

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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Westminster Hall Debate

Anti-bullying Week

col 181WH Daniel Zeichner (Labour): ... with the rise of social media and technology, a whole range of new challenges has come along. The playground no longer stops when the bell goes. Whereas these issues could once have been dealt with in class, they now extend well beyond the playground, often on the way home and outside school. ...

col 184WH Others who also suffer include those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; ethnic or faith minorities; young carers; and looked-after children. The Anti-Bullying Alliance found that one child in four aged from seven to 15 reports being frequently bullied, while more than a third of disabled children and those with special educational needs are victims of regular bullying. Nearly half of school pupils say that their friends use discriminatory language towards LGBT people. Last year, a poll by the Diana Award found that 61% of school staff had witnessed racism-driven bullying. That is totally unacceptable, and it shows that even in 2018 we have a long way to go to stamp out racism entirely in our schools. ...

col 185WH Angela Crawley (SNP): ... The Scottish Government expect all schools to develop and implement an anti-bullying policy, which should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. ... We want all young people to learn tolerance, respect, equality and good citizenship to address and prevent prejudice, as well as to build healthy relationships.

col 186WH In November 2017, the Scottish Government published their anti-bullying guidance: "Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People". The guidance provides a holistic approach to anti-bullying that makes it clear that all types of bullying are unacceptable, and that adults involved in young people's lives have a role to play in preventing and responding to bullying. It includes guidance on prejudice-based bullying, recording and monitoring of online and offline bullying, labelling, and the impact and outcomes of bullying.

col 188WH Mike Kane (Labour): ... bullying can be devastating for the victim. It permeates every minute of every single day, even when the victim is not in the presence of those who are causing them harm. Bullying is intensified when it happens in a school environment, because in any given school day there will be times when no teacher or staff member is present to spot it and stop it. Nor is it confined to physical space ... an estimated 5.43 million young people in the UK have experienced cyber-bullying, with

1.26 million subjected daily to extreme cyber-bullying. ...

col 190WH The Minister for School Standards (Nick Gibb): ... Tackling bullying means creating a culture where difference is respected and bullying behaviour is not tolerated by staff, pupils and parents. ... There are pupils who are more likely to be targeted because of some young people's attitudes towards those who are different from themselves, which is not the way it should be. That is why, earlier this year, the Department for Education announced an additional £1 million investment to extend projects led by several anti-bullying organisations until March 2020 ...

That investment will enable the Anti-Bullying Alliance ... to extend its All Together programme, which focuses on reducing bullying of children with special educational needs and disabilities. ... The Anne Frank Trust will further develop its Free to Be debate programme, which encourages young people to think about the importance of tackling prejudice, discrimination and bullying. Over the 18-month extension, it will reach an additional 825 ambassadors and more than 8,000 workshop participants. The Diana Award will extend its peer-to-peer anti-bullying ambassadors programme ...

col 193WH The Government are committed to preventing and tackling bullying, but we know we cannot do that alone. We continue to work with schools and partner organisations to ensure that schools are a safe place for all. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-11-15/debates/D91220AD-5515-4B98-AB4B-DDF9E8EC003B/Anti-BullyingWeek>

The guidance referred to by Angela Crawley can be read at

<https://tinyurl.com/yc66ygvj>

Welsh Government

Organ donation consent rates in Wales highest in the UK

New data shows for the first time, a significant increase in the donation after brain stem death (DBD) consent rates in Wales (88.2%) when compared to England (73.3%).

The donation after circulatory death (DCD) consent rate in Wales has also improved and is now 68% compared to England 59.8%.

Wales now has the highest combined DBD and DCD consent rate in the UK at 80.5%, when compared to England (66.2%), Scotland (63.6%) and Northern Ireland (66.7).

On 1 December 2015, Wales became the first country in the UK to move to a soft opt-out system of consent to organ donation. This means that if a person has not registered a decision to become an organ donor (opted in) or a decision not to become an organ donor (opted out), they will be considered as having no objection to being an organ donor – this is known as deemed consent. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://gov.wales/newsroom/health-and-social-services/2018/consent-rates/?lang=en>

The data referred to is not yet available online.

