



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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SCoJeC is incurring significant extra costs as a result of the war in Israel and Gaza, including producing expanded issues of this digest. Please help us maintain these resources by donating at

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Welsh Senedd Written Answer

Schools: Religious Education

Darren Millar (Conservative) [WQ93110] What enforcement arrangements are in place to ensure that schools in Wales are compliant with statutory requirements in relation to both religious education and the religion, values and ethics requirements in the new curriculum?

Cabinet Secretary for Education: As set out in the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, RVE is a legal requirement of the Curriculum for Wales and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16.

As Religious Education was under the previous curriculum, RVE is a locally determined subject. An Agreed Syllabus must be created to specify what should be taught in RVE within each of the 22 local authorities in Wales. Each local authority has a legal duty to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference, through which an appropriate syllabus is agreed. All maintained schools and settings are required to have regard to the agreed syllabus including schools of a religious character, in their design of the agreed syllabus element of their RVE provision.

Maintained schools are publicly held to account through Estyn inspections, which provide objective, independent, and impartial information about schools' performance and effectiveness. Local authorities have statutory responsibility for monitoring their schools and intervening where appropriate. Under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, local authorities have the power to

intervene in a school where specific grounds for intervention exist, for example, ground 5, where the governing body or headteacher has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a duty under the Education Acts. Further information regarding local authority powers of intervention can be found online:

[School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

[Schools causing concern – Statutory guidance for schools and local authorities](#)

<https://record.senedd.wales/WrittenQuestion/93110>

The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/4/contents>

A list of the Education Acts referred to above can be read at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/578>

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Israel

Scottish Parliament Motion

Humza Yousaf (SNP) [S6M-13609] Immediate Recognition of the State of Palestine –

That the Parliament notes calls urging the UK Government to join its European neighbours, Ireland, Spain and Norway, in immediately recognising the State of Palestine; understands that 144 member states of the United Nations recognise Palestine as a sovereign state; believes that a two-state solution is the only viable path for peace between Israel and Palestine, and that there can only be a two-state solution if a sovereign Palestinian state is immediately recognised and co-exists alongside Israel; further believes that Palestinian statehood is an inalienable right of the people of Palestine, not a privilege that can be vetoed by others; notes in horror the continued suffering of the people of Gaza; commends aid organisations, and community groups across Scotland, including in Glasgow Pollok, which are donating funds and sending aid to ease the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza; notes the calls urging the Government of Israel to allow unimpeded access to Gaza for humanitarian aid, and further notes the calls for an immediate ceasefire, an end to arms sales to Israel and the immediate release of all hostages.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-13609>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

“We must urgently find our way back to peace”, says High Commissioner Volker Türk as he presents his global update to the 56th session of the Human Rights Council

... It pains me to start my Global Update to this Council, once again, with the cruelty of war.

Last March, I spoke of the right to peace.

Since then, conflicts have only intensified.

Killings and injuries of civilians have become a daily occurrence.

Destruction of vital infrastructure a daily occurrence. ...

Children shot at. Hospitals bombed. Heavy artillery launched on entire communities.

All along with hateful, divisive, and dehumanising rhetoric.

I am dismayed by the extent to which warring parties have pushed beyond the boundaries of what is acceptable - and legal - on many fronts, with utter contempt for the other, trampling human rights at their core.

In 2023, data gathered by my Office shows the number of civilian deaths in armed conflict soared by 72 per cent.

Horrifyingly, the data indicates that the proportion of women killed in 2023 doubled and that of children tripled, compared to the year prior.

I am appalled by the disregard for international human rights and humanitarian law by parties to the conflict in Gaza. There has been unconscionable death and suffering. More than 120,000 people in Gaza, overwhelmingly women and children, have been killed or injured since 7 October, as a result of the intensive Israeli offensives. Since Israel escalated its operations into Rafah in early May, almost one million Palestinians have been forcibly displaced yet again, while aid delivery and humanitarian access deteriorated further.

The situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is dramatically deteriorating. As of 15 June, 528 Palestinians, 133 of them children, had been killed by Israeli security forces and/or settlers since October, in many cases raising serious concerns of unlawful killings. In the same period, 23 Israelis have been killed in the West Bank and Israel in clashes with or attacks by Palestinians, including 8 members of Israeli security forces.

Israel's relentless strikes in Gaza are causing immense suffering and widespread destruction. The arbitrary denial and obstruction of humanitarian aid have continued, and Israel continues to detain arbitrarily thousands of Palestinians. This must end.

Palestinian armed groups continue to hold many hostages, and, in some cases in densely populated areas, putting them and Palestinian civilians at further risk. These hostages must be released.

The patterns we have documented raise serious concerns about the commission of war crimes and other atrocity crimes.

I call for the binding decisions of the Security Council and of the International Court of Justice to be respected.

The occupation must end, accountability must be served and the internationally agreed two-State solution must become a reality.

I am extremely worried about the escalating situation between Lebanon and Israel. Already 401 people have reportedly been killed in Lebanon, including paramedics and journalists. Over 90,000 people have been displaced in Lebanon, and over 60,000 have been displaced in Israel with 25 Israeli fatalities. Thousands of buildings have been destroyed. I reiterate my call for a cessation of hostilities and for actors with influence to take all possible measures to avert a full-scale war. ...

We urgently need to find our way back to peace, in line with the UN Charter and international law. ...

The far-reaching impact of war and conflict on the environment is also undeniable.

Burning of land, chemical contamination of air, water and soil, destruction of civilian infrastructure, even the risk of nuclear catastrophe. ...

We talk about human rights as the best tool for early warning and prevention. But what does this mean?

It means we must take the drivers and root causes of tensions, violence, and conflict seriously.

Entrenched inequalities. Lack of access to basic rights – food, water, housing, education, decent work, a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. Systemic discrimination. Deficient governance and the quashing of dissenting voices. ...

I once again warn of the dangers of antisemitism, anti-Muslim bigotry, as well as divisive rhetoric and disinformation that cast migrants and refugees as the scapegoats for wider challenges in society, including socio-economic issues. This has become particularly fashionable among populists and far right extremists in election campaigns in Europe, North America and elsewhere. ...

In closing, I need to flag one overarching concern. We are seeing increasingly aggressive verbal attacks, threats and reprisals, and virulent social media campaigns against

international institutions and mechanisms, including the United Nations generally, my Office, Special Procedures mandate holders, the International Court of Justice, and the International Criminal Court.

This is unacceptable. These institutions were set up and mandated by States precisely to undertake their crucial work — States must facilitate this work and protect it from undue interference and attack. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/06/we-must-urgently-find-our-way-back-peace-says-high-commissioner>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Holocaust Memorial Bill

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

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

**** closes in 2 days**

Faith school designation reforms (closing date 20 June 2024)

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

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

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

Petitioning against the Holocaust Memorial Bill (closing date 17 July 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>

£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>

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill (closing date 16 August 2024)
https://yourviews.parliament.scot/health/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-bill/consult_view/

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill: Financial Memorandum (closing date 16 August 2024)
https://yourviews.parliament.scot/finance/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland/consult_view/

Gaps in Equality Legislation [Northern Ireland] (closing date 6 September 2024)
<https://consult.nia-yourassembly.org.uk/committee-for-the-executive-office/gaps-in-equality-legislation-inquiry>

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