life on campus is up to you. It is imperative that you understand, you condemn, and you act against antisemitism. Now.

We, Jewish students past and present, from the left and the right, religious and secular, from all points on the religious spectrum, say with one united voice:

We've had enough.

<https://www.ujs.org.uk/enough>

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## Israel

**See also the UJS letter "We've had enough" that is included in the Home Affairs section above.**

### Scottish Parliament Written Answer

#### Gaza Families United Campaign

**Paul Sweeney (Labour)** [S6W-27500] To ask the Scottish Government what engagement it has had with the Gaza Families Reunited campaign following the letter that the former Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees sent to the UK Government Minister for Legal Migration on 12 April 2024, and whether it has any plans to convene a working group of stakeholders who are involved in the campaign in Scotland.

**Kaukab Stewart:** The Scottish Government supports the Gaza Families Reunited campaign's calls for the UK Government to create a scheme to allow Palestinians in the UK to bring family members trapped in Gaza to a place of safety in the UK. The former Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees met with members from the campaign on 26 March and campaign representatives were subsequently invited to a roundtable discussion with the former First Minister on 17 April.

Following these meetings, Scottish Government officials are in discussions with Scottish Refugee Council to develop a proposal for a stakeholder working group and will continue to engage with campaign members to ensure this meets their priorities.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-27500>

### Northern Ireland Assembly Oral Answers

#### Gaza: Ceasefire

**T6. Ms Sheerin** [AQT 326/22-27] asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the First Minister agrees that Israel's barbaric attack on a refugee camp full of displaced

Palestinians was another example of why there needs to be a complete and total ceasefire in Palestine, given that she will have seen over the weekend the horrible images from Gaza that flooded our screens.

**The First Minister (Michelle O'Neill):** Speaking personally, there is no doubt that over one million Gazans are sheltering in Rafah with absolutely nowhere to go. Over the weekend, we all witnessed the horrendous scenes of charred remains and bodies under the rubble of a refugee camp that is in ruins. Israel's ongoing indiscriminate slaughter of the Palestinian people must end, and the international community must finally take a stand against Israel's genocide, ethnic cleansing and collective punishment of Palestinians. All hostages should be released immediately, and aid must be allowed to flow freely into Gaza. Israeli forces must withdraw from Gaza and the West Bank, and a peaceful settlement must be agreed through peace negotiations that lead to a viable Palestinian state.

**Emma Sheerin (Sinn Féin):** ... First Minister, you have outlined the need for a total and unequivocal ceasefire. Do you agree that the Irish state's eventual recognition of the Palestinian state is a very good first step and a historic moment in our support for the Palestinian people?

**The First Minister:** Again, speaking personally, of course, I absolutely do. It is a historic moment for the people of Ireland and Palestine. I commend the efforts of all those people at home and across the international community who have campaigned for that outcome for years. However, there is no escaping the fact that the international community must come together and finally take a stand against Israel's genocide, ethnic cleansing and collective punishment of Palestinians, and work to deliver a peace settlement that leads to a viable Palestinian state.

***There is no direct link to individual Topical Questions. T6 (above) is approximately halfway down the page at***

<https://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2024/05/28&docID=402612>

## Northern Ireland Assembly Written Answer

### **Israel: Divestment, Sanctions, and Revocation of Arms Sale Licences**

**Justin McNulty (SDLP)** [AQW 12072/22-27] To ask the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they discussed (i) divestment; (ii) sanctions; (iii) the revocation of arms exports licenses to the State of Israel; and (iv) funding protection and enhancement for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, at the meeting of (a) the East-West Council on 26 March 2024; and (b) the British Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 29 April 2024.

**The First Minister and deputy First Minister:** The matters discussed at the meeting of the East-West Council on 26 March were set out in our statement to the Assembly on 7 May. We were not present at the meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 29 April.

<https://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/questions/printquestionssummary.aspx?docid=401884>

*The statement referred to above can be read at*

<https://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2024/05/07&docID=399634#4356085>

### **Secretary-General Condemns ‘in Strongest Terms’ Deadly Air Strikes in Rafah, Gaza, on Tents Sheltering Displaced People, Stressing Horror Must Stop Immediately**

... The Secretary-General has condemned in the strongest terms the 26 May air strikes on Rafah hitting tents sheltering displaced people. He is heartbroken by the images of the killed and injured, including many small children. As he has said before, the horror and suffering must stop immediately.

The Secretary-General grieves for the over 36,000 Palestinians and some 1,500 Israelis killed in the relentless violence, including the gruesome acts of terror perpetrated by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Israel on 7 October 2023, the devastating Israeli assault on Gaza, the continued indiscriminate rocket launches towards Israel. The humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is now compounded by the unconscionable prospect of a man-made famine.

The Secretary-General reiterates his demand for an immediate ceasefire and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. He recalls the recent orders of the International Court of Justice, which are binding and must be complied with.

The Israeli authorities must allow, facilitate and enable the immediate, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian supplies assistance to those in need and all crossing points must be open in line with Security Council resolution 2720 (2023). Humanitarian organizations must have full, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to reach all civilians in need across Gaza, in line with Security Council resolution 2712 (2023).

We must work expeditiously to restore security, dignity and hope for the affected population. This will require urgent efforts to support and strengthen the new Palestinian Government and its institutions, including preparing the Palestinian Authority to reassume its responsibilities in Gaza. We must also move forward with tangible and irreversible steps to create a political horizon.