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Hate Crime

S5W-19910 George Adam (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what its plans are for taking forward the development of a Hate Crime Bill, and how people can take part in the process.

Reply from Humza Yousaf: A consultation document based on Lord Bracadale's recommendations from his independent review of Hate Crime Legislation will be available to the public via Citizen Space from 14 November until 24 February 2019. In parallel we will be undertaking a series of consultation events across

Scotland from December until early February to increase the opportunity for stakeholders and the public to respond to the consultation in part or in whole. The consultation will also explore the findings of the Working Group on Defining Sectarianism in Scots Law, and the Working Group's report will also be published on 14 November. The findings from the consultation exercise will inform the content of consolidated and modernised Hate Crime legislation.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-19910>

Information about the consultation and associated events referred to above can be read at <https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

The report referred to above can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/ycllav6m>

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Israel

United Nations

Palestinian Rights Committee Recommends 4 Draft Resolutions for Action during Upcoming General Assembly Debate on Question of Palestine

... the first three draft resolutions deal with the work of that Committee, the Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights and the Department of Public Information's Special Information Programme. The fourth draft deals with peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine ...

Riyad H. Mansour, Permanent Observer for the State of Palestine, noted that the first three are very similar to the 2017 texts, with some technical updates. The fourth is also essentially the same, with an addition to operative paragraph 25 calling upon all States to honour their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Committee also heard a briefing by Michael Lynk, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, who described the situation in the Gaza Strip as one of the most burning issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. ...

He went on to emphasize that Israel's 11-year-long blockade of Gaza must end soon, as the enclave is crumbling under its effects, which amount to collective punishment in clear violation of Israeli responsibilities under international humanitarian law. ...

Meanwhile, Israel is entrenching its sovereignty claim through annexation, having already integrated West Bank infrastructure into its domestic network, he continued. Not one of the six parties in the coalition governing Israel genuinely supports a two-State solution, he said, stressing that Israel's settlement and annexation activities are prohibited under international law. The Security Council has stated that such activities are in grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and that annexation is in violation of the United Nations Charter, he noted, emphasizing that Israel has rarely paid a meaningful price for its defiance. ...

Mr. Mansour said that Israel's recent escalation of aggression was sparked by a botched operation conducted by that country's armed forces and led to "a very bloody aggression against the Gaza Strip". While acknowledging efforts by the Government of Egypt to mitigate the situation, he noted that despite his request that the Security Council condemn the aggression, "it did not rise to its responsibilities and did not act in an effective way". ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gapal1416.doc.htm>

Third Committee Approves 6 Drafts on Child Marriage, Fighting Nazi Glorification amid Discord over Long-Agreed Reproductive Rights Language, Politicized Motives

... the Committee took up a draft resolution titled “The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination” ...

The representative of Egypt, introducing the draft on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), said the Palestinians suffer from the longest occupation in modern history, which has denied them the enjoyment of fundamental rights.

The Chair replied to the representative of Egypt that the representative of Israel had requested a recorded vote on the matter.

The representative of Israel, making a general statement, said this resolution, which has been introduced on multiple occasions, has done nothing to promote peace. For peace to be achieved in the Middle East, Palestinians must negotiate with Israel rather than ignore it.

The Committee then approved the draft resolution ...

By its terms, the Assembly would reaffirm the right of Palestinians to self-determination, including to an independent State of Palestine, and urge all States and United Nations agencies to continue to support Palestinians in the early realization of that right. ...

An observer of the State of Palestine, making a general statement, said the overwhelming support for this resolution represents the continued support for the right of Palestinians to self-determination. It in no way obstructs the search for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, but rather reflects the collective will to uphold international law. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gashc4253.doc.htm>

(Note that another section of this lengthy press release is included under “Other Relevant Information” below.)

The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination (A/C.3/73/L.29)

<https://undocs.org/A/C.3/73/L.29>

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Other Relevant Information

OSCE/ODIHR

On International Day for Tolerance, OSCE/ODIHR Director urges states to renew efforts to counter hate-motivated crime as new hate crime data published

... ODIHR Director Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir called on OSCE participating States to strengthen their efforts to counter hate crime.

