



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### **Euthanasia and Palliative Care**

**Lord Jackson of Peterborough (Conservative)** [HL177] To ask His Majesty's Government what analysis they have undertaken in either of the last two Parliaments of the fiscal implications for the National Health Service and the wider economy of any liberalisation of end-of-life care and assisted dying.

**Baroness Merron:** No assessment has been made of the fiscal implications for the National Health Service, or the wider economy, of any liberalisation of end of life care and assisted dying.

Integrated care boards (ICBs) are responsible for commissioning palliative and end of life care services that meet the needs of their local populations. This promotes a more consistent national approach and supports commissioners in prioritising palliative and end of life care. To support ICBs in this duty, NHS England has published statutory guidance and service specifications for adults, and children and young people.

Assisted dying is an extremely sensitive issue with deeply held views on both sides of the debate. A vote on any change to the law of England and Wales in this area is a matter for Parliament to decide. It is reasonable to have a discussion on what is an important topic, and it is right that we locate that question within a broader context of how we care for people at the end of their lives. Should the law on assisting dying change, the Government would work with stakeholders to ensure that safeguards were in place, and that the law is enforced in the way that Parliament intended.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-19/hl177>

*The following six questions all received the same answer*

#### **Faith Matters**

**Baroness Gohir (Crossbench)** [HL41] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the

Written Answer by Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 4 April (HL3324), how much of the funding provided to Faith Matters for its Tell Mama project in each year from 2016 to 2024 (1) has been spent on legal expenses and litigation, and (2) how much of that has been spent on cases involving potential libel and defamation.

**Baroness Gohir (Crossbench)** [HL42] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 4 April (HL3324), how much of the funding provided to Faith Matters for its Tell Mama project in each year from 2016 to 2024 was spent on consultancy fees, who were those fees paid to; and what for.

**Baroness Gohir (Crossbench)** [HL43] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 4 April (HL3324), how much of the funding provided to Faith Matters for its Tell Mama project in each year from 2016 to 2024 was spent on (1) monitoring Islamophobia, (2) supporting victims of Islamophobia and (3) countering extremism.

**Baroness Gohir (Crossbench)** [HL44] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 4 April (HL3324), what type of extremism or hatred Faith Matters is being funded to address via its Tell Mama project, whether it includes (1) right-wing extremism against Muslims, (2) Islamic extremism, (3) anti-Semitism, (4) homophobia, or (5) a combination of these, and what was the expenditure on each of these for each year from 2016 to 2024.

**Baroness Gohir (Crossbench)** [HL45] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 4 April (HL3324), (1) how much of the funding provided to Faith Matters for its Tell Mama project in each year from 2016 to 2024 was spent in total on counselling, (2) what was the total number of counselling sessions provided and (3) which counselling providers were used.

**Baroness Gohir (Crossbench)** [HL46] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 4 April (HL3324), (1) how much of the funding provided to Faith Matters for its Tell Mama project in each year from 2016 to 2024 was spent on salaries, (2) how many staff were paid, and (3) what were the full-time equivalent staff numbers.

**Lord Khan of Burnley:** The Government has funded Tell MAMA since 2012 to monitor and support victims of anti-Muslim hatred. It is important that any organisation the department works with is aligned with our commitment to tackling all forms of hate crime and extremism.

As is the case for all partners funded by the Department, Tell MAMA are subject to regular internal grant funding processes and due diligence checks.

Each year, the Department and Tell MAMA sign a grant funding agreement which details objectives, deliverables and legitimate spend to deliver Anti-Muslim Hatred reporting services.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-17/hl41>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-17/hl42>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-17/hl43>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-17/hl44>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-17/hl45>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-17/hl46>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-03-18/hl3324>

## House of Lords Library Briefing

### How ethnically and religiously diverse is the House of Lords?

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/how-ethnically-and-religiously-diverse-is-the-house-of-lords/>

## University of St Andrews

### Statement from the Court of the University of St Andrews – University Court Discharges Rector

The Court of the University of St Andrews has informed the University Rector, Ms Stella Maris, that she is to be discharged from the role of President of Court and as a charity trustee.

