



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

UK statement in response to IDF military operation in the Occupied West Bank, August

The UK is deeply concerned by the ongoing IDF military operation in the occupied West Bank.

We recognise Israel's need to defend itself against security threats, but we are deeply worried by the methods Israel has employed and by reports of civilian casualties and the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

The risk of instability is serious and the need for de-escalation urgent. We continue to call on Israeli authorities to exercise restraint, adhere to international law, and clamp down on the actions of those who seek to inflame tensions. The UK strongly condemns settler violence and inciteful remarks such as those made by Israel's National Security Minister Ben-Gvir, which threaten the status-quo of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem.

It is in no one's interest for further conflict and instability to spread in the West Bank.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-statement-in-response-to-idf-military-operation-in-the-occupied-west-bank-august-2024>

The UN are running out of safe places for their staff: UK statement at the UN Security Council

The UK, alongside Switzerland, called this humanitarian meeting after yet another alarming warning from the UN.

The situation in Gaza is intolerable and worsens with each day that passes. Over 100 hostages remain trapped in Gaza, subject to unimaginable horror. We reiterate our call for Hamas to immediately release them, and for ICRC to be granted humanitarian access.

And Palestinian children, already suffering, are now facing the imminent threat of a major polio outbreak caused by the devastation of water and sanitation services, as well as widespread malnutrition and famine risk in Gaza.

A ten-month old baby has already been paralysed by this disease – the first such case for 25 years. This is a tragedy that could have been prevented.

As we've heard, the UN plans to deliver vaccines as soon as this weekend. We strongly

welcome Israel's agreement for pauses on military operations so that the WHO and health agencies can deliver a safe and effective campaign. ...

Israel's ramping up of short-notice evacuation orders, including in areas that should provide safe refuge, is causing more chaos, again leaving Palestinians with no safe place to turn.

The UN Department of Safety and Security this week warned us that the UN too are running out of safe places for its staff. They cannot deliver desperately needed aid when IDF mass evacuation orders force them to uproot their homes and offices with just a few hours' notice.

Israel must minimise evacuation orders and provide sufficient notice of at least 48 hours. And despite repeated calls by this Council for deconfliction and the protection of aid operations, we continue to see appalling and unacceptable attacks on UN and aid convoys. ... Just this week, the UN confirmed the IDF opened fire on a World Food Programme truck which had been fully coordinated with Israel and had UN workers inside. Israel must take immediate steps to protect aid workers. And if its personnel are responsible for incidents, hold them accountable. ...

Sadly, President, it is not only in Gaza where we are witnessing violence. We are deeply concerned by rising levels of violence in the West Bank. Over 130 Palestinians, including 26 children, have been killed this month alone. We join the Secretary General in calling for urgent de-escalation.

Colleagues, the only way to bring an end to this suffering is an immediate ceasefire. ... We must then see irreversible steps towards a two-state solution, the best means of ensuring long term peace for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-un-are-running-out-of-safe-places-for-their-staff-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council>

Scottish Government FoI Release

Correspondence regarding Ukraine, Israel and Palestine

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-202400401396/>

and

<https://tinyurl.com/5n7tzj3v>

and

<https://tinyurl.com/3d6vdsu9>

and

<https://tinyurl.com/p88bmzut>

and

<https://tinyurl.com/bdz5ae5c>

United Nations

Secretary-General Calls for 'Immediate Cessation' of Military Operations in Occupied West Bank

The Secretary-General is deeply concerned by the latest developments in the occupied West Bank, including Israel's launch today of large-scale military operations in Jenin, Tulkarm and Tubas governorates, involving the use of air strikes, which resulted in casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure. He strongly condemns the loss of lives, including of children.

The Secretary-General calls for an immediate cessation of these operations.

He calls on Israel to comply with its relevant obligations under international humanitarian

law and to take measures to protect civilians and ensure their safety. He urges security forces to exercise maximum restraint and use lethal force only when it is strictly unavoidable to protect life.

All those injured must have access to medical care, and humanitarian workers must be able to reach everyone in need.

These dangerous developments are fuelling an already explosive situation in the occupied West Bank and further undermining the Palestinian Authority.

The Secretary-General is also deeply concerned by the recent dangerous and provocative acts and statements by an Israeli Minister at the holy sites in Jerusalem. He stresses the importance of maintaining the status quo at the sites.

Ultimately, only an end to the occupation and a return to a meaningful political process that will establish a two-State solution will bring an end to the violence. The United Nations will continue to work with all parties towards this end, to seek a de-escalation of the current situation and promote stability in the region.

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sqsm22345.doc.htm>

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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

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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