



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024>

Data tables

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6706280092bb81fcdbe7b533/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2023-to-2024-data-tables.ods>

Appendix tables

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670628b5e84ae1fd8592f01b/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2023-to-2024-appendix-tables.ods>

Welsh Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Evidence session with the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales

191 Christopher Catling [Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales]: ... We have two governing documents, if you like, at the royal commission. One is the royal warrant itself, which, if I could summarise in a sentence, requires us to make an inventory of the buildings and monuments of Wales that illustrate the life of the people of Wales at all times in the past. So, that's our core duty: to create an inventory. ... At the same time, we have a remit letter from Welsh Government and a set of key performance indicators that, I'm afraid, don't really address that core warrant duty. They are social objectives. They are objectives to do with young people, older people, community cohesion, apprenticeships, social prescribing, promotion of the Welsh language—I could go on, there are many others. All of which are extremely worthy

objectives, but I think the assumption is that we can just deliver those as a by-product of the core duty, but of course that's not the case. ...

227 And one example of that is that, currently, I think there's an expectation that the royal commission will be the body that goes out and records every building that is going to be demolished or substantially altered—partial or total demolition. We have one and a half people to do that. Wales is going to lose 500 places of worship in the next 10 years—just do the maths. We can't record all those buildings. So, we are thinking hard about how we delegate that work to other people, and what we're trying to do is encourage local conservation officers to place a recording condition on listed building consent, and then use the private sector to do the recording work and then we get the results into the national monuments record, where they're available for everybody to consult. So, that's an example of creative and different thinking. ...

296 I mentioned the loss of places of worship just now. The National Lottery is very concerned about places of worship and their future, and we're trying to undertake an audit to find out what the different denominations are planning in terms of church and chapel closure over the next 10 years, and what their needs are. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://record.senedd.wales/Committee/14121#C617313>

TOP

Holocaust

The Royal Family

The Royal Family A message of condolence from His Majesty The King following the passing of Lily Ebert MBE, Holocaust survivor and educator.

It was with the greatest sadness that I heard this morning the news of Lily Ebert's death. As a survivor of the unmentionable horrors of the Holocaust, I am so proud that she later found a home in Britain where she continued to tell the world of the horrendous atrocities she had witnessed, as a permanent reminder of our generation – and, indeed, for future generations – of the depths of depravity and evil to which humankind can fall, when reason, compassion and truth are abandoned. Alongside other Holocaust survivors she became an integral part of the fabric of our nation; her extraordinary resilience and courage an example to us all, which will never be forgotten.

<https://x.com/RoyalFamily/status/1844025026473082963>

Downing Street

Keir Starmer On behalf of the whole country, I want to send my deepest condolences on the passing of the extraordinary Lily Ebert.

Lily represented everything that was best about humanity. I think of her message of tolerance and hope; her courage to share her story and relive the horrors of her experience so that we might learn; her creativity and restless determination to be heard, which even led to her becoming a global star on TikTok. She was without doubt, one of this country's greatest centenarians.

In Auschwitz, Lily made her now famous promise that if she survived, she would tell the world what happened. She kept that promise in the most remarkable way. With her passing today, we must now keep our promise to her. Together we will ensure that Lily's message echoes eternally across the generations – and that the Holocaust is never forgotten and never again repeated.

Israel

See also Commons written answer 6220 “Yemen: Military Intervention” that is included in the Foreign Affairs section below.

House of Lords Grant Committee Debate

Strategic Defence Review

col 225GC Lord Stirrup (Crossbench): ... The necessity for significantly improved deterrent capability within NATO reaffirms the importance of the north Atlantic link, but that will be of little avail if the UK end of that link is not secure. At the moment, we could not counter the kind of missile attacks that Iran has launched against Israel. Æ

col 230GC Lord De Mauley (Conservative): ... Over the last couple of years, the global security environment has changed dramatically. ... we are witnessing a period of growing instability. ... In the Middle East, the conflict between Israel, Hamas and Hezbollah threatens to escalate into a wider regional war, potentially drawing in Iran. ...