The Court's determination was made after the Rector repeatedly declined to accept the conclusion of an independent investigation which found that she had made some St Andrews students "fear for their safety", and by her actions and activities breached her responsibilities and legal obligations as a Court member and charity trustee. ...

Ms Maris will retain the title and office of Rector of the University until her term expires in October 2026, but will no longer sit on Court, the University's supreme governing body. The Court's decision has no bearing on Ms Maris's freedom of speech, which has been acknowledged by the Court at every stage.

The decision to discharge Ms Maris is the conclusion of a lengthy process which began in November 2023 when Ms Maris, as Rector, issued a message to all 10,000 St Andrews students offering her personal opinions on the conflict in Gaza and Israel.

The Rector then published a series of posts on social media, some of which the subsequent independent investigation found were "discourteous and disrespectful" in the way in which they dismissed fears raised by students who had contacted her seeking reassurance.

The Chair of Court, Mr Ray Perman, has today offered an unreserved apology to students, staff and others who feared for their safety or were upset or angered by the ensuing rise in community tensions in the wake of the Rector's statement and her subsequent actions and activities.

After concerns were raised by students and others, Court commissioned an independent investigation from Lady Ross, then Morag Ross KC, to examine whether the Rector's actions and activities were compatible with the responsibilities and standards placed on her as a member of Court, and the legal requirements of a charity trustee.

Lady Ross's report of the investigation

<https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/assets/university/about/documents/governance/court/independent-investigation-29-July-2024.pdf>

is being published in full by Court.

It found that:

- The Rector was entitled to free speech, but had exercised "poor judgment" in the manner in which she wrote to all students to give her personal opinions on the conflict, specifically in ignoring the possibility that her words from a position of leadership could encourage antisemitic behaviour by others.
- Reactions to the statement from the student body were divided. Some students, especially some Jewish students, were very distressed and angry, and "feared for their safety", while other students felt "validated and heard."
- The Rector's subsequent actions on social media fell below the standards required of a Court member, "inflamed tensions" in the St Andrews community, and represented a breach of her responsibilities to act with courtesy and respect.
- Court received Lady Ross's report in April and accepted its findings in full. ...

Ms Maris, however, has repeatedly declined to clearly acknowledge and accept Lady

Ross's finding that she breached her responsibilities. ...

Ray Perman, the Senior Lay Member and Chair of University Court said: ... "Under charity law and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, regrettably, Court has no choice but to discharge Stella Maris from two of the administrative roles that are traditionally associated with being Rector of a university.

"Court wishes to stress that this decision has no bearing on Ms Maris's freedom of speech, to which she is entitled and for which, like everyone else, she is personally accountable. We recognise that parts of the Rector's statement were an important source of comfort to students affected by the conflict in Gaza.

"We also wish to stress most explicitly that the Rector has never been asked to diminish or change her support of the Palestinian cause, only to acknowledge that in her handling of this matter, she caused distress and fear to some students, whom it was her duty to support and represent.

"As the Chair of University Court, I wish to offer an apology to all students, and others, who were upset or feared for their safety as a consequence of the Rector's handling of this matter, and those who were subsequently upset by the rise in tensions and disagreements which ensued."

Professor Dame Sally Mapstone, Principal of the University of St Andrews, said: "We can disagree passionately on the most difficult issues, but it should always be with courtesy and respect for those whose views may differ from our own.

"In large part, our community in St Andrews has responded to this terrible conflict and the abhorrent loss of innocent civilian life with strong, reasoned argument and commitment, but always consideration for the effects of their actions on others, and our students in particular, deserve significant recognition for that. ...

