



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Israel

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

#### **Not enough aid is getting into Gaza: UK statement at the UN Security Council**

... We reiterate our strong condemnation of Hamas' 7 October attacks and we call for the immediate release of all the remaining hostages, and the return of all those who have died in captivity. We are appalled by reports of sexual violence and abuse. The UK stands firm in its condemnation of these heinous acts. A negotiated pause in the fighting that leads to a sustainable ceasefire is the best way both to secure the release of the hostages and to enable the major and essential scaling up of humanitarian aid. There is now a deal on the table, endorsed by this Council, to achieve those goals. The onus is now on Hamas to accept it.

We also continue to call on Israel to fulfil its commitments to increase the amount of aid getting into Gaza and to meet its obligations to facilitate unhindered humanitarian access. The findings of the IPC famine risk assessment demonstrate that not enough aid is getting into Gaza and reaching those in need. We also call for the immediate re-opening of the Rafah crossing, and to scale-up aid through all other crossing points.

Distribution of aid within Gaza also needs to improve. A guaranteed and functioning deconfliction mechanism is critical to this. We call on Israel to support the minimum operating requirements of the UN agencies, by providing timely approval of visas and allowing entry of armoured vehicles and personal protective equipment. President, resolution 2720 provides for a mechanism which will show whether aid is reaching those who need it. I thank Senior Coordinator Kaag and her team for their work to establish this mechanism and urge her to continue her efforts to ensure it can deliver this in a comprehensive and timely way.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/not-enough-aid-is-getting-into-gaza-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council>

## United Nations

### **Amid Deteriorating Situation in Gaza, Senior Humanitarian Coordinator, Briefing Security Council, Stresses Need for Ceasefire, Unimpeded Delivery of Aid**

... **Sigrid Kaag, Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza** ... noted that nearly nine months since the Hamas attack, the hostages' plight continues to torment the Israeli people, while Palestinian civilians in Gaza have been plunged into an abyss of suffering. Following the Israeli offensive against Rafah since 6 May, over 1 million people have been displaced once again. ... Stressing the need for a full and complete ceasefire in Gaza, she also demanded the release of all hostages and the delivery of aid at scale. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) must be allowed to deliver on its mandated role. ... Stressing the importance of political will, she said the mechanism for monitoring and verification of humanitarian assistance, mandated by the resolution, is now capturing humanitarian aid shipments from Jordan, Cyprus, Israel and the West Bank into Gaza. The activation of the mechanism for supplies from Egypt is expected by mid-July. ...

Highlighting last week's evacuation of 21 Palestinian children with serious illnesses and their accompanying adults from Gaza to Egypt via Kerem Shalom crossing, she said discussions are ongoing to establish a more regular and predictable system of medical evacuations. Describing this as a priority, she called for the Council's urgent attention to this. "Many of you will be familiar with the images of supplies accumulated at Kerem Shalom crossing", she said, adding that the UN has asked Israel to find solutions to enable the safe delivery of aid. ... The Palestinian Authority has a critical role to play in Gaza, she said, calling on the international community to support its financial and governance capacities. The creation of a modern local economy in Gaza should be a priority, because Palestinians should not be expected to depend on humanitarian assistance, she underscored.

"Ambitious reconstruction planning requires ambitious and generous financing," she said, adding that the international community needs to consider a range of financing options and instruments, from traditional development financing to the establishment of new trust funds to tried-and-tested innovative financing instruments. "Talking about recovery, reconstruction and financing can be abstract, but if we view it through a human lens, it means dignified shelter while more permanent housing is being built or refurbished, the restoration of basic functioning health, sanitation and water systems and the rehabilitation of schools", among others, she said. ... The estimated 17,000 children orphaned by the war will need support as will the large numbers of people with disabilities, including the vast number of amputees who will require prostheses. ...

**The representative of China** voiced concern over the unprecedented deterioration of the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, where — due to extreme shortages of supplies and dire health conditions — millions of people are struggling with hunger, disease and despair. Gaza — "an open-air prison" — has been under blockade for nine months, with the supply of water, electricity and fuel cut out. Further, the entry of humanitarian supplies into Gaza has been obstructed, and people have been denied access to the most basic necessities. ...

**The representative of France** ... expressed alarm that the number of civilian victims continues to increase, while famine is taking hold and 80 per cent of civilian infrastructure has been destroyed. "An entire generation of children have been traumatized and deprived of education", he said, calling on Israel to open the Rafah crossing and enable

the delivery of aid throughout Gaza. Stressing ... that the protection of humanitarian workers must be guaranteed, he said: “France demands an immediate ceasefire and release of all hostages.” ...

**The representative of Switzerland**, sounding alarm over the appalling humanitarian situation in Gaza, condemned that the hostilities continue to claim many civilian victims, particularly among children and the 1.7 million displaced persons in the Strip. Around 95 per cent of the population there is facing high levels of acute food insecurity; within this, 15 per cent are at the catastrophic level. “The high risk of famine will persist as long as the conflict continues and humanitarian access is hampered,” she stressed. ...

