



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Cabinet Appointments

Prime Minister	Keir Starmer
Deputy Prime Minister	Angela Rayner
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Rachel Reeves
Home Secretary	Yvette Cooper
Foreign Secretary	David Lammy
Justice Secretary	Shabana Mahmood
Defence Secretary	John Healey
Health Secretary	Wes Streeting
Education Secretary	Bridget Phillipson
Work and Pensions Secretary	Liz Kendall
Energy Secretary	Ed Miliband
Business and Trade Secretary	Jonathan Reynolds
Science, Innovation and Technology Secretary	Peter Kyle

Transport Secretary	Louise Haigh
Environment Secretary	Steve Reed
Culture Secretary	Lisa Nandy
Secretary of State for Scotland	Ian Murray
Secretary of State for Wales	Jo Stevens
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland	Hilary Benn
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Pat McFadden
Leader of the House of Commons	Lucy Powell
Leader of the House of Lords	Baroness Smith of Basildon
Chief Whip	Alan Campbell
Chief Secretary to the Treasury	Darren Jones
Attorney General	Richard Hermer

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## Holocaust

### Scottish Government

#### **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance reception: First Minister speech**

... Primo Levi, the Jewish-Italian chemist, writer, and Holocaust survivor, who passed away in 1987, wrote these words: "The Holocaust is a page from the book of humanity from which we should never remove the bookmark of memory".

Why should we never remove this bookmark?

Firstly, because Holocaust distortion has never been more prevalent in our society today. And, secondly, because these crimes against humanity – conducted on an industrial scale, against innocent civilians – were executed, as the words of the United Kingdom's presidency of IHRA say, "in plain sight" and in broad daylight by Nazis and by neighbours. How could it be that – within living memory – 1,000 children, from the ages of three to ten, could be rounded up and taken to the forest of Uman in Ukraine, in April 1942, only to be murdered over mass graves already dug?

Their tiny bodies then covered with soil?

Their executioners unmoved as to whether surviving children were buried alive, even as the earth continued to move below them? ...

This was the same year over 33,000 Jews were murdered at Babi Yar, a ravine in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv.

The young and the old, were made to strip and lie down, upon many layers of wounded bodies and corpses, so that they could be gunned down and buried, en masse, more efficiently.

How can modern society become so numb, so cynical, so complacent, so brutal that children would be amongst the most expendable victims of extermination – in the cruellest and coldest manner imaginable?

Of the Holocaust survivors who remain with us today, many of them have carried the scars and burden of childhood trauma all their lives.

Earlier this year, at the Scottish Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony held on 30 January,

in the Scottish Parliament, the extraordinary Peter Laszlo Lantos, spoke about his experiences of his terrible journey by cattle wagon train – at just five years old – from Hungary to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. ...

Peter's father died of starvation.

He and his mother, by some miracle, survived.

On their return to Hungary, it became clear some 21 members of their family had perished in the Holocaust.

21 members of just one family.

One family, among millions, to endure the basest of human depravity. ...

It is our collective commitment to IHRA and our collective duty to honour their life's work by addressing contemporary challenges to Holocaust remembrance in defiance of antisemitism today.

The Scottish Government – in its adoption of the IHRA definition of the Holocaust, and by supporting activities like Holocaust Memorial Day – will always proclaim that no Jewish person should ever need to live in fear of being targeted for who they are.

Not then, not now, not ever.

Scotland greatly cherishes our Jewish communities – our friends and neighbours – and the vital contribution they make to our society and to our culture.

It is now almost 25 years since the Stockholm Declaration, through which each IHRA country committed to educating and remembering the Holocaust; countering antisemitism and other forms of hate with knowledge, truth and compassion.

One of the elements of our contribution to that work, of which I am immensely proud, is the partnership between the Scottish Government and the Holocaust Educational Trust, which takes a plane-load of school pupils from Scotland to Auschwitz every year.

As Education Secretary in a previous part of my ministerial life, I had the enormous privilege of accompanying one of those trips to Auschwitz. I will never forget the day. ...

A quarter of a century on from the Stockholm Declaration, it is important not only to ask ourselves whether our collective efforts have made the world a safer place.

We must ask ourselves what more we will do to fulfil our commitments together, and to contribute to peace and security for all, for every Jewish person, for every Jewish child, for every other victim of the Holocaust, so that such vile history is never repeated in a world that has become less safe, and less tolerant for the Jewish community.

This is our mission and our moral obligation. It is the moral obligation to which I commit the Scottish Government tonight. ...

May we never remove the bookmark of memory, nor witness our darkest history repeat itself, unchecked, and in plain sight.

**To read the full transcript see**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/international-holocaust-remembrance-alliance-reception-first-minister-speech/>

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## Israel

### Downing Street

#### **PM call with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel: 7 July 2024**

The Prime Minister thanked Prime Minister Netanyahu for his congratulations and said he looked forward to further deepening the close relationship between the two countries.

The leaders discussed the importance of regional security in the Middle East, and the Prime Minister said he was committed to continuing the UK and Israel's vital cooperation to deter malign threats.

The Prime Minister said the situation on northern border of Israel was very concerning, and it was crucial all parties acted with caution.

Turning to the conflict in Gaza, the Prime Minister reiterated his condolences for the tragic loss of life following the October attacks. He then set out the clear and urgent need for a ceasefire, the return of hostages and an immediate increase in the volume of humanitarian aid reaching civilians.

He added that it was also important to ensure the long-term conditions for a two-state solution were in place, including ensuring the Palestinian Authority had the financial means to operate effectively.

The leaders agreed to stay in close touch.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-call-with-prime-minister-netanyahu-of-israel-7-july-2024>

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### **PM call with President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority: 7 July 2024**

The Prime Minister said he was pleased to be able to speak to President Abbas so early in his tenure, given the pressing issues in the region, ongoing suffering, and devastating loss of life in Gaza.

The Prime Minister updated President Abbas on his immediate priorities, including securing a ceasefire, the return of hostages, an increase and acceleration in humanitarian aid, and financial support for the Palestinian Authority.

Discussing the importance of reform, and ensuring international legitimacy for Palestine, the Prime Minister said that his longstanding policy on recognition to contribute to a peace process had not changed, and it was the undeniable right of Palestinians.

The leaders agreed to stay in close touch.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-call-with-president-abbas-of-the-palestinian-authority-7-july-2024>

## **United Nations**

### **Note to correspondents – on the situation on the Blue Line**

The UN is deeply concerned at the increase in the intensity of exchanges of fire across the Blue Line yesterday, which heightens the risk of a full-scale war. Escalation can and must be avoided. We reiterate that the danger of miscalculation leading to a sudden and wider conflagration is real. A political and diplomatic solution is the only viable way forward.

On 4 July, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lebanese Parliament visited UNIFIL to express support for UNIFIL and resolution 1701. Also yesterday, the UN Special Coordinator, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with Lebanese officials, including Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati, underscoring the need for de-escalation across the Blue Line.

We echo the appeals of UNSCOL and UNIFIL urging the parties to immediately return to a cessation of hostilities and to recommit to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/note-correspondents/2024-07-05/note-correspondents-%E2%80%93-the-situation-the-blue-line>

*UNSCR 1701, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1701\(2006\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1701(2006))

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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 4 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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