**To read the full statement see**

<https://news.st-andrews.ac.uk/archive/statement-from-the-court-of-the-university-of-st-andrews-university-court-discharges-rector/>

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## Holocaust

### Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**'It is the duty of European societies to prevent history from repeating itself, by countering anti-Gypsyism'**

Fourat Ben Chikha ... PACE General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, made the following statement on the eve of the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day:

"This year's commemoration of European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day marks the 80th anniversary of that tragic night of 2 August 1944, when about 4300 Roma and Sinti people, most of them women and children, were murdered at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps. This was one horrific episode in a massacre that saw over half a million Roma and Sinti victims brutally murdered under Nazi German rule.

As we pay homage to the victims of this genocide and honour the survivors, we should endeavour to understand what made this tragedy possible. The Roma Holocaust did not happen overnight. It was the last stage in an escalation of discrimination and violence, fuelled by hateful propaganda and translated into racial laws. Sinti and Roma people were increasingly deprived of their rights. Excluded from certain professions and from serving in the army, they were isolated, subjected to forced sterilisation, deportation and forced labour.

Today, it is the duty of European societies not only to prevent history from repeating itself,

by preventing and countering early sign of anti-Gypsyism, beginning with stigmatisation and hate speech. We also need to show solidarity with Roma and Sinti communities, defend their human rights and promote their inclusion. The Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly must be at the forefront of these efforts.” ...

<https://pace.coe.int/en/news/9563/-it-is-the-duty-of-european-societies-to-prevent-history-from-repeating-itself-by-countering-anti-gypsyism->

## Council of Europe

### **Why teaching Roma history – and the Roma Holocaust – is more important than ever**

Ahead of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day, 2 August, Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić, made the following statement:

“On the night of 2–3 August 1944, over 3,000 Roma women, men and children were exterminated in the gas chambers of the ‘Zigeunerlager’ at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

“Eighty years later, we honour the memory of the Roma victims of the Holocaust, a chapter of history that is too often overlooked. On this solemn day, we remember the Roma who were persecuted and murdered by the Nazi regime, estimated around 500,000. And we reaffirm our dedication to combating prejudice and discrimination in all forms.

“The Council of Europe has made strides to include the Roma Holocaust in school curricula and textbooks in our member states: a key objective set forth in our [Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion \(2020-2025\)](#). This initiative has promoted teaching of Roma history in general.

“To reinforce this effort, we launched this past spring a two-year joint EU-Council of Europe programme: [“Roma Holocaust Remembrance and Education” \(Roma Memory\)](#) to increase public knowledge across Europe.

“In addition, the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion is now providing member states, teachers and educators with several tools to teach Roma and Traveller history.

“Eighty years have passed since the Roma Holocaust. Survivors and witnesses of these atrocities will soon fade into memory. It is more important than ever to remain committed to everlasting remembrance. We pledge to stand against injustice and to build a world rooted in respect, understanding, and equality. May the legacy of the Roma victims of the Holocaust inspire us to create a better, more inclusive future.”

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/why-teaching-roma-history-and-the-roma-holocaust-is-more-important-than-ever>

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## Israel

*See also the statement from the Court of the University of St Andrews that is included in the Home Affairs section above.*

## House of Commons Written Answers

### **Palestine Solidarity Campaign**

**John Glen (Conservative)** [1236] To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Prime Minister plans to meet representatives of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign.

**Georgia Gould:** As was the practice under the previous Administration, details of the Prime Minister’s official engagements will be announced in the usual way.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-23/1236>

## Israeli Settlements

**Andy McDonald (Labour)** [1279] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential implications for his Department's policies of the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion entitled Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem of 19 July 2024 on Israel's settlement policy.

**Hamish Falconer:** We have received the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on Friday 19 July and are considering it carefully before responding. The UK respects the independence of the International Court of Justice. The government is absolutely clear on the fundamental importance of the international rule of law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-23/1279>

*The ICJ Advisory Opinion referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/186/186-20240719-adv-01-00-en.pdf>

## Palestinians: Human Rights

**Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat)** [1336] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will (a) sanction violent settlers who have committed human rights abuses against Palestinian communities in the West Bank and (b) sanction all entities connected to those settlers.