col 234GC Baroness Helic (Conservative): ... There are more simultaneous conflicts today than in any period since the Second World War. We see autocracies acting in a more power-hungry and aggressive way than at any time in recent history. We are witnessing widespread disregard for human rights and international law that, far from coincidentally, overlaps with a rise in mass killings, atrocities and disasters. We are seeing the accelerating development and deployment of new technology on the battlefield, including the reported use of autonomous weapons systems in the conflict in Gaza, in ways that are contributing to the perception of the unravelling of decades of norms and conventions regarding the protection of civilians. ...

col 237GC Lord Hogan-Howe (Crossbench): ... we have been at the forefront of the international community’s bid to support Ukraine and we must carry on in that relentless and ruthless endeavour to defeat Russia and the enemies of Israel, and to deter any further aggression across the world. The bullies in this world must know that we will face them down and that they will lose. ...

col 241GC Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer (Liberal Democrat): ... I have to mention the matter of nuclear weapons and Israel. Israel neither admits nor denies that it has nuclear weapons, and the USA and the UK have colluded in this ambiguity, but that moment has passed its sell-by date. As much as we may condemn Iran for trying to develop a nuclear capability, we must surely take the same stance towards Israel now. It is almost 40 years since Mordechai Vanunu bravely warned us of Israel’s capability. ...

col 243GC Lord Verdirame (Non-affiliated): ... More recently, we had the decision to suspend the 30 arms licences to Israel. The Government presented that decision as one required by law and published an assessment of their reasons for the decision. A very concerning aspect of that assessment is that they said that not a single instance of violation of the IHL rules on the conduct of hostilities was established, with or without British weapons. I think the noble Baroness, Lady Goldie, commented that it seems no longer to be the case that there should be concrete and specific evidence of a nexus between British weapons and violations. A legal arms embargo is different from a political one. Legal risk, unlike political risk, will eventually apply equally to everyone.

A key question for the review to consider is whether we are still a reliable arms exporter in

the eyes of our strategic partners. Countries considering buying British weapons may conclude that, if they are at war, they are unlikely to receive essential components of those weapons, as a result of our approach to policy, and may therefore decide to buy elsewhere. If we lose these contracts, we lose business; we weaken our industrial base; and, crucially, we lose influence. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2024-10-09/debates/020869F5-69AB-483A-99F3-194808B90DE8/StrategicDefenceReview>

House of Commons Oral Answer

Prime Minister's Questions

The Prime Minister (Keir Starmer): Earlier this week, the House marked the first anniversary of the horrific attacks on 7 October, and I take this opportunity to reiterate that the hostages must be released. I also reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-09/debates/6B709BDC-3894-4ECD-B7BF-CA133F85230E/Engagements#contribution-169033A1-2F64-4F6B-8033-42997C55ECEF>

House of Commons Written Answers

Israel: Arms Trade

Melanie Ward (Labour) [7152] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the possibility of arms supplied from the UK to Israel being used to be used to (a) commit and (b) facilitate serious violations of International humanitarian law in (i) the West Bank and (ii) Lebanon.

Hamish Falconer: The UK's robust export licensing criteria state that the Government will not issue export licences if there is a clear risk that the items might be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of International Humanitarian Law. Following the Government's decision on 2 September to suspend certain arms export licences to Israel for use in Gaza, there are currently no extant licences that we assess are for use in Lebanon or the West Bank, apart from the licences for the F-35 components which were exempted. We are clear that International Humanitarian Law must be upheld, and civilians protected.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7152>

Israel: F-35 Aircraft

Chris Law (SNP) [5587] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the potential risk of UK-made parts for the F-35 fighter aircraft that are re-exported to Israel being used in violations of international law.

Hamish Falconer: As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement to Parliament on 2 September 2024, following consideration of the detailed International Humanitarian Law (IHL) assessment, he concluded, and the Secretary of State for Business and Trade agreed, that there is a clear risk that military exports to Israel, where used for military operations in Gaza, might be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of IHL. That assessment includes components exported to the global F-35 programme that will ultimately be used in Israeli F-35s. In accordance with the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria (SELC), licences for items we assess might be used to carry out or facilitate Israeli military operations in the Gaza conflict

have therefore been suspended.

