

Political Affairs Digest

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

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Home Affairs

House of Lords Written Answer

Religious Hatred: Christianity

Baroness Berridge [HL5298] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for a Christian hate crimes unit, additional to the Jewish and Muslim hate crimes units in the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Government set out its commitment to reduce the harm caused by all hate crime, including that which is religiously motivated, in '[Action against hate: the UK government's plan for tackling hate crime](#)' which was published in July 2016.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) does not have specific units for antisemitic or anti-Muslim hate crime. Rather, we support Working Groups to bring members of those communities, where religiously motivated hate crime is at the highest levels, together with Government and other agencies to discuss what more we can do to tackle anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hate crime. DCLG also supports the cross-Government Hate Crime Programme, which coordinates the response to all forms of hate crime across Whitehall and the Criminal Justice Agencies.

DCLG supports the police website 'True Vision' and, in January 2017, the Communities Secretary announced £25,000 extra funding for True Vision to work with Christian Groups, including Churchwatch. The project will assess the nature and extent of anti-Christian hate crime, reassure affected Christians and raise awareness of reporting mechanisms for hate crime. The findings of the research will help inform our future activity to challenge hate crime, which is unacceptable in any community.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-07/HL5298/>

Home Affairs Committee: Hate crime and its violent consequences

Muslim Council of Britain: Supplementary written evidence

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/home-affairs-committee/hate-crime-and-its-violent-consequences/written/47177.pdf>

Supreme Court

Judgment relating to entry requirements for non-EEA applicants to join their spouses or civil partners in the United Kingdom. These included a minimum income requirement (“MIR”) of at least £18,600 per annum with additional sums for dependent children, to be satisfied by the sponsoring spouse or civil partner. ...

... the appellants claim that the Rules themselves, and the Immigration Directorate Instruction on family migration giving guidance to entry clearance officers ... are incompatible with the rights protected by the European Convention on Human Rights ...

The claims to strike down the Rules partly succeeded in the High Court, but this decision was reversed by the Court of Appeal. ...

The Supreme Court unanimously (i) allows [one applicant’s] appeal, restoring the decision of the Upper Tribunal in her case, and (ii) allows the other four appeals to a limited extent. The court holds that the MIR is acceptable in principle but that the Rules and the Instructions unlawfully fail to take proper account of the ... duty [to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children]. The Instructions also require amendment to allow consideration of alternative sources of funding when evaluating a claim ...

Press release

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2015-0011-press-summary.pdf>

Full judgment

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2015-0011-judgment.pdf>

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Holocaust

House of Lords Written Answer

World War II: Genocide

Lord Hylton [HL5303] To ask Her Majesty’s Government, in the light of correspondence from Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth to Lord Hylton concerning a grant towards the National Holocaust Memorial, what is the estimated cost to (1) build, and (2) annually maintain, the National Holocaust Memorial; of those sums, how much will be provided from (a) government department direct grants, (b) other sources of public funding, and (c) private funds; and whether they will make a statement to Parliament on the costs and funding.

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Government has committed £50 million towards establishing a new National Holocaust Memorial, learning centre and endowment fund; with an expectation of a further £50 million being raised in donations. The estimated cost of constructing the memorial and learning centre is up to £40 million. Further consideration of the costs associated with the memorial and learning centre will continue over the coming months

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-07/HL5303/>

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House of Commons Oral Answers

Israeli Settlements

8. **Martyn Day:** Whether he made representations on Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories during the recent visit of the Prime Minister of Israel to the UK. [908810]

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson): Yes, indeed. I met Prime Minister Netanyahu and repeated the historic UK position, which is that we believe the settlements on the west bank are illegal and constitute a barrier to a peaceful settlement in the region.

Martyn Day: President Trump has caused great concern for peace in the middle east by dismissing a 20-year US commitment to a two-state solution. Will the Foreign Secretary confirm that the UK remains committed to a two-state solution and will redouble its efforts?

Boris Johnson: Yes, I certainly can—and, if I may say so, I think the hon. Gentleman misrepresents what the US President said.

21. **John Howell:** Were the representations on settlements set in the context of Hamas fully restoring its military strength to levels before 2014—an illustration that peace does not entirely depend on this one issue? [908824]

Boris Johnson: We are aware of the preparations being made by Hamas in Gaza and we remain very concerned about the situation. It underscores the reality that while Israel is of course at fault for the expansion of settlements in the west bank—we have made that absolutely clear—on the other hand nobody should underestimate the very real security threat facing Israel. We are firmly on the side of the Israelis as they face that threat.