**Hamish Falconer:** The UK has already moved to sanction those responsible for violence in the West Bank and announced designations against eight extremist Israeli settlers perpetrating human rights abuses against Palestinian communities in the West Bank. The UK has also designated two groups known to have supported, incited and promoted violence against these communities.

The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution. The Foreign Secretary raised this with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Herzog during his visit to Israel and the OPTs on 14-15 July.

We do not comment on future sanctions designations as to do so would reduce their impact.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-23/1336>

## Gaza: Israel

**Andy McDonald (Labour)** [1278] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to his oral contribution of 19 July 2024, Official Report, column 307, if he will publish all assessments made by the Government on whether international law has been breached in Gaza since 7 October 2023 before the Summer recess.

**Hamish Falconer:** As the Foreign Secretary has made clear, he is not able to look back on advice made available to previous Government Ministers. That review process is underway. It is complex and requires careful consideration. The Foreign Secretary has committed to being transparent when making decisions on International Humanitarian Law assessments.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-23/1278>

*The oral contribution referred to above can be read at*

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-07-19/debates/CEEB9B68-0D16-45BD-85E3-AA2F02F415DE/IsraelAndGaza#contribution-5C85CCC7-3351-481D-AC49-4A9A3DE5BADE>

## Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

**David Lammy** It's been 300 days since 7 October – the deadliest attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust. Many who were brutally abducted and taken hostage remain in captivity. Today we renew our call for an immediate ceasefire and for Hamas to release all hostages now.

<https://x.com/DavidLammy/status/1818980053717266705>

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### **The UK is deeply concerned by the escalation of tensions in the Middle East: UK statement at the UN Security Council**

The UK is deeply concerned by the escalation of tensions in the Middle East and the impact this may have on regional security and stability. I will make three points.

First, escalation and a cycle of endless violence is in no-one's interests. We do not want to see further bloodshed. We urge calm and call for immediate restraint.

Our Foreign Secretary is in the region as we speak, reiterating this call and encouraging de-escalation.

The path to peace must be through diplomatic negotiations. Long-term peace will not be secured by bombs and bullets.

Second, in recent weeks we have seen reckless attacks launched by the Houthis against Tel Aviv killing one person and Hezbollah rockets fired on innocent children in Majdal Shams resulting in at least 12 deaths and many more injured.

We have repeatedly been clear in this Council of Iran's role in destabilising the region through its use of proxies including Lebanese Hezbollah and the Houthis. These attacks are enabled by the continued supply of advanced weaponry by Iran, especially missiles, to proxy groups. This must cease.

The UK is resolute in our commitment to Israel's security. We support Israel's right to defend itself in the face of such aggression, in line with international humanitarian law.

Third, since October 7 last year, we have seen the terrible toll on Israelis, Palestinians and many others in the region. The humanitarian situation in Gaza is truly appalling with nearly 40,000 Palestinians killed. The impact of this devastation is particularly acute for women and children.

The attempts by Iran and their proxies to use the suffering of those in Gaza as justification for further violence is perverse and we reject them entirely. We support all ongoing efforts to bring stability to the region and an end to the suffering. We reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, to protect civilians, get all the hostages out, get more aid in and open a pathway towards long-term peace. This will require the parties to commit to a renewed peace process resulting in a two-state solution with a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-uk-is-deeply-concerned-by-the-escalation-of-tensions-in-the-middle-east-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council>

## United Nations

### **Deadly Attacks in South Beirut, Tehran 'Dangerous Escalation' Secretary-General Says, Urging Vigorous Work to Prevent Pushing Entire Middle East over the Edge**

... The Secretary-General believes that the attacks we have seen in South Beirut and Teheran represent a dangerous escalation at a moment in which all efforts should instead be leading to a ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all Israeli hostages, a massive increase of humanitarian aid for Palestinians in Gaza and a return to calm in Lebanon and across the Blue Line.

