

# 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

#### **Palestinians: Schools**

**Joan Ryan (Labour)** [171642] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the methodologies of the review of the Palestinian Authority's curriculum will include compliance with (a) Articles 1, 4.2 and 5 of the Declaration of principles on tolerance proclaimed and signed by the member states of UNESCO on 16 November 1995, (b) Principles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the UN Declaration on the promotion among youth of the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding between peoples, signed in 1965, and (c) Articles 9 and 18 of the integrated framework for action on education for peace, human rights and democracy, approved by the general conference of UNESCO at the 28th session in Paris in November 1995.

**Alistair Burt:** We are in the process of commissioning the review and are considering the most robust methodology for conducting the textbook analysis. We will give consideration to relevant international agreements and previous high quality academic research when determining the final methodology. We will provide further detail on the methodology in due course.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-07/171642/>

#### **Palestinians: Schools**

**Joan Ryan (Labour)** [171643] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the review of the Palestinian Authority's curriculum has been commissioned.

**Alistair Burt:** We are in discussions with potential funding partners and research organisations and aim to commission the review as soon as possible, whilst ensuring value for money and a robust methodology. We will publish further information once the assessment has been commissioned.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-09-07/171643/>

### European Parliament Debate

#### **The threat of demolition of Khan al-Ahmar and other Bedouin villages**

*Note that only speeches in English have been abstracted below*

**Federica Mogherini** (Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the

Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy): ... The Israeli High Court last week rejected the petitions by the residents of the Palestinian village of Khan al-Ahmar and allowed the Israeli authorities to proceed with the plans for demolition within seven days. Any day now, the Israeli authorities could start demolishing this community and evict the residents from their homes, including parents and children. This is why last week I called once again on the Israeli authorities to reconsider this decision. That demolition would have grave humanitarian consequences and it would be contrary to Israel's obligations under international humanitarian law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. The demolition of Khan al-Ahmar, together with plans for further settlement expansions in the same area, would also severely threaten the viability of the two-state solution ...

The EU and its Member States expressed their concerns about the imminent demolition through repeated statements, démarches and ministerial letters to the Israeli authorities, and the representatives of several Member States were present at the village on 5 July when the Israeli forces attempted to cordon it off. Until now, these efforts have been to no avail. Israel claims that the community has been built without the required building permits. It is important to note, however, that it is virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain any building permits in Area C of the West Bank, as confirmed by the quartet report we produced in July 2016. ...

This will only further entrench a one-state reality, with unequal rights for the two peoples, perpetual occupation and conflict. ...

**Ivo Vajgl** (on behalf of the ALDE Group): ... the date of demolition of the Bedouin village of Khan al-Ahmar represents just another step by the Israeli authorities towards a situation where reaching a real and not just hypothetical two-state solution to the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not be possible anymore. ...

The decision of the Israeli High Court of Justice of 5 September did not come as a surprise, either for the Bedouins or for us. Israel is once again proving that it does not abide by international law ...

**Margrete Auken** (on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group): ... I would like to remind the Vice-President / High Representative, that you started your mandate, Ms Mogherini, by telling this House that the Israeli-Palestine conflict was your foreign policy priority.

You told this House that you would not accept any more demolitions of EU-funded projects. You told this House that you would do all you could to uphold international law and preserve the two-state solution. And what has this House witnessed under your mandate? No EU initiatives. An EU Special Envoy has gone missing in action; EU aid worth millions of euros destroyed in full impunity and no adequate labelling of settlement products.

The village of Khan al-Ahmar that I and countless friends of the Bedouins have visited is about to be destroyed. You have warned of severe consequences. This is your moment to save your record on this file, and that of all Europeans. Will you take action at last? If not, then when?

**Martina Anderson** (on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group): ... the barbaric and insidious Israeli occupation of Palestine is the problem. All other catastrophes are the symptoms. Not content with stealing Palestinian land and building their own illegal settlements, the State of Israel continues to destroy people's homes on an industrial scale.

Khan al-Ahmar is the most recent in a series of planned village destruction. The Bedouin residents, who valiantly fought the planned destruction for years, have suffered disproportionately because of this apartheid policy. To add insult to injury, the Israeli State plans to forcibly relocate the inhabitants to a site right next to a public rubbish dump. This House likes to think it stands up for political freedom and democracy. You would imagine, then, that all here would condemn – without reservation or equivocation – illegal occupation, illegal settlement construction and illegal destruction of property.

Recently we heard that Israel has prevented Ahed Tamimi from leaving Palestine. Where else would a state restricting the movement of a political opponent be tolerated? You would imagine that the EU High Representative would act decisively and go beyond fluff

words. I won't hold my breath. ... Inaction is acquiescence. Mere rhetoric with no follow—up in these cases of supreme human rights violation means only one charge is viable: rank hypocrisy. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20180911+ITEM-019+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

**Text adopted:**

### **The threat of demolition of Khan al-Ahmar and other Bedouin villages**

The European Parliament ...

1. Joins the VP/HR, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom in their call for the Israeli government to shelve the relocation plan that would lead to the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar and the forcible transfer of its population to another location; considers it of the utmost importance that the EU continue to speak with one voice on this matter;
2. Warns the Israeli authorities that the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar and the forcible transfer of its residents would constitute a grave breach of international humanitarian law;
3. Expresses its concern at the impact of the demolition of Khan al-Ahmar, which would further threaten the viability of the two-state solution and undermine prospects for peace; reiterates that protecting and preserving the viability of the two-state solution is the immediate priority for EU policies and action on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Middle East peace process;
4. Insists that – should the demolition and eviction of Khan al-Ahmar take place – the EU's response must be commensurate with the seriousness of this development and consistent with its long-standing support to the community of Khan al-Ahmar; calls on the VP/HR to step up the EU's engagement with the Israeli authorities with regard to full respect for the rights of the Palestinian population in Area C and to demand compensation from Israel for the destruction of EU-funded infrastructure;
5. Calls on the Israeli Government to put an immediate end to its policy of threats of demolition and actual eviction against the Bedouin communities living in the Negev and in Area C in the occupied West Bank; stresses that the demolition of houses, schools and other vital infrastructure in the occupied Palestinian territory is illegal under international humanitarian law;
6. Recalls that Israel bears full responsibility for providing the necessary services, including education, healthcare and welfare, for the people living under its occupation, in line with the Fourth Geneva Convention;
7. Remains firmly convinced that the only lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East is that of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace within secure and recognised borders, on the basis of the 1967 border and with Jerusalem as the capital of both states; condemns any unilateral decision or action that may undermine the prospects of this solution;
8. Calls on the Israeli authorities to immediately halt and reverse their settlement policy; calls for the EU to remain steadfast on the issue;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the Knesset and the Government of Israel, the President of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council.

**To read the full text see**

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2018-0351+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

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

### UK Parliament

#### **Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

#### **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

#### **Online Forums Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

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

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

### Scottish Parliament

#### **Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated today

**\*\* Reform of the legal requirements for divorce** (closing date 10 December 2018)

<https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/reform-of-the-legal-requirements-for-divorce/>

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