Richard Burden: Is the Foreign Secretary aware that just two days ago dozens of stop-work orders, which are usually regarded as precursors to demolition orders, were distributed in the village of Khan al-Ahmar, including to a primary school that serves over 170 children from local Bedouin communities? He may or may not know that the school is being visited by a large number of hon. Members from this House, and that if demolitions take place there to make way for settlements the chances of a viable Palestinian state will disappear. Is he making representations on this matter, and what action will he take to ensure that Mr Netanyahu heeds those representations?

Boris Johnson: I, of course, deplore demolitions, although, as the hon. Gentleman will appreciate, there is a difference between settlements and demolitions taking place in the west bank and demolitions within green line Israel.

Eric Pickles: Does my right hon. Friend think that our opposition to settlements is somewhat diluted by treating all settlements equally? The Oslo accords and the late President Arafat recognised that there would be land swaps. Would it not be better, as the Prime Minister said, to concentrate on new settlements and leave the existing settlements for a final decision?

Boris Johnson: The Government's policy is unchanged. We regard settlements as illegal insofar as they are in occupied Palestinian territories. Members will be absolutely clear that sooner or later—I hope sooner rather than later—there will be a deal and an understanding that involves land swaps. As my right hon. Friend rightly says, we will have to show some sense when it comes to doing that deal.

20. **Margaret Ferrier:** I am going to give the Foreign Secretary another opportunity to answer the question from the hon. Member for Birmingham, Northfield (Richard Burden). The Israeli civilian administration personnel and police arrived at Khan al-Ahmar and served 39 stop-work orders, including to a school. An entire community is about to be forcefully displaced. What representation has he made to his Israeli counterpart on this matter? [908823]

Boris Johnson: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave a moment ago. My hon. Friend the Minister will be going to Israel very shortly. When we have got to the bottom of the exact complaint she is making, I am sure he will raise it.

Stephen Crabb: Alongside concerns about the rearmament of Hamas and the rebuilding of its network of cross-border terror tunnels, does my right hon. Friend share the growing alarm at the new activities of Daesh in the Sinai desert, which, together with the activities of Hamas, point to the prospect of further violence in the region and a new wave of terror attacks on innocent Israeli citizens?

Boris Johnson: My right hon. Friend is completely right. What he says underscores the need for a regional solution that brings together all the states surrounding Israel to do a deal that brings the Palestinians, finally, to the table, and brings concessions from the Israelis.

David Winnick: Is not the truth of the matter that the Israeli authorities have at no stage over the years ever wanted a viable independent Palestinian state? President Trump's inane comments have strengthened the ultras in Israel. What encouragement can one give to the Palestinian people in view of the continuing destruction of their homes and the building of settlements by Israelis?

Boris Johnson: Every Israeli Prime Minister in the last 20 years has supported a two-state solution, and that is the right way forward. It is the policy of the UK Government and remains the policy of the US Government. The difficulty will be to get a deal that not only allows the creation of the Palestinian state that I think everybody wants to achieve, but protects the security of the state of Israel.

Fabian Hamilton: But last week President Trump said very clearly on televisions across the world that he could "live with either one" of a two-state or one-state solution. I am sure the Foreign Secretary agrees it is deeply disappointing that the President could casually disregard so many years of international consensus on a possible peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian people. Did Mr Netanyahu give any hint at his recent meeting with the Prime Minister that he too was prepared to live with a one-state solution? If so, what was her response?

Boris Johnson: Let us be absolutely clear. As both the President and Prime Minister Netanyahu, and indeed the Palestinians, have said, there needs to be dialogue, but at the moment I do not think that the Palestinians are committing to dialogue in the way they could and should be. It takes two to negotiate. We have seen no progress over the last eight years. Let us not rule out the possibility of progress today.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/D1FE592C-4CE3-476D-B1ED-3BA4306A1986/IsraeliSettlements>

Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

T5. **Neil Gray:** Last week, on this issue of securing peace between Palestine and Israel, Donald Trump said: "So I'm looking at two-state, and one-state...I can live with either one." Having heard that direct quote, how can the Foreign Secretary say, as he did earlier to my right hon. Friend the Member for Gordon (Alex Salmond) and my hon. Friend the Member for Linlithgow and East Falkirk (Martyn Day), that US policy has not changed or is not changing?