Rather than that, what we are seeing are efforts to undermine these goals. The Secretary-General has consistently called for maximum restraint by all. It is increasingly clear, however, that restraint alone is insufficient at this extremely sensitive time. The Secretary-General urges all to vigorously work towards regional de-escalation in the interest of long-term peace and stability for all.

The international community must work together to urgently prevent any actions that could push the entire Middle East over the edge, with a devastating impact on civilians. The way to do so is by advancing comprehensive diplomatic action for regional de-escalation.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22322.doc.htm>

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### **Briefing Security Council In Wake of Hamas Leader Ismail Haniyeh's Killing in Tehran, Under-Secretary-General Calls for Regional De-escalation**

**Rosemary Dicarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs**, briefing the Council on alarming developments in the Middle East, said that, earlier today, Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas' political bureau, was killed, together with a bodyguard in Tehran. Mr. Haniyeh had been in Tehran, at the invitation of Iran's Government, to attend the inauguration ceremony of the new President, Masoud Pezeshkian. In a letter to the Council President today, Iran accused Israel of carrying out an attack that killed Mr. Haniyeh and claimed it was a "serious infringement" of Iran's sovereignty and territory integrity and constituted a "blatant violation" of international law. Iran's Supreme Leader and other senior officials have vowed to avenge Mr. Haniyeh's death, warning Israel of "harsh punishment ...

In a live broadcast to the nation ... Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel had launched strikes against three fronts, including Hamas, Hizbullah and the Houthis. He emphasized that Israel was fighting an existential war with Iran. ... "While violence continues unabated in Gaza after months of relentless diplomatic efforts, the situation across the Blue Line and inside Lebanon is on an increasingly worrying path," she said. In a tragic incident on 27 July, 12 children were killed, and dozens injured in an apparent strike on a soccer field in the Druze village of Majdal Shams in the Israeli-occupied Golan. She said that according to Israel Defense Forces, an Iranian-made Falaq-1 rocket was fired by Hizbullah from north of Shebaa village in southern Lebanon. The strike — for which Hizbullah denied responsibility — followed months of increasingly intense exchanges across the Blue Line with Lebanon and hundreds of aerial attacks toward Israel from various locations across the region that Israel has attributed to Iran-backed forces. On 30 July, the Israel Defense Forces issued a statement claiming a "targeted strike" in Beirut on a Hizbullah commander allegedly responsible for the deaths in Majdal Shams. Hizbullah confirmed that a senior commander, Fuad Shukr — also known as Hajj Mohsin — was killed. ...

She observed that the various attacks over the past few days have taken place amidst the ongoing war and a catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, where Hamas continues to hold hostages abducted from Israel on 7 October 2023. Most recently, on 27 July, an Israeli strike, killing dozens, including children, took place on a school in Deir al Balah where thousands of displaced Palestinians were sheltering. ...

Diplomatic efforts to change the trajectory and seek a path towards regional peace and stability are urgently needed, she said, stressing that "communication by means of missiles, armed drones and other deadly attacks must end". ...

**The representative of China**, condemning the assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh, said it is "a blatant attempt to sabotage peace efforts" and a violation of State sovereignty and territorial integrity. ...

**The representative of Algeria** condemned the assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh by Israel as "not merely an attack on one man", but "a vicious assault on



the very foundations of diplomatic relations, the sanctity of State sovereignty and the principles that underpin our global order”. ...

**The representative of the United States** underscored Israel’s right to defend itself against attacks from Hizbullah and other terrorists. “That is precisely what it did” on 30 July when it independently responded to Hizbullah’s 28 July attack, which killed 12 children. Washington, D.C., was not involved with Israel’s response on 30 July in Lebanon. Hizbullah is not the only Iranian-backed group in the region taking advantage of the situation in Gaza to undermine regional peace and security. The Houthis are brazenly violating international law with their attacks on commercial and merchant vessels in the Red Sea. The United States was not involved in the apparent death of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and has no independent confirmation as to Hamas’ claims regarding his death, he said. ...

