

# 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 Commons Oral Answer

#### Prime Minister's Questions

**Anne Main (Conservative):** ... What more can be done to protect all persons of faith who are being persecuted for their faith, particularly our students on campuses who are suffering large amounts of anti-Semitism?

**Prime Minister:** ... he is absolutely right that this is important. Sometimes we talk a lot about people who are being persecuted for their faith in countries abroad, but actually we need to be very clear that, sadly, we do see people here suffering attacks, particularly anti-Semitic ones, on campuses. The Community Security Trust does a lot of work with students to provide support, and I am happy that the Government are supporting them. We are also supporting Muslim communities that are suffering from Islamophobia. There is no place for such hate in our society, and we must all work to stamp it out.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-06-28/debates/2CBD7C4C-2C6F-49DF-9C56-D5AA938D013A/Engagements#contribution-823B5D66-6930-4183-94D1-8F7AC4A41731>

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Hate Crime

**John Mann (Labour)** [831] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential implications for the funding of anti-hate crime projects of the UK leaving the EU.

**Sarah Newton:** The Government takes all hate crime seriously and published a Hate Crime Action Plan in July 2016 which sets out a comprehensive programme of work to drive forward action against hate crime.

We are currently assessing the impact of exiting the European Union on projects across Government, including any joint initiatives that we have with the European Union on hate crime.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-22/831/>

#### Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

**Tracy Brabin (Labour)** [1114] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

with reference to her oral contribution of 22 June 2017, Official Report, column 211, on terror attacks, whether (a) the requirement for a hate crime to have occurred within two years before a place of worship can apply for security funding has been removed and (b) any new requirements for such applications have been put in place; and when she plans to publish updated application information.

**Sarah Newton:** On the 22 June, the Home Secretary announced an additional £1 million of funding for places of worship who are vulnerable to attack.

The new scheme will not require the applicant to demonstrate that they have been subject to a hate crime attack within the last two years. Full details of the criteria for the scheme and how to apply will be published on GOV.UK in the near future.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-26/1114/>

*The oral contribution and announcement referred to above can be read at*  
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-06-22/debates/D00D2537-BD22-4E4D-8E65-FE170E02848A/TerrorAttacks#contribution-0C3A539A-9FB7-4EEC-AD30-26DCF76A37FE>

### Religious Freedom

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [168] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what the Government's policy is on protecting the right of (a) Christians and (b) people of other religious beliefs to wear or carry religious symbols in public.

**Nick Gibb:** The Government believes that both Christians and people of other religious beliefs should be able to wear or carry religious symbols in public so long as they act within the boundaries of the law while doing so.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-21/168/>

### Faith Schools: Admissions

**Angela Raynor** [457] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on inclusivity rules and faith school admissions.

**Justine Greening:** Schools play a vital role in promoting integration and promoting an understanding of different faiths and communities. We expect all schools to be inclusive and respect the protected characteristics of their pupils in line with their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Schools designated with a religious character have the freedom to take faith into account when allocating places. We will continue to work closely with faith schools to promote and support integration and will set out further details in due course.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-21/457/>

### Faith Schools: Admissions

**William Wragg (Conservative)** [847] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on the proposal set out in Schools that work for everyone, published in September 2016, on the 50 per cent admissions cap on faith schools.

**Justine Greening:** Schools play a vital role in promoting integration and promoting an understanding of different faiths and communities. We will continue to work closely with faith schools to promote and support integration and will set out further details in due course.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-22/847/>

### Organs: Donors

**Dan Jarvis (Labour)** [1214] To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on the change in the level of organ donations in Wales since the

introduction of an opt-out system in that country.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:** Organ donation policy is a devolved matter. NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) collects data on organ donation and transplantation across the United Kingdom. The latest activity data for Wales can be found in full on NHSBT's website.

The following table shows there has been no notable change in Welsh deceased donation figures since the change in legislation on 1 December 2015:

Country of hospital of donor death	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Wales	60	64	61

NHSBT's statistical analysis indicates that, due to small numbers of donors in Wales, it may be three or four years before there are sufficient numbers to provide enough evidence to determine the true impact of the change in legislation.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-26/1214/>

### Organs: Donors

**Dan Jarvis (Labour)** [1215] To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2017 to Question 71709, on organs: donors, if he will introduce a system of deemed consent for organ and tissue donation in England.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:** On 1 December 2015, Wales introduced deemed consent (opt-out) for organ and tissue donation. We will monitor closely how the changes in the law on consent in Wales affect donation rates.

