

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 Answer

Hamas

Mike Penning (Conservative) [151113] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans his Department has to list Hamas as a proscribed terrorist organisation; and if he will make a statement.

Ben Wallace: I refer my Hon. Friend to the answer given to the Hon. Member for Chipping Barnet on 22 May 2018, UIN 145293.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-06-07/151113/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-05-17/145293/>

Hamas Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades (Hamas IDQ), the military wing of Hamas, was proscribed in March 2001. A decision to proscribe an organisation must be based on a belief that it is concerned in terrorism as defined in the Terrorism Act 2000. We do not routinely comment on whether an organisation is or is not under consideration for proscription.

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Palestine

S5W-17044 Sandra White (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what support it can provide to the people of Palestine through its International Development Fund.

Alasdair Allan: The Scottish Government's new International Development Strategy, published in 2016, focuses our work on four partner countries with which we have strong historic and contemporary links to ensure our £10 million International Development Fund has the greatest impact. Those four partner countries are Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia and Pakistan.

However, Scottish based organisations working in any country whose Human Development scores medium or low on the current United Nations Human Development Index are eligible to apply to our Small Grants Programme for Feasibility or Capacity Building grants of up to £10,000. The State of Palestine is currently ranked as a country of medium human development in the UN's Human

Development Index (ranked 114 in the 2016 HDR), and therefore eligible organisations would be able to apply for these two types of grant within our Small Grants Programme.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-17044>

The Strategy referred to above can be read at
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00512161.pdf>

United Nations

General Assembly Adopts Resolution on Protecting Palestinian Civilians Following Rejection of United States Amendment to Condemn Hamas Rocket Fire

In an emergency meeting, the General Assembly ... adopted a resolution deploring the use of excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and particularly the Gaza Strip. ...

It also deplored the firing of rockets from the Gaza Strip into Israeli civilian areas — and any actions that could endanger civilian lives — and called for urgent steps to ensure an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire, as well as for the exercise of maximum restraint by all parties. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a report in no later than 60 days, outlining proposals on ways and means for ensuring the safety of Palestinian civilians, including on an international protection mechanism.

The resolution was adopted following the Assembly's rejection of a United States-sponsored amendment ... which would have condemned Hamas for repeatedly firing rockets into Israel and inciting violence along the boundary fence. It would have demanded that Hamas cease all violent activity and expressed grave concern over the destruction of the Kerem Shalom crossing by actors in Gaza. ...

Sabri Boukadoum (Algeria), introducing the draft resolution on the Protection of the Palestinian civilian population ... said the situation represented a major threat to international peace and security. "I will not quote the terrifying numbers of the dead and wounded," he emphasized, adding that Israel's aggressions had not spared children, women, the elderly, nurses or humanitarian workers. Razan al-Najjar, a 21-year old Palestinian nurse, was shot dead at the Gaza Border where she had worked to save the wounded. Israel had not only set aside its responsibilities under international law, it had purposely violated those obligations. "They have, in a premeditated way, harmed Palestinians, denying them their basic rights," he stressed. ...

Nikki R. Haley (United States), introducing her delegation's proposed amendment to that draft resolution (document A/ES-10/L.24), said that today, demonstrations were taking place in Nicaragua, civilians peacefully protesting their Government in Iran had been arrested and the world's worst humanitarian crisis continued to unfold in Yemen. In Myanmar, almost a million civilians had been driven from their homes. But the Assembly was not meeting in an emergency session on any of those situations. "Instead, the General Assembly is devoting its valuable time to the situation in Gaza," she said, asking what made that situation different from conflicts in other desperate places around the world.

The answer, she said, was that for many delegations, attacking Israel had become a "favourite political sport". Such one-sided resolutions as the one presented today, which failed to even mention Hamas, did nothing to advance peace. Moreover, everyone knew its passage would accomplish nothing, and could even make peace less likely by feeding the narrative that Gaza's leaders were not responsible. ...

"We still have the opportunity to salvage something honest from this," she said, stressing that the modest amendment proposed by the United States rightly condemned the firing of rockets by Hamas as well as its diversion of resources from civilians to military

resources. "It is the least that any self-respecting international organization or nation can do for the cause of peace," ...