**The representative of France**, expressing alarm about the possibility of a conflagration in the Middle East, said Iran must stop supporting destabilizing actors. ... Calling for an immediate ceasefire, and the release of all hostages, she stressed that only a two-State solution is viable.

**The representative of the United Kingdom** urged calm and called for immediate restraint ... “The path to peace must be through diplomatic negotiations,” she said, adding: “Long-term peace will not be secured by bombs and bullets.” She noted Iran’s role in destabilizing the region through its use of proxies including Lebanese Hizbullah and the Houthis ...

[\[click here to read this speech in full\]](#)

**The representative of Japan** ...condemn[ed] the reported rocket attack on 27 July that killed 12 children and youth and wounded many others in the Golan Heights. Noting Israel’s air strike in Beirut on 30 July, as well as the news of the killing of Hamas’ leader Ismail Haniyeh last night, she stated: “Let us not forget that the conflict began with the heinous 7 October 2023 attack on Israel and the taking of hostages by Hamas and other groups.” The ensuing hostilities in Gaza have caused unimaginable suffering for Palestinians and the fighting has reverberated across the region, from the West Bank to Lebanon to Yemen to Syria to Iran, she said ...

**The representative of Switzerland** ... said all actors and those who have influence over them must show utmost restraint ... adding that there is no military solution to the conflict. ...

**The representative of the Russian Federation** ... condemn[ed] the assassination of Hamas’ political leader Ismail Haniyeh. This provocation attack was carried out at a time when he was in Iran, officially invited to participate in the inauguration ceremony of the new President, Masoud Pezeshkian. “Those who are behind this political assassination must know how dangerous the consequences could be for the entire region,” he cautioned, noting that this is “a serious blow to mediation negotiations between Hamas and Israel towards a ceasefire in Gaza”. He warned against efforts to drag Iran into a regional confrontation, noting that it will destabilize a region that is already at a boiling point, stressing that “the key to de-escalation is an end to the bloodshed in Gaza”.

**The representative of Iran** condemned Israel’s assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, the great leader of the Palestinian people’s legitimate struggle for self-determination. Mr. Haniyeh was in Teheran on official invitation from his Government to attend the inauguration of the country’s new President ... This is yet another manifestation of Israel’s decades-long pattern of terrorism targeting Palestinians and their supporters, he said. But, in addition to its terrorist objective, Israel was “also pursuing a political goal with this act”, aiming to disrupt the first day of his country’s new Government ...

For nearly 10 months, he said, certain countries, particularly the United States, have shielded Israel from any responsibility for the massacre in Gaza and other malicious activities in the region. These countries have not only denied the right of Palestinian resistance groups to self-defence against Israeli atrocities, but have also shamelessly justified the Israeli genocide under the pretext of self-defence. “Palestinian resistance

groups like Hamas and other resistance groups in the region are not terrorists,” he stressed, adding that they are legitimate groups under international law, established to fight against occupation. ...

**The Deputy Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine** condemned the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, former Palestinian Prime Minister and head of the Political Bureau of Hamas, in Tehran on 31 July, as “the criminal breach” of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iran. ... She also condemned the repeated breaches by Israel of the territorial integrity of Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, including Tuesday’s brazen attack on Beirut. Israel openly declares its intentions to carry on with its scorched-earth killing and destruction spree in Gaza, mocking the Security Council, General Assembly and the international community as a whole. The international community must confront this reality and act immediately to stop these crimes and aggressions, she said ...

The Council and all States should uphold their responsibilities and obligations to end Israel’s genocide against the Palestinian people, she asserted, urging them to prevent the former’s continued violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States in the region and avert a regional war. She also called for desperately needed humanitarian relief for Palestinians, full accountability for all the crimes perpetrated, and support for the Palestinian people to end the illegal occupation and apartheid regime. ...

