

# Political Affairs Digest

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*  
**Scottish Council of Jewish Communities**  
**SCoJeC**

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### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israeli Settlements

**Nicholas Soames** [63513] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Israeli Prime Minister on the building of settlements.

**Tobias Ellwood:** The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) met the Prime Minister of Israel on 6 February. They discussed the Middle East Peace Process and the UK's firm commitment to a two state solution. The Foreign Secretary restated the UK's position that settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are illegal and an obstacle to peace.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-02-07/63513/>

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Tommy Sheppard** [63570] To ask the Prime Minister, whether she discussed a two-state solution with the Prime Minister of Israel during his visit to the UK of February 2017.

**Theresa May:** During my meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel we discussed the Middle East Peace Process and the UK's firm commitment to a two-state solution as the best way to bring stability and peace to the region. I also reiterated the UK's opposition to settlement activity.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-02-08/63570/>

#### Nuclear Weapons: Israel

**Kelvin Hopkins** [63602] To ask the Prime Minister, whether she discussed matters relating to (a) Israel's nuclear weapons arsenal and (b) prospects of Israel joining the multilateral Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty with her Israeli counterpart during his visit of 6 February 2017.

**Theresa May:** During my meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel we committed to working together on a wide range of areas including defence and security. We discussed the important work our countries do together and committed to talk further about how we can deepen this cooperation.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-02-08/63602/>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### **Palestinians: Overseas Aid**

**Lord Hylton** [HL5253] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are planning to undertake a comprehensive review of the current needs of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, Jordan and Lebanon.

**Lord Bates:** The Secretary of State is currently conducting an examination of DFID's programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). It will look at how best to meet the needs of Palestinians, including refugees in the region.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5253/>

### **Palestinians**

**Lord Hylton** [HL5254] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are providing funding for (1) efforts to promote a comprehensive Palestinian negotiating team, and (2) Palestinian elections at all levels of government.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We have previously funded legal, policy and communications expertise for the Palestinian Liberation Organisation's Negotiations Affairs Department. This funding ended in 2015. We continue to advocate the resumption of bilateral negotiations to resolve the conflict in the Middle East.

We are not currently providing funding for Palestinian elections. Previously, we have supported women's participation, working with women to help prepare them to compete in elections, and to help them serve their communities most effectively when elected.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5254/>

### **Palestinians: Recognition of States**

**Lord Hylton** [HL5255] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their responsibilities under the Balfour Declaration of 1917 include the recognition of a Palestinian State as well as the Israeli one.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time most helpful to the peace process. We judge that a negotiated end to the occupation is the most effective way for Palestinian aspirations of statehood to be met. We continue to be one of the principal supporters of Palestinian state building efforts, assisting them to tackle poverty, build institutions, and boost their economy.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5255/>

### **Diplomatic Relations**

**Baroness Tonge** [HL5278] To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the apology issued by the Israeli embassy over its interference in British politics, what measures they have put in place to ensure that no foreign government's embassy can behave in this way again.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** We are unable to comment on hypothetical situations, we will manage incidents when they occur and respond accordingly. The Israeli Ambassador has apologised, and is clear that the recent comments made by a former member of staff at the Israeli Embassy do not reflect the views of either the Embassy or Government of Israel. The UK Government considers the matter closed.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5278/>

### Israel: Palestinians

**Baroness Tonge** [HL5280] To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the 15-year sentence imposed in March 2003 on the Palestinian teenagers from the village of Hares.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Whilst we have not raised this issue with the Israeli Government, we regularly discuss matters concerning the treatment of Palestinian minors in detention with the Israeli authorities.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5280/>

### Israeli Settlements

**Baroness Tonge** [HL5281] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Prime Minister, at her meeting with the Prime Minister of Israel, will raise concerns about the continuing illegal settlement building, and UN Resolution 2334.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** When the Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), met the Prime Minister of Israel on 6 February they discussed the Middle East Peace Process and the UK's firm commitment to a two-state solution as the best way to bring stability and peace to the region. The Prime Minister reiterated the UK's opposition to settlement activity.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5281/>

### Overseas Trade: Israeli Settlements

**Baroness Tonge** [HL5279] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 14 November 2016 (HL2849) concerning illegal settlement construction by Israelis, what measures they are putting in place to ensure that further trade between the UK and illegal settlements is prohibited.