Riyad H. Mansour, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, said today's initiative represented a genuine effort to address the recent violence and worsening conditions on the ground. "It is firmly based on the belief that, by upholding shared responsibilities in line with the [United Nations] Charter, international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, we can contribute to the efforts to defuse tensions, de-escalate the situation, deter further violence and protect civilian lives," he said. ...

"We cannot remain silent in the face of the most violent crimes and human rights violations being systematically perpetrated against our people," he said. It was the international community's duty to address all aspects of the crisis and the grave injustice and alleviate, in any way it could, the suffering of the Palestinian people. ...

"We therefore firmly reject the bad-faith attempt to insert an amendment that would radically unbalance the text and shift the Assembly's focus away from the core objective of protecting civilians and upholding international law," he said, calling on delegations to support the longstanding Palestinian cause, advance peace and support the work of United Nations agencies working to meet the needs of Palestinian civilians on the ground ...

Danny Ben Yosef Danon (Israel) said he was here today to stand up for a basic right afforded to every country in the world: the right to defend its citizens. The Assembly had convened two emergency sessions in the last six months, both on Israel. Today's meeting was about Israel's right to defend itself. "It is the international community's attempt to take away that right," he said, adding that the draft resolution protected neither Palestinians nor Israelis. "By supporting this resolution, you are colluding with a terrorist organization and empowering Hamas," he stressed. ... The Palestinian rioters wanted to seize Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem and replace the Jewish State. "We take them at their word," he said, adding that the so-called "March of Return" was a violent attack on Israel. Hamas was using children's toys as weapons. "How would you react if 40,000 rioters attempted to flood your borders," he asked. If the rioters had breached the wall, the world would have witnessed the death of many Israelis and Palestinians. ...

It was Hamas that decided when to attack, when to retreat and when to send its own people straight into harm's way and even to their death. Hamas had been recognized as a terrorist organization by many, including Australia, New Zealand, the European Union, Egypt the United Kingdom and the United States. The Assembly's hypocrisy should come as no surprise, he said, recalling that it had called 10 emergency sessions since the founding of the United Nations. Five had been on Israel. The devastation in Syria, which had claimed half a million lives and displaced 7 million people, had never resulted in an emergency session of the Assembly. "This type of worldwide assault is reserved only for Israel," he said. "It is anti-Semitism."

He said Israel had taken many steps to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza, while Hamas had spent countless resources on terrorism. Yet, Hamas was not even mentioned once in today's resolution. ... To those supporting today's resolution, "you are the ammunition in Hamas' gun; you are the warheads on Hamas' missiles," he said. ...

Joanne Adamson, European Union, expressing deep alarm about the sharp escalation of violence in Gaza and the high number of Palestinians killed or injured as a result, underlined the pressing need for a political solution based on internationally agreed parameters and leading to a two-State solution. ... Israel must respect the right to peaceful protests and ensure the use of proportional measures when protecting its legitimate security interests. Urging all parties to take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation and act with utmost restraint, he said Israel's security forces must refrain from the excessive use of force against unarmed civilians. ... Those leading protests in Gaza, including Hamas and other groups, also had a responsibility to avoid provocations and ensure that they remained strictly non-violent. Condemning the rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, he underscored the European Union's clear, consolidated position on Jerusalem as a final status issue, vowing to continue to respect the international

consensus on that matter. ...

The representative of United Kingdom said while her delegation had abstained, it supported the two-State solution. However, the draft was imbalanced. She did not agree with the procedural decisions, noting that the majority of Member States had voted to condemn the actions of Hamas. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12028.doc.htm>

Protection of the Palestinian civilian population (A/ES-10/L.23)

<http://undocs.org/A/ES-10/L.23>

United States of America: amendment to draft resolution A/ES-10/L.23: Protection of the Palestinian civilian population (A/ES-10/L.24)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/ES-10/L.24>

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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>

Commons consideration of Lords amendments

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-06-13/debates/B2C7C836-6CAA-4356-9AC0-F405D5E08471/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-06-13/debates/B2C7C836-6CAA-4356-9AC0-F405D5E08471/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

Notice of amendments

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2017-2019/0111/18111.pdf>

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>

Scottish Parliament

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

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

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Consultations

** new or updated today

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>

Antisemitism: Survey of European Jews (closing date not stated)

<http://www.eurojews.eu/>

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