The devastation and misery of the past seven months have reinforced the absolute need for Israelis, Palestinians, the States of the region and the broader international community to take urgent steps that will enable the parties to re-engage on the long-delayed political path to achieve a two-State solution. The UN will continue to support all such efforts.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sqsm22247.doc.htm>

*The International Court of Justice Orders referred to above can be read at (26 January 2024)*

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240126-ord-01-00-en.pdf>  
and (28 March 2024)

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240328-ord-01-00-en.pdf>  
and (24 May 2024)

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240524-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

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))

UNSCR 2712, referred to above, can be read at

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

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### **Palestinian Rights Committee Bureau Welcomes Expanding Wave of Recognition of State of Palestine, Condemns Ongoing Attacks in Gaza**

The following statement was issued today by the Bureau of the General Assembly's Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People:

The Bureau warmly welcomes the recent recognition of the State of Palestine by Barbados, the Bahamas, Ireland, Jamaica, Norway, Spain and Trinidad and Tobago. The Bureau

commends the determination of these countries to uphold and advance the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to bring hope in the midst of a devastating war in Gaza and increased threats to the survival of the Palestinian people. The expansion of recognitions follows the UN General Assembly [resolution](#) of 10 May 2024, reaffirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their independent State of Palestine. Such developments echo growing international voices clamouring for equal rights and self-determination as enshrined in the UN Charter and for an end to the 57-year Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and a just, peaceful diplomatic solution to the question of Palestine. The Bureau urges the Security Council to align itself with the broad consensus expressed by the General Assembly and recommend the admission of the State of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations.

The Bureau welcomes the International Court of Justice Provisional Measures Order of 24 May 2024, following on Provisional Measures indicated on 26 January 2024 and 28 March 2024, ordering Israel to immediately halt its military offensive in Rafah, allow for unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza and for access to Gaza of UN investigative mandates.

The Bureau deplores the ongoing Israeli military operations in Gaza and particularly in Rafah on 26 May, two days after the International Court of Justice's ruling, and where at least 45 Palestinian civilians, including children, among them infants, were killed and more than 200 wounded in their displacement camp by an Israeli missile attack. It calls for an investigation and to hold accountable those responsible for such grave breaches of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law.

The Bureau appeals to the international community for urgent and coordinated efforts aimed at ending the Israeli occupation and achieving a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, in accordance with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, to bring an end to this historic and grave injustice.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/gapal1468.doc.htm>

*The International Court of Justice Provisional Measures Order of 24 May 2024, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240524-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

*The International Court of Justice Provisional Measures Order of 26 January 2024, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240126-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

*The International Court of Justice Provisional Measures Order of 28 March 2024, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240328-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

## UNRWA

### **The scenes coming out of #Rafah last night are harrowing: Phillipe Lazzarini**

Reports of more casualties continue to come in following an Israeli airstrike on a heavily populated area northwest of Rafah.

Children and women living in tented plastic makeshift shelters are among the killed. Many were injured. Others were reportedly burnt to death.

The images from last night are testament to how Rafah has turned into hell on earth.

It has been extremely difficult to establish contact with our @UNRWA teams in Rafah today. Some of our staff are unaccounted for.

UNRWA is doing everything possible not to interrupt the delivery of humanitarian assistance. But with every day passing, providing assistance & protection becomes nearly impossible.

Of the 200 trucks with humanitarian supplies offloaded on the Palestinian side yesterday, only 30 trucks were picked up due to heavy movement restrictions + ongoing Israeli Forces airstrikes + the launch of rockets by Hamas + delays & limitations on the routes that can be used.

These are all additional challenges & restrictions that do not allow us to distribute aid. They further strangle the humanitarian operation on which 2 million people across Gaza depend. I reiterate the call of the @UN Secretary-General @antonioguterres for an immediate #ceasefire + for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages to end the suffering of civilians.

I echo his dismay by the lack of implementation of the recent order of the International Court of Justice regarding Rafah. The decisions of the @CIJ\_ICJ Court are binding.

The military operation in Rafah must immediately end & the flow of humanitarian assistance into Gaza must improve without further delay.

**To read the full statement see**

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/scenes-coming-out-rafah-last-night-are-harrowing>

*The International Court of Justice Order referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240524-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

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## Other Relevant Information

### UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

**Strengthening Human Rights in Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Policy: A Toolkit**

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/terrorism/ohchr-toolkit-strengthening-hr-in-ct-strategy-policy.pdf>

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## 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>

**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>

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

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

## **Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief Bill**

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

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

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

## **Scottish Parliament**

### **Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill>

### **Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill**

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

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

### **Faith school designation reforms** (closing date 20 June 2024)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/faith-schools-policy-team/faith-school-designation-reforms/>

### **Petitioning against the Holocaust Memorial Bill** (closing date 21 June 2024)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8481/petitioning-against-the-holocaust-memorial-bill/>

House of Lords: Guidance on the right to be heard

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/55634/documents/4871>

House of Lords: Guidance on submitting your petition

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/55632/documents/4869>

### **Review of the RSHE statutory guidance** (closing date 11 July 2024)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/rshe-team/review-of-the-rshe-statutory-guidance/>

### **£20k registration threshold for charities in Northern Ireland** (closing date 11 August 2024)

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-ps20k-registration-threshold-charities-northern-ireland>

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