**The representative of the United States** ... said that 96 per cent of the Gaza population — over 2 million people — will likely experience a catastrophic level of food insecurity between now and September. Underlining the need to provide sustained and unhindered humanitarian assistance, she stressed that opening all existing land crossings into Gaza is a vital step. Relatedly, she supported efforts to distribute aid within Gaza so it would reach the most vulnerable, including women and children. For humanitarian organizations to safely carry out their work, the Israel Defense Forces must improve the overall security environment inside Gaza, she asserted, adding that the United States continues to press Israel to improve humanitarian access. However, “the best way to address the crisis is for Hamas to accept the ceasefire proposal”, she stated, noting that it would create the conditions to support a massive surge of relief for Palestinians and allow for increased commercial activities in Gaza. ...

**The representative of the United Kingdom** expressed concern over the devastating and deteriorating humanitarian crisis in Gaza where “too many people have died”. A negotiated pause in the fighting that leads to a sustainable ceasefire is the best way to both secure the release of the hostages and enable the major and essential scaling up of humanitarian aid. “There is now a deal on the table — endorsed by this Council — to achieve those goals”, she said, calling on Hamas to accept it. ... [[click here to read this speech in greater detail](#)]

**The representative of the Russian Federation** ... noting that sustainable and adequate provision of aid in Gaza is impossible, said that Gazans are on the brink of famine. The ongoing military operation has resulted in over 38,000 deaths and displaced people are being asked to flee yet again. The system of deconfliction is not working, he noted, adding that 274 humanitarian workers have been killed by Israel’s military operation. Of these, 197 were United Nations personnel and 193 of them from UNRWA. “No matter how carefully Ms. Kaag chooses her words”, he said, the reality is that humanitarian access is not being ensured and the channels of delivery are limited. When they open, it is for a short time, he said, and citing Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, added that even after the Israel Defense Forces announce pauses of hostilities to enable aid delivery, nothing changes. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15757.doc.htm>

## UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

### **Israel: UN experts condemn decades of unfair trials for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank**

Palestinians’ right to due process guarantees have been violated for 57 years UN experts said today, denouncing the lack of fair trial in the occupied West Bank since June 1967.

On 7 June 1967, the Israeli military commander issued three proclamations concerning the military’s executive, security, public order, and judicial authority in the occupied West Bank.

These provisions were later amended into Military Order No. 378, which established military courts.

“In the occupied West Bank, the functions of police, investigator, prosecutor, and judge are vested in the same hierarchical institution – the Israeli military,” the experts said.

The Order establishes vague procedural instructions and broad powers to military forces for the conduct of proceedings.

“This military system has served to control many aspects of Palestinians’ daily lives, including public health, education, and land and property law. It also criminalises many forms of political and cultural expression, association, movement, nonviolent protest, traffic offenses, and other acts that might be considered methods for opposing the occupation and its policies,” the experts said.

“This translates into a situation where military judges in military courts consistently provide legal and judicial cover for acts of torture, cruel and degrading treatment against Palestinian detainees carried out by their colleagues in the armed forces and intelligence agencies. It also makes legal defence impossible,” they said.

Under international standards, guarantees of fair and public trial include the independence and impartiality of the courts and require that the judicial system is not dependent on the discretion of any branch of government, particularly the executive and armed forces.

“The dual court system set up in the occupied West Bank, in violation of international law, has furthered legitimisation of the occupation and illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, through a militarily enforced, draconian penal system that is only applied to Palestinians without due process guarantees,” the experts said. “We are especially disturbed that Palestinian children are subject to this abusive system.”

“This system also turns a blind eye to settler violence and criminality, allowing it to grow and remain in impunity,” they said.

“Since the beginning of the occupation, the Israeli military has either taken part in or failed to protect Palestinians from violent settler attacks in the occupied West Bank, including, extrajudicial killings, forced displacement, property damage, destruction and unlawful appropriation, discrimination, harassment, and threats.”

Public scrutiny of these proceedings, and access to information about the harsh treatment of Palestinians in military courts and leniency towards illegal settlers is extremely limited given the media censorship exercised by the Israeli military, the experts said.

Israeli military courts allow the military prosecutor to request a prohibition order against Palestinian detainees, preventing them from meeting with their lawyers for a total period of 60 days. This practice denies detainees the right to confer with legal counsel, especially during the interrogation process, the experts said.

When part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, severe deprivation of physical liberty can amount to a crime against humanity.

The experts were concerned that an order posted by the Israeli military on its website on 29 May transferred responsibility for dozens of bylaws at the Civil Administration – the Israeli body governing in the West Bank – from the military to pro-settler officials led by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. The experts recall that annexation is absolutely prohibited under international law.

“We call on Israel as the de facto occupying power, to repeal Military Order No. 378 and related laws and regulations, dissolve the military court, and ensure the right to fair trial in the occupied West Bank,” the experts said.

The experts have been in contact with Israel about these concerns.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/israel-un-experts-condemn-decades-unfair-trials-palestinians-occupied-west>

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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 7 days**

#### **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/](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/](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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