However, as set out in the Secretary of State for Business and Trade's statement, it is not currently possible to suspend licensing of F35 components for use by Israel without prejudicing the entire global F35 programme, including its broader strategic role in NATO and our support to Ukraine. Therefore, as announced to Parliament in that statement, the Foreign Secretary advised and the Secretary of State for Business and Trade agreed, that to ensure international peace and security it was necessary to take the specific measure of excluding exports to the F-35 program from the scope of the suspension, but this exclusion should not in principle apply to licences for F-35 components which could be identified as going to Israel. Departing from the Strategic Export Licencing Criteria to exclude F-35 licences from the scope of the suspension decision is consistent with HMG's published policy, which states that the application of the SELC is *"without prejudice to the application to specific cases of specific measures as may be announced to Parliament from time to time."*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-09-12/5587>

The Foreign Secretary's statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

The Secretary of State for Business and Trade's statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/24090222000013/ExportsToIsraelMilitaryOperationsInGaza>

The Strategic Export Licencing Criteria and associated published policy, referred to above, can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-12-08/hcws449>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Israel: Military Intelligence

Jeremy Corbyn (Independent) [5252] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what (a) intelligence the Government is sharing with Israel on the potential location of remaining UK national hostages in Gaza and (b) other intelligence the Government is sharing with Israel gathered from surveillance flights from RAF Akrotiri.

Israel: Surveillance

Jeremy Corbyn (Independent) [5253] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment the Government has made of the potential impact of Israel's use of surveillance data provided by the UK on the UK's role in ensuring adherence to international law.

Luke Pollard: The unarmed UK surveillance aircraft are employed solely to support hostage rescue. Only information relating to hostage rescue will be passed to the relevant Israeli authorities responsible for hostage rescue.

We are unable comment further on detailed intelligence matters for operational security reasons.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-09-11/5252>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-09-11/5253>

House of Commons Library Briefing

Israel-Hezbollah conflict 2023/24: UK and international response

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10108/CBP-10108.pdf>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Richard Burgon (Independent) [221] UN's resolution on Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine and sanctions – That this House welcomes the UN General Assembly's decision to overwhelmingly adopt a resolution on 18 September calling for Israel to rapidly end its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT); further welcomes that the UN resolution calls on states to comply with their obligations under international law and to take concrete steps to address Israel's unlawful presence in the OPT; notes this includes calling on states not to act in ways that provide aid or assistance that help maintain Israel's illegal presence in the OPT, to cease importing products originating from Israeli settlements, to halt arms transfers to Israel where there are reasonable grounds to suspect they may be used in the OPT, to implement sanctions including travel bans and asset freezes against those involved in maintaining Israel's unlawful presence in the OPT, and to take steps to prevent all other trade that aids or assists the illegal occupation; further notes the UN General Assembly's resolution follows an International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion that Israel's decades-long occupation violates international law and which calls on states not to act in ways that maintain this unlawful situation; believes the adoption of this resolution places new obligations on the Government; and calls on the Government to act in support of the UN resolution and ICJ opinion including by ending all military exports to Israel, banning the import of goods from illegal Israeli settlements and revoking the 2030 Roadmap which deepens UK economic, trade and security ties with Israel.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/62551>

The UN Resolution referred to above can be read at

<https://undocs.org/en/A/ES-10/L.31/Rev.1>

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>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Israel must ensure that humanitarian workers can operate safely: UK statement at the UN Security Council

... Now more than ever we need strong voices to speak up for the humanitarian community ...

We are now one year on from the events of 7 October 2023 and Hamas's brutal terrorist attack against Israel; the darkest day in Jewish history since the Holocaust. As my Prime Minister has said, we honour those lost and continue in our determination to ensure the return of those still held hostage.

Sadly, the anguish did not end on the 7th of October. Each and every day since then, we have seen civilians suffer on a dreadful scale.

We call upon Hamas and Israel to agree a ceasefire deal which would see the release of the hostages, more aid entering Gaza, and an opportunity to begin the work of reconstruction and progress towards a Palestinian state. We also call upon Hamas to stop endangering civilians.