**The representative of Israel** ... said this meeting has been called for by “the number one sponsor of terrorism”, responsible for the most horrifying barbarism across the region — Iran. Tehran has used its proxies — Hamas and Hizbullah — to target Israel and its citizens from every direction. Just last week, children were innocently playing soccer in the Druze town of Majdal Shams when an Iranian-supplied Hizbullah rocket murdered 12 of them. “Where were the condemnations of Hizbullah and their Iranian supplier for the butchery of these innocent children?”, he asked.

Yesterday, Israel carried out a precise strike against Hizbullah commander Fu’ad Shukr — a senior terrorist with the blood of Israelis and many others on his hands. This operation sends a clear message: “We will defend ourselves and respond with great force against those who harm us.” ... Detailing Iran’s arms supplies to Hizbullah and Hamas, he underscored that the country uses its proxies to the detriment of Israel. ...

**The representative of Syria** said that a few days ago, the Israeli occupying entity perpetrated a horrific crime in Majdal Shams, which is Syrian and not Israeli. Stressing that it has been part of the occupied Syrian Golan since 1967, he said this resulted in the death of 12 Syrian children. The occupying authorities have tried to shirk responsibility and cover up this crime, he said, rejecting all such lies, and reaffirming that the occupied Syrian Golan has and always will be his country’s territory. The occupied citizens in that territory are Arab Syrians and they reject Israeli occupation, he said. ...

The Zionist entity has perpetrated yet another crime in Tehran this morning, he said ... Expressing solidarity with other States facing Israeli aggression, he said that such actions could lead to a conflagration in the region. The genocide perpetrated by Israel in Gaza in the last 10 months has targeted hospitals, journalists and hundreds of United Nations workers. The war criminals from Israel would not have been able to continue their war crimes without the double standards of Western States, he added. ...

**The representative of Lebanon** said that Israel’s aggression reached “our capital, Beirut”. The culprit is the Government of Israel and its Prime Minister. The victim is “your ceasefire resolution”. The objective is to drag Israel’s allies into a regional war with disastrous consequences on peoples and countries, and on the present and the future. “Lebanon and its people do not want war,” he said ...

... Israel must withdraw from lands that it continues to occupy and stop violating Lebanon’s sovereignty by ground, sea and air, he asserted, warning that Tuesday’s aggression by Israel targeting the southern suburb of Beirut is “the most dangerous chapter of the conflict so far”. He also condemned Israel’s assassination operation in Tehran “only hours” after the attack on the Beirut suburb. ...

**The representative of Iraq** underscored that the 7 October 2023 attacks could not be seen separately from Israel's occupation ... For decades, the international community has used every track to end the Israeli occupation and its aggressive policies against the Palestinian people. ... Israel's aggression against Palestine, Lebanon and Syria "is no longer self-defence" — as claimed by that country — but a reprisal and genocide. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15782.doc.htm>

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## Foreign Affairs

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### **Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief**

**The Lord Bishop of Winchester** [HL154] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to appoint a Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, in line with recommendation 6 of the 'Truro' Review of 2019.

**Lord Collins of Highbury:** The Government will champion freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all abroad. No one should live in fear because of what they do or do not believe in. Envoy roles will be decided upon in due course. In the meantime, we will use the strength of our global diplomatic network, including dedicated staff within the FCDO, to promote and protect FoRB around the world.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-07-18/hl154>

*The Bishop of Truro's Review, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://christianpersecutionreview.org.uk/storage/2019/07/final-report-and-recommendations.pdf>

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

### UK Parliament

#### **Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3741>

#### **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**

**Independent review into civil unrest in Leicester 2022** (closing date 5 August 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/independent-review-into-civil-unrest-in-leicester-2022/independent-review-into-civil-unrest-in-leicester-2022>

**£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>

**Equality and Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan 2025-2028** (closing date 3 October 2024)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/our-strategic-plan-consultation-2025-2028>

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