[908832]

Boris Johnson: I really must accuse the hon. Gentleman of failing to listen to the answer that I gave a few moments ago. I am not here to defend or explain what the American President said, but he made it very clear that there should be dialogue, and he also made it very clear that he thought that the illegal settlements should no longer continue. The solution is a deal between the two parties, and that is what everyone in the House believes and wants.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/CABF1EC5-22B3-4017-BD80-F82213411DF8/TopicalQuestions#contribution-FE1D4525-7444-4240-B17B-A532B68B582D>

Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

T6. Vicky Foxcroft: Despite its continued violations of international law, Israel enjoys favoured trade status with the UK and the EU. Does the Minister agree that if the UK Government are serious about peace and justice post-Brexit, we must revisit trade negotiations with Israel while it continues to deny Palestinians their rights? [908833]

Boris Johnson: If the hon. Lady is suggesting that we should boycott Israeli goods, I must say that I completely reject her advice.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/CABF1EC5-22B3-4017-BD80-F82213411DF8/TopicalQuestions#contribution-8B41756D-24BC-463B-A350-732DBEC8C1B6>

Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Nadhim Zahawi: The Israeli Prime Minister has recently spoken about coming together with the Gulf Co-operation Council on security issues. Countries such as Jordan and Egypt have played a significant role in previous peace processes. Does the Foreign Secretary think that the GCC has a significant role to play in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process?

Boris Johnson: My hon. Friend brings a wealth of knowledge to this subject. I do think that the GCC and the Arab countries more generally hold the key, and that a variant of what used to be called the Arab peace plan is indeed where we will end up. What it will take now is for both sides to see that, and to make progress.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/CABF1EC5-22B3-4017-BD80-F82213411DF8/TopicalQuestions#contribution-2A1E98EA-07C5-498E-85DF-5C5E7B1C5A11>

Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Chris Davies: We all look forward to the day when a sovereign Palestinian state exists alongside a safe and secure Israel. Does my right hon. Friend agree that that can be achieved only through face-to-face negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis?

Boris Johnson: I certainly agree with that, and those negotiations should take place as fast as possible and without preconditions.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/CABF1EC5-22B3-4017-BD80-F82213411DF8/TopicalQuestions#contribution-9B0E2AB5-6DCC-4C07-8CDD-739B733EDA55>

Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Andy Slaughter: A few moments ago, the Secretary of State confirmed as Government policy something that this House resolved without a Division on 9 February—that there should be a halt to the planning and construction of residential settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. Given that that is the case, why is the UK permitted to trade specifically with those illegal settlements?

Boris Johnson: It is the policy of the UK, and I think of many of our friends and partners, to continue to trade on the grounds that that is the best way to support the economy of the region. Many workers in the region come from populations within the occupied Palestinian territories, and their livelihoods depend on that industry. That policy is widely understood and supported, and we will continue with it.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-02-21/debates/CABF1EC5-22B3-4017-BD80-F82213411DF8/TopicalQuestions#contribution-589FACC2-1A78-4A86-9C43-E31F5D8303ED>

House of Commons Written Answer

Israel and Palestine

Flick Drummond [908821] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of progress towards a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine.

Boris Johnson: We continue to believe the two-state solution is the only viable long-term solution to the Arab Israeli conflict. We are concerned that ongoing settlement construction, incitement and terrorist attacks are undermining prospects for peace. We will work with the parties and our international partners to arrest these trends and encourage a return to negotiations.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-02-09/908821/>

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Tonge [HL5315] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding reports of toxic waste, effluent and pollution released from Israeli industry and settlements in the West Bank onto Palestinian land and into the water supply.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, the UK Government has made clear to the Government of Israel of our concerns about the humanitarian and environmental impact of the damage to water sources and the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related building activity. We deplore the destruction of Palestinian property and have called on the Israeli Government to cease such activity. We have also urged the Israeli Government to avoid actions that restrict Palestinian access to water for irrigation and drinking. With Department for International Development support, UNICEF works with the Palestinian Water Authority to help monitor the water situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and ensure effective response in case of an emergency.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-07/HL5315/>

Israeli Settlements

Lord Warner [HL5316] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take with their international partners in respect of the government of Israel's decision to retrospectively legalise the previously illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories of the West Bank.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), issued a statement on 7 February condemning the passing of the Land Regularisation Bill and expressing concern that the bill paves the way for significant growth in settlements deep in the West Bank, threatening the viability of the two-state solution. The UK also welcomes the recent statement by Federica Mogherini, Vice-President of the European Commission, condemning the adoption of the bill.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-07/HL5316/>

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office statement referred to above can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/minister-for-the-middle-east-tobias-ellwood-statement-on-israels-land-regularisation-bill>

The European Commission statement referred to above can be read at https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/20104/statement-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-regularisation-law-adopted_en

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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>

House of Lords consideration of House of Commons amendments

[http://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-02-21/debates/F115383F-CCCB-41FE-A01B-A45209BE92BF/CulturalProperty\(ArmedConflicts\)Bill\(HL\)](http://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-02-21/debates/F115383F-CCCB-41FE-A01B-A45209BE92BF/CulturalProperty(ArmedConflicts)Bill(HL))

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 in 5 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>

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO29438