With the conflict now having spread into Lebanon, we reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire between Lebanese Hizbollah and Israel, and for diplomacy to take the place of violence.

President, while we continue to push for regional de-escalation, it is vital that we do not lose sight of the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Almost 42,000 people have been killed, according to Palestinian health officials. The majority of critical civilian infrastructure is damaged or destroyed. And civilians live in constant fear of air strikes. More women and children have now been killed this year in

Gaza than in any other global conflict in the last two decades.

Despite Israel's commitment to flood Gaza with aid, the number of humanitarian trucks entering Gaza last month was the lowest we have seen since the start of the year. This is unacceptable and must be addressed immediately.

Restrictions imposed by Israel have also led to the significant drops in the flow of commercial goods, and these shortages are driving looting and attacks on aid convoys.

Humanitarian aid is therefore not reaching those who need it most, particularly in northern Gaza, which is at risk of being completely cut off. As winter approaches, it is critical that Israel takes action to change this.

As we have repeatedly said in this Council, Israel must do much more to avoid civilian casualties and ensure the UN and its humanitarian partners can operate safely and effectively.

We are concerned by any efforts to undermine the UN or UNRWA, which plays an indispensable role.

The UK fully supports the Secretary General, UNRWA and the wider UN as they seek to secure peace through diplomacy and help the people of the Middle East. That is why my government restored funding to UNRWA, to support its vital work and to implement the recommendations of the Colonna Report.

President, what the people of Gaza need more than anything is an immediate ceasefire. We urge Israel and Hamas to return to the table and secure a deal which would achieve this.

As my Prime Minister has said, the United Kingdom will not falter in our pursuit of peace and our determination to secure a better future for the region.

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/israel-must-ensure-that-humanitarian-workers-can-operate-safely-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council>

Scottish Parliament Debate

Brighton Bomb Blast (40th Anniversary)

17.56 Murdo Fraser (Conservative): ... There is perhaps a certain symmetry to the fact that we are holding a debate to recognise that anniversary just a couple of days after the first anniversary of the horrific terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas—Israel being the only fully functioning democracy in the middle east. However, whatever the terrorist organisation—the IRA, Hamas, Hezbollah or any other—we should be very clear that terrorism must always be confronted and must not be allowed to succeed. As we reflect on the memory and sacrifice of those who were killed in the Brighton bombing 40 years ago, we should all hold fast to that principle and resolve that democracy must prevail. ...

17.59 Christine Grahame (SNP): ... there were wrongs and cruelties on all sides and an abject failure of politics, which, as ever, even today in Israel, Gaza and Lebanon, mean death and injury, with ordinary people caught in the middle. ...

https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/official-report/search-what-was-said-in-parliament/meeting-of-parliament-09-10-2024?meeting=16044&iob=137010#orscontributions_M3896E381P717C2621357

United Nations

Secretary-General Appoints Tom Fletcher of United Kingdom Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres today announced the appointment of Tom Fletcher of the United Kingdom as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. He succeeds Martin Griffiths of the United Kingdom, to whom the Secretary-General is deeply grateful for his outstanding work, dedicated service and long-standing commitment to the Organization. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sqa2322.doc.htm>

Israeli Efforts to Dismantle Palestinian Refugee Agency's Life-Saving Operations in Gaza Would Be Disastrous, Senior Officials, Speakers Warn Security Council

One year after Hamas' attack on Israel and the resulting military response — now extending to Lebanon — senior UN officials warned the Security Council today that efforts to dismantle the United Nations' presence in Gaza and its surrounds would be disastrous for the people in need there, as speakers urged the Council to act.

"Gaza is unrecognizable," said Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), detailing the dire situation in the Strip. ... [\[click here to read this speech in greater detail\]](#)

Echoing that was **Lisa Doughten, Director of the Finance and Partnerships Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**, who said that ongoing legislation to stop UNRWA's activities would be disastrous for the provision of aid and essential services to millions of Palestinians. "If approved, such legislation would be diametrically opposed to the UN Charter and in violation of Israel's obligations under international law," she stressed. ...

Spotlighting the consequences for women and children, she relayed UNRWA's reports that 10 children are losing one or both of their legs each day in the Strip. ...