Since the launch of the United Kingdom-wide Taking Organ Transplantation to 2020 Strategy in 2013, organ donation rates have increased by 7% and transplant rates by 6% mainly through a strengthening of the donation infrastructure (e.g. increased specialist nurses, improved retrieval arrangements). In 2016-17, the UK had the highest ever deceased donor and transplant rates with 1,413 deceased donors resulting in 3,712 transplants.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-26/1215/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-04-24/71709/>

## Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

### Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012

**James Kelly (Labour):** To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on calls to repeal the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012. (S5O-01191)

**Reply from the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs (Annabelle Ewing):** Offensive, hateful and prejudicial behaviour associated with football, and online threats of violence and hatred, continue to be a problem. I share the concerns expressed by equality groups that repealing the 2012 act in the absence of a viable alternative will send entirely the wrong message to the public—that expressions of prejudice and hatred at football matches are somehow condoned and decriminalised.

Police and prosecutors need appropriate tools to tackle hate crime, which is why I commissioned the independent review of hate crime legislation in Scotland. I look forward to hearing the outcomes of the review next year, and I remain opposed to repealing the 2012 act.

**James Kelly:** It is clear, following the consultation on my proposed member's bill, that there is massive support for repeal of the 2012 act. It is also clear that there is a majority in Parliament in favour of repealing the act. With that in mind, will the minister agree to work with me on a sensible approach to repealing the act? Will she also work with parties in Parliament and groups outside it on developing a positive approach to behaviour at football matches and tackling sectarianism?

**Reply from Annabelle Ewing:** This Government stands on the side of the tens of thousands of football fans throughout Scotland who simply want to go to a football match with their family and friends and not be surrounded by tainted, prejudicial and hateful behaviour.

I have to say that I find it very strange indeed that, at a time when our society faces so many challenges, Labour's number 1 priority for legislation is to repeal the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 without offering a viable alternative. What a strange set of priorities, and what contempt those priorities display for people who are targeted by hateful, prejudicial and abusive behaviour.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11042&i=100869#ScotParlOR>

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## [Israel](#)

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### Israel: Trade Agreements

**Paul Masterton (Conservative)** [175] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps the Government is taking to increase trade between Scotland and Israel; and what potential opportunities there will be for that trading relationship after the UK has left the EU.

**Mark Garnier:** The value of trade in goods between Scotland and Israel was £120 million in 2016 (source: HM Revenue and Customs Regional Trade Statistics Database).

Israel is an important trading partner for the UK and we are committed to strengthening the trade relationship with Israel.

Israel currently has an Association Agreement with the EU on trade and we have established a UK-Israel working group to continue the progress we have seen to date, and to prepare the ground for a Post-Brexit trade agreement.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-21/175/>

#### Israel: Palestinians

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [375] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the Israeli Government on encouraging more Palestinians to seek Israeli citizenship.

**Alistair Burt:** We have not had any discussions with the Israeli authorities on this issue.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-21/375/>

#### Israel and Lebanon: Minerals

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [504] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the (a)

Government of Israel and (b) Government of Lebanon on disputed mineral-rich areas of the eastern Mediterranean.

**Alistair Burt:** While we have not had any specific discussions with the Israeli or Lebanese authorities on this issue, we encourage all attempts to resolve the dispute.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-06-21/504/>

## House of Lords Written Answer

### Gaza

**The Lord Bishop of Southwark [HL150]** Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the humanitarian impact on Gaza of the decision by the government of Israel to implement a request from the Palestinian Authority to reduce the flow of electricity supplies from Israel to Gaza.

**Lord Bates:** We are closely monitoring the current electricity situation in Gaza. This was initially triggered by a lack of fuel for the Gaza Power Plant, and exacerbated by a subsequent reduction in the supply of electricity from Israel, following a request from the Palestinian Authority. Gaza is considered a humanitarian priority for the UN and, though the humanitarian situation is deteriorating, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has not declared the current situation an 'emergency'.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-06-22/HL150/>

## United Nations

### **Ending Occupation Key to International Security, Defeating Islamic State, Senior Palestinian Official Tells Forum Marking 50 Years since 1967 Arab-Israeli War**

Ending 50 years of occupation by Israel was not only a matter of international security, but also of defeating Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), a senior Palestinian official said today as Headquarters hosted a forum to commemorate that milestone. ...

