

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

Hezbollah: Weapons

Ian Paisley (DUP) [138444] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of Hezbollah's weapons arsenal.

Alistair Burt: We are aware of concerns that Hizballah continues to amass an arsenal of weapons in Lebanon. We condemn the threat that this poses to regional stability and in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolutions 1559 and 1701. The UK is working with Lebanon to reinforce its state institutions, in particular the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). It is in the interests of Lebanon that the LAF are recognised as the only legitimate armed forces of Lebanon.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-26/138444/>

Palestinians: Radicalism

Ian Paisley (DUP) [138445] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the level of radicalisation in the Palestinian Territories.

Alistair Burt: We strongly condemn all violence and all incitement to commit violence. We are deeply concerned by continued incitement against Israel in the Hamas-run media and education system. The glorification of terrorists as "martyrs" is a barrier to peace. But President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to non-violence and a negotiated two-state solution. It is important that the Palestinian leadership continue efforts to fully implement the recommendations of the Quartet Report regarding incitement.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-26/138445/>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/7022_en

Israel: Palestinians

Ian Paisley (DUP) [138446] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of changes in the level of violence in Israel and the West Bank.

Alistair Burt: We remain concerned about the use of violence in Israel and the

West Bank. The UK firmly believes that, to have the best chance of success, the Middle East Peace Process must be conducted in an atmosphere free from violence. We press the parties to refrain from rhetoric and actions which make the goal of peace harder to achieve. We call on all parties to act with restraint, reject violence, and work together to ensure calm and stability.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-26/138446/>

Syria: Palestinians

David Drew (Labour Co-op) [138360] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations has he made to the Syrian authorities on the attacks on Palestinian refugees in the Yarmouk Camp, Damascus.

Alistair Burt: We have had no direct contact with the Syrian regime about the Yarmouk Camp, Damascus. We have used our position in the UN Security Council to call upon the regime to cease any indiscriminate attacks, to protect civilians and allow rapid and unhindered humanitarian access, including to Yarmouk and the surrounding areas. We have done this most recently in the UN Security Council consultations on the humanitarian situation in Syria on 25 April.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-04-26/138360/>

United Nations

Gaza's children deserve much better: Statement attributable to Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa

Over the past five weeks, five children were killed and hundreds were injured in largely peaceful protests in Gaza.

“Power cuts and shortages of fuel, medicine and equipment are straining an already fragile health system and complicating access to treatment for the injured.

“In addition to physical injuries, children are showing signs of severe distress and trauma.

“Yesterday, our UNICEF Special Representative visited a 14-year-old boy who suffered a gunshot wound, causing a severe injury close to his heart. He is now home recovering after being in hospital for two weeks. It is hard for him to be optimistic through the pain, but when he gets better, he wants to be a doctor, like the ones who helped him survive.

“The escalating violence in Gaza has exacerbated the suffering of children whose lives have already been unbearably difficult for several years. Half of all children depend on humanitarian assistance, and one in four needs psychosocial care.

“Schools are overcrowded and operating on triple shifts, limiting children's learning prospects.

“The minimal power supply in Gaza has disrupted water and sanitation services, severely reducing the availability of drinking water – nine out of 10 families do not have regular access to safe water.

“UNICEF continues its lifesaving assistance for children in health, water, sanitation, hygiene, education and protection.

“UNICEF renews its calls for all those with influence to protect children and keep them out of harm's way. Children belong in schools, homes and playgrounds – they should never be targeted or encouraged to participate in violence.”

<https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/gaza-s-children-deserve-much-better-enar>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

European Union (Withdrawal) Bill

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

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>

Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill

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

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Consultations ** new or updated today

Integrated Communities Strategy green paper (closing date 5 June 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper>

Measures to further improve the effectiveness of the fight against illegal content online (closing date 25 June 2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-measures-further-improve-effectiveness-fight-against-illegal-content-online_en

Home Education (closing date 2 July 2018)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/home-education-call-for-evidence-and-revised-dfe-a/>

Ecclesiastical exemption and guidance on scheduled monuments (closing date 13 July 2018)

<https://beta.gov.wales/ecclesiastical-exemption-and-guidance-scheduled-monuments>

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