In the ensuing discussion, Member States underscored UNRWA's indispensable and irreplaceable role in providing humanitarian assistance. ...

Some speakers — including **the United States' representative** — also sounded alarm over legislation before the Knesset that could alter UNRWA's legal status. "This legislative proposal reflects the significant distrust between Israel and UNRWA," she observed. Israel must provide additional information regarding the allegation that Hamas is misusing UNRWA facilities, while the Agency needs to address these concerns. "It is in no one's interest for the neutrality of UNRWA personal to remain in doubt," she added.

Going further, **the representative of the Russian Federation** said that, if the bills before the Knesset are adopted, they will threaten the prospects of providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees in neighbouring Arab States. ...

The representative of Switzerland ... said that, following the first phase of the polio-vaccination campaign, the UN and its specialized agencies — including WHO and UNICEF — have demonstrated that they can fulfil their humanitarian aid mission.

"Israel must do much more to avoid civilian casualties," stressed **the representative of the United Kingdom**, recalling that her Government has restored UNRWA's funding. And while States should continue pushing for regional de-escalation, she said they should not lose sight of the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. ... [\[click here to read this speech in greater detail\]](#)

"You keep repeating yourselves, and one country is not listening to you," **the Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine** pointed out, adding: "You don't have teeth, you are not using the tools available to you in order to make them listen to you." Stating that Israel's unprecedented attacks against the UN, its Secretary-General and UNRWA must be understood in the context of its desire to seize control of Gaza and force it into submission, he observed: "If your aim is to make Gaza unliveable, then you must attack the backbone of the humanitarian response in Gaza."

Noting that the same failure to stop Israeli atrocities in Palestine is being repeated in Lebanon, he asked: “Did you grow accustomed to our death?” A firefighter does not negotiate with an arsonist; he prevents him from spreading the fire ...

Israel’s representative ... stated: “If any Council members want the discussion to be productive, every conversation should centre around a simple truth – the future of Gaza must be a future without Hamas.” Hamas has exploited the suffering of Palestinians, he said, “using the misery in Gaza as a propaganda tool while they line their pockets and boost their arsenals”. Stressing that his country imposes no restrictions on humanitarian aid, he said that 82 per cent of all requests for humanitarian coordination have been approved and implemented.

“We are willing and able to work on the ground,” he emphasized, urging those present to then “compare our efforts to the failures of UNRWA”, which has allowed Hamas to infiltrate its ranks to the point where the Agency “is simply beyond repair”. He also insisted that “while Israel fights to protect and uplift civilians, UNRWA leaves them and allows them to suffer”. However, “the real evils — Hamas, Hizbullah and their puppet-masters in Tehran — continue to sow terror and death”. ...

Taking the floor a second time as the meeting drew to a close, **the Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine** said: “I am not asking the Israeli Government]to condemn the killing of Palestinian civilians. I am telling your Government to stop killing them.”

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15849.doc.htm>

World Must Not Turn Blind Eye to Trampling of Women’s Rights in Middle East War, under Taliban Rule in Afghanistan, Delegates Tell Third Committee

The international community must not look away from the trampling of women’s rights in Gaza, Lebanon and Afghanistan, delegates told the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) ...

“As we speak, Palestinian women and girls endure unspeakable suffering —killed, maimed, displaced, starved, detained and traumatized,” said **Türkiye’s delegate**, adding that in the past year alone, over 40,000 civilians have been killed in Gaza, 70 per cent of whom are women and children. At least 97,000 Palestinians — mostly women and children — have been wounded and denied access to adequate medical care. Food insecurity has reached critical levels, especially for pregnant women, new mothers and their infants, who are among the most vulnerable, he said, calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon.

In that same vein, **the representative of the United Arab Emirates** underscored that the international community “cannot turn a blind eye to the immense pain and suffering experienced by communities across the Middle East, particularly women and girls in Palestine and Lebanon”. Calling for a permanent ceasefire to stop the “cruel war on Gaza”, she reaffirmed her country’s commitment to provide gender-responsive humanitarian assistance, including sanitary and maternity kits, to the conflict zones.