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Secretary-General Saeb Erakat said the occupation had created the "right environment for the birth of extremism" in the Middle East. ...

While emphasizing that the best option for the Palestinian people was "to live and let live", he declared: "Unfortunately, we do not have a partner in Israel today," adding that it was time to hold that country's Government accountable and to rebuke the apartheid policies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Israel believed it could continue enforcing apartheid and get away with it, he added, pointing out that in the West Bank, 60 per percent of which remained outside Palestinian control, locals compelled to carry identification cards had different vehicle registration plates from those issued to Israelis. ... He said that although he recognized Israel's right to exist — stressing "we are going to live and let live" — he wanted Israelis to change from occupier to neighbour. "We have negotiated enough," he said. "It's time for decisions." ...

The Secretary-General, in remarks delivered by Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, said that ending the occupation was the only way to lay the foundation for an enduring peace that met both Israeli security needs and Palestinian aspirations for statehood. Resolving the conflict would also help to remove a driver of violent extremism and terrorism in the Middle East.

Fifty years of Israeli occupation, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of

Palestinians and Syrians had imposed a heavy humanitarian and development burden on the Palestinian people, he continued. ...

The Deputy Secretary-General spoke in her personal capacity, underscoring the deep despair of the Palestinian people. The international community had for far too long failed to find a just and lasting solution to their displacement, she said, noting that generations of Palestinians and Israelis had been confined by a conflict that had shaped their world with concrete walls, checkpoints and watch towers, all under a heavy atmosphere of fear, mutual distrust and despair. ...

Mr Ben-Ami [former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Israel] said that, for Israel, 1967 meant military grandeur on the one hand, and moral and political crisis on the other. At that time, Israel's historic encounter with Judea and Samaria had shifted every political party to different positions from their pre-1967 attitudes. The National Religious Party had been the least "trigger happy" in government, but that had changed after its contact with the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria — the terms used at the time. ... The "old secular, modernizing Israel" was in decline while "Jerusalem Israel" was on the rise, he said. It represented Jewish history and the rise of ethnic nationalism reflected in the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu, whose power base had realized that emphasizing Israel's Jewish character was a "winning horse". ...

... he continued Today, Israel was endorsing all kinds of laws that one would not expect in a liberal democracy, which in turn, was related to the "ecosystem" established in the Territories. ...

Mr. Ben-Ami ... emphasized that the colonial reality, especially in terms of "real estate", could not be denied. ... For Orthodox Jews, real estate was expensive, so they were settling in neighbourhoods or settlements adjacent to the Green Line, but on the Palestinian side. The Orthodox, historically "a-Zionist" or anti-Zionist, were becoming nationalist. ...

Ms. Golan-Gild [Darwin Professor Emerita, Hebrew University of Jerusalem] said much had happened since 1967, spotlighting the PLO's 1988 decision to recognize Israel. ... Another decision that had paved the way forward was Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), a practical decision designed to address what had been going on since 1967. It was designed to stop Israel's creeping annexation of land, as well as Israeli actions that would render a two-State solution impossible. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/gapal1387.doc.htm>

### **Security Council renews steps against illicit Libyan oil exports; renews missions in Golan, Mali, Darfur**

The Security Council today adopted a series of resolutions by which it extended the mandates of United Nations missions in the Golan, the Darfur region of Sudan and Mali, and renewed measures against illicit oil exports in Libya.

In resolution 2361, which extends the mandate of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), the Council condemned the use of heavy weapons by both the Syrian armed forces and armed groups in the ongoing Syrian conflict in the area of separation between Israel and Syria, and underlined that there should be no military activity of the armed opposition groups in that area.

It also urged Member States to convey strongly to the Syrian armed opposition groups in UNDOF's area of operations to halt all activities that endanger UN peacekeepers and to accord them the freedom to carry out their mandate safely and securely.

UNDOF was established by the Council in May 1974 to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria, to supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces, and to supervise the areas of separation and limitation. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57090#.WVZNmNOGOnY>

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

### Scottish Parliament

**Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) (Scotland) Bill**  
<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/105269.aspx>

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

**Caste in Great Britain and Equality Law** (closing date 18 July 2017)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/caste-in-great-britain-and-equality-law-a-public-consultation>

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

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