**Lord Price:** The UK and Israel have a strong and important trading relationship and we are firmly opposed to boycotts or sanctions. We do not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including the settlements, as part of Israel and they are not covered by the current EU-Israel Association Agreement which governs our trade with Israel.

It is up to individual businesses whether they undertake business dealings with companies operating in illegal settlements. The Government neither supports nor encourages such dealings. The FCO advises businesses on the risks of so doing.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-06/HL5279/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2016-10-31/HL2849/>

## UK Parliament Ministerial Statement

### Foreign Affairs Council: 6 February 2017

**The Minister for Europe and the Americas (Sir Alan Duncan):** ... Foreign Ministers discussed issues relating to the middle east peace process. The Council discussed possible timing for the next EU-Israel Association Council and agreed to revert to the issue. Member states expressed concern about the increase in Israel's settlement building and the new settlement legislation passed by the Israeli Knesset. ...

**To read the full statement see**

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-20/debates/17022024000008/ForeignAffairsCouncil6February2017>

## UK Parliament Online Petition

### **UK must apologise for the Balfour Declaration & lead peace efforts in Palestine**

We call on Her Majesty's Government to openly apologise to the Palestinian people for issuing the Balfour Declaration. The colonial policy of Britain between 1917-1948 led to mass displacement of the Palestinian nation.

HMG should recognise its role during the Mandate and now must lead attempts to reach a solution that ensures justice for the Palestinian people.

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/184398>

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

### **UK Parliament**

#### **Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/arbitrationandmediationservicesequality.html>

#### **Assisted Dying Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/assisteddying.html>

#### **\*\* Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/culturalpropertyarmedconflicts.html>

Report Stage, House of Commons

[http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-20/debates/F25A6B47-F67B-403B-80C5-34AAA3AF2E92/CulturalProperty\(ArmedConflicts\)Bill\(Lords\)](http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-20/debates/F25A6B47-F67B-403B-80C5-34AAA3AF2E92/CulturalProperty(ArmedConflicts)Bill(Lords))

Third Reading, House of Commons

[http://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-20/debates/F25A6B47-F67B-403B-80C5-34AAA3AF2E92/CulturalProperty\(ArmedConflicts\)Bill\(Lords\)#contribution-335E9969-46F1-4DEF-A3FA-ACB340CBD944](http://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-02-20/debates/F25A6B47-F67B-403B-80C5-34AAA3AF2E92/CulturalProperty(ArmedConflicts)Bill(Lords)#contribution-335E9969-46F1-4DEF-A3FA-ACB340CBD944)

Notices of Amendments

[https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2016-2017/0066/amend/cultural\\_rm\\_rep\\_0216.1-3.html](https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2016-2017/0066/amend/cultural_rm_rep_0216.1-3.html)

and

[https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2016-2017/0066/amend/cultural\\_day\\_rep\\_0217.1-2.html](https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2016-2017/0066/amend/cultural_day_rep_0217.1-2.html)

#### **Lobbying (Transparency) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/lobbyingtransparency.html>

#### **Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

#### **Promotion of Israeli-Palestinian Peace (United Kingdom Participation)**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/promotionofisraelipalestinianpeaceunitedkingdomparticipation.html>

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

### **\*\* closes today**

**Measurement framework for equality and human rights** (closing date 21 February 2017)  
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-measurement-framework/measurement-framework-consultation>

### **\*\* closes in 6 days**

**Racism at work** (closing date 27 February 2017)  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RacismAtWork>

**Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation: increasing numbers of successful donations (Scotland)** (closing date 14 March 2017)  
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00511160.pdf>

**The UK's policy towards the Middle East Peace Process** (closing date 30 March 2017)  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/foreign-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2015/middle-east-peace-process-inquiry-16-17/>

**Adoption and Children (Northern Ireland) Bill** (closing date 10 April 2017)  
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/adoption-and-children-northern-ireland-bill>

**Workplace Diversity (Wales)** (closing date not stated)  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/wtucdiversity>

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