For her part, **the observer for the State of Palestine** said that Israel has used deliberate targeting of civilians — particularly women and children — in Gaza as a weapon of war. “[evacuation orders are not meant to protect lives,” she asserted, adding that “they are only a tactic to inflict more suffering, forcibly displace, maximize Palestinian losses and exacerbate collective punishment of the entire population”. Israel “has invented pretexts in an attempt to convince you they had a reason to pull the plug off infant incubators in Gaza, to sexually harass Palestinian women held illegally in Israeli prisons and threaten them with gang rape, to demolish schools and destroy universities”, she said, urging it to end its aggression and unlawful occupation without delay.

The representative of Israel rejected the “repeated lies” during today’s discussion. The

current situation in the Middle East is due to the 7 October attacks committed by the terrorist organization Hamas, she said. On that day, 1,200 people were murdered, including women and children, the elderly and Holocaust survivors, and 251 were abducted. “Hamas sent its people to sexually torture and rape women and girls,” and since 2023 Israeli women and girls held by Hamas are denied any humanitarian assistance, she said. While Israel is fighting on seven fronts to protect its citizens from Hamas’ “sworn annihilation of the State of Israel,” Hamas ignores efforts to reach a ceasefire — instead of protecting its people. Rejecting the idea of discussing the advancement of women and girls while the 101 hostages are still held in Hamas tunnels, she called on the international community to ensure their unconditional and immediate release. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/gashc4408.doc.htm>

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Increased Protection of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/appeals/Occupied-Palestinian-Territory-Increased-Protection-The-1-en.pdf>

UNRWA

Statement of Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, at the United Nations Security Council

I deeply regret that one year after the abhorrent attacks against Israel, and the catastrophic war on Gaza, no end is in sight to the brutal violence engulfing the region.

It has been a year of profound loss and suffering.

A year of dehumanization and barbarism.

Hostages taken from Israel remain captive, their families left in deep and prolonged distress.

Gaza is unrecognizable.

A sea of rubble.

A graveyard for tens of thousands of people, including far too many children.

Almost the entire population is displaced.

People have been forced to flee multiple times, searching for safety that does not exist.

The latest developments in the north are especially alarming.

Hundreds of thousands of people are again being pushed to move to the south, where living conditions are intolerable.

And yet again, Gazans are teetering on the edge of a man-made famine.

Children in Gaza have not been spared.

They are killed, injured and orphaned in shocking numbers.

More than 650,000 children are out of school – deeply traumatized and living in the rubble.

They have already lost two years of learning.

Palestinians are no strangers to loss.

But to be dispossessed from education – which has always been a source of pride – is new.

We cannot afford to lose an entire generation and sow the seeds for future hatred and extremism. ...

Beyond Gaza, the West Bank is gripped by escalating violence.

Nearly 700 people have been killed in the past year. Among them, more than 160 children.

Civilian life is increasingly militarized, and settlement activity is expanding aggressively.

The Israeli Security Forces routinely destroy public infrastructure during military operations, inflicting collective punishment on Palestinians. Lebanon is the latest casualty of this widening conflict. Civilians are paying a heavy price. Air strikes by Israeli forces are killing and injuring thousands, and displacing hundreds of thousands, while Hezbollah continues to attack Israel with rockets. ... The need for the Agency's services in Gaza, the occupied West Bank, and Lebanon has never been greater. And we have never been under fiercer attack. ... Gaza is the most dangerous place in the world for aid workers – 226 UNRWA personnel have been killed in 12 months. United Nations premises, including two-thirds of UNRWA's buildings, have been damaged or destroyed. Our premises have also been used for military purposes by Palestinian armed groups, including Hamas, and the Israeli Security Forces. Humanitarian aid convoys are looted by armed gangs and obstructed by Israeli soldiers defying their own chain of command. ... Senior Israeli officials have described destroying UNRWA as a war goal. Legislation to end our operations is ready for final adoption by the Israeli Knesset. It seeks to ban UNRWA's presence and operations in the territory of Israel, revoking its privileges and immunities, in violation of international law. ... Coordination with Israel would cease, further disrupting the provision of shelter, food, and healthcare ... Legally, the Knesset legislation violates Israel's obligations under the United Nations Charter and international law. It defies the will of the international community expressed through General Assembly resolution 302 on UNRWA, and deepens violations recognized by the International Court of Justice. Politically, the anti-UNRWA legislation, which is part of a broader campaign to dismantle the Agency, seeks to strip Palestinians from their refugee status, and change – unilaterally – the parameters for a future political solution. ... Failing to push back against attempts to intimidate and undermine the United Nations in the occupied Palestinian territory will eventually compromise humanitarian and human rights work worldwide. ... UNRWA is an integral part of the United Nations, which anchors the multilateral system. I urge you to shield this UN agency from efforts to end its mandate, arbitrarily and prematurely, in the absence of a long-promised political solution. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/statement-philippe-lazzarini-commissioner-general-unrwa-united-nations-security-council>