“The International Day for Tolerance is an opportunity for us to send the clear message that there can be no space for discrimination or intolerance in our societies. Any attack against someone simply because of who he or she is reinforces a message of hate and rejection that can undermine the security of our societies. This is why every single OSCE participating State has committed to make great efforts to counter hate crime,” the ODIHR Director said. “Collecting data is only the first step, but it puts into place elements that can be used by public institutions and civil society to make a real difference for victims.”

The 2017 data ... contain information provided by participating States, civil society and international organizations. This includes official data reported by 39 states, including disaggregated official hate crime statistics for 23 countries. These are complemented by information on hate incidents in 47 participating States, as reported by 124 civil society

groups, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and OSCE field operations. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.osce.org/odihr/403199>

2017 Hate Crime Data

<http://hatecrime.osce.org/what-do-we-know>

2017 Hate Crime Data: Key findings (infographic)

<http://hatecrime.osce.org/sites/default/files/documents/Website/Infographics/2017-HC-Overview.png>

United Nations

Third Committee Approves 6 Drafts on Child Marriage, Fighting Nazi Glorification amid Discord over Long-Agreed Reproductive Rights Language, Politicized Motives

... the Committee then took up a draft resolution titled “Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance” ...

The representative of the Russian Federation, introducing the draft, recalled that 70 years ago, the anti-Hitler coalition gave rise to the United Nations, a triumph over nationalism and hate that reinforced the Nuremberg tribunal. ... He noted current attempts to rewrite history in the name of narrow-minded geopolitical interests, evidenced in new memorials and the renaming of streets that honoured collaborators of Nazism. Such actions are incompatible with the obligations of Member States. Xenophobic rhetoric has become part of electoral campaigns, marked by statements justified as “free speech”. ...

The representative of the United States expressed concern over the politicized roots of the draft resolution. ... Her country does not need to defend its position on Nazism, she said, recalling that the greatest fear the Nazis had was of the United States, as it stood for liberty and humanism. A draft resolution should honour that truth.

However, the current draft was borne of a political controversy, she said. It is an annual power play by one country attempting to exert influence over a region without genuine efforts to actually combat Nazism, and instead, seeking to criminalize free speech and expression. The United States is disgusted by anti-Semitism and fought a war against it. However, the solution to hate “is not censorship and will only be found in the free marketplace of ideas. ...

The representative of Ukraine ... said millions of Ukrainians made an enormous contribution to the victory over Nazism. While reiterating his country’s condemnation of Nazism, racism, xenophobia and intolerance, he said this draft resolution has nothing to do with Nazism and other forms of intolerance. He condemned the Russian Federation’s cynical attempt to present itself as a champion of the fight against Nazism and neo-Nazism while perpetrating crimes against other nations. ...

The Committee then approved the draft resolution...

By its terms, the Assembly would express alarm over the spread in many parts of the world of various extremist political parties, movements and groups, including neo-Nazis and skinhead groups, as well as racist extremist movements and ideologies — and further — over the fact that this trend has resulted in the implementation of discriminatory measures, policies and bills at the local or national levels. It would call for the universal ratification and implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and urge those States parties that have not yet done so to consider making the declaration under its article 14. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/gashc4253.doc.htm>

(Note that another section of this lengthy press release is included under "Israel" above.)

Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance (A/C.3/73/L.53/Rev.1)

<https://undocs.org/A/C.3/73/L.53/REV.1>

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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>

House of Lords Library Briefing

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2018-0123/LLN-2018-0123.pdf>

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/>

The future of civil partnership in Scotland (closing date 21 December 2018)

<https://consult.gov.scot/family-law/the-future-of-civil-partnership-in-scotland/>

2021 Census: Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland (closing date 9 January 2019)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/dfp/2021-census-outputs-strategy-consultation-for-northern-ireland-document.pdf>

Draft guidance to challenge bullying in schools [Wales only] (closing date 15 February 2019)
<https://beta.gov.wales/draft-guidance-challenge-bullying-schools>

One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here (closing date 24 February 2019)
<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

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