General Assembly Resolution 302, referred to above, can be read at
<https://documents.un.org/doc/resolution/gen/nr0/051/21/pdf/nr005121.pdf>

UNIFIL

UNIFIL statement (10 October)

Recent escalation along the Blue Line is causing widespread destruction of towns and villages in south Lebanon, while rockets continue to be launched towards Israel, including civilian areas. In the past days we have seen incursions from Israel into Lebanon in Naqoura and other areas. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers have clashed with Hizbullah elements on the ground in Lebanon.

UNIFIL's Naqoura headquarters and nearby positions have been repeatedly hit.

This morning, two peacekeepers were injured after an IDF Merkava tank fired its weapon toward an observation tower at UNIFIL's headquarters in Naqoura, directly hitting it and causing them to fall. The injuries are fortunately, this time, not serious, but they remain in hospital.

IDF soldiers also fired on UN position (UNP) 1-31 in Labbouneh, hitting the entrance to the bunker where peacekeepers were sheltering, and damaging vehicles and a communications system. An IDF drone was observed flying inside the UN position up to the bunker entrance.

Yesterday, IDF soldiers deliberately fired at and disabled the position's perimeter-monitoring cameras. They also deliberately fired on UNP 1-32A in Ras Naqoura, where regular Tripartite meetings were held before the conflict began, damaging lighting and a relay station.

We remind the IDF and all actors of their obligations to ensure the safety and security of UN personnel and property and to respect the inviolability of UN premises at all times. UNIFIL peacekeepers are present in south Lebanon to support a return to stability under Security Council mandate. Any deliberate attack on peacekeepers is a grave violation of international humanitarian law and of Security Council resolution 1701.

We are following up with the IDF on these matters.

<https://unifil.unmissions.org/unifil-statement-10-october>

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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Foreign Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Yemen: Military Intervention

Mary Glendon (Labour) [6220] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the UK is carrying out airstrikes in Yemen.

Luke Pollard: The situation in the Red Sea remains extremely serious. The Houthis continue to conduct illegal and dangerous attacks that risk innocent lives, exacerbate the humanitarian suffering in Yemen, threaten regional security and harm the global economy.

In response to the Houthi attacks, the Royal Air Force conducted five self-defensive strikes against Houthi targets between January and May, acting alongside the United States, with non-operational support from Australia, Bahrain, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, and New Zealand.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6220>

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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>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3769>

Holocaust Memorial Bill

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

Palestine Statehood (Recognition)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3771>

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3765>

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-bil>

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

Northern Ireland Assembly: Inquiry into Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Schools (closing date 29 October 2024)

<https://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/committees/2022-2027/education/inquiries/inquiry-into-relationship-and-sexuality-education-rse-in-schools/>

Northern Ireland Executive: Draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 (closing date 4 November 2024)

<https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/PfG-consultation>

Curriculum and Assessment Review [England] (closing date 22 November 2024)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/curriculum-and-assessment-team/curriculum-and-assessment-review-call-for-evidence/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission Code of practice for services, public functions and associations (closing date 3 January 2025)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/code-practice-services-public-functions-and-associations-consultation>

Burial and Cremation [Law Commission] (closing date 9 January 2025)

<https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/burial-and-cremation/>

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