

# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Lords Debate

#### **Civil Partnership (Opposite-sex Couples) Regulations 2019**

*col 1166* **The Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford):** ... [the Regulations'] main purpose is to allow opposite-sex couples in England and Wales to form civil partnerships. The Government want to see more people formalise their relationship in the way that they want with the person they love. ...

This instrument therefore amends the eligibility criteria in the Civil Partnership Act 2004 to allow opposite-sex couples to register civil partnerships under the law of England and Wales. It provides specific protections for religious organisations and persons acting on their behalf in relation to civil partnerships. Importantly, the regulations prevent religious organisations and persons acting on their behalf from being compelled to do specified acts, such as allowing religious premises to be used for civil partnerships. The instrument also ensures that, where religious organisations do choose to participate in civil partnerships, they can distinguish between opposite-sex and same-sex civil partnerships, as with marriage. ...

*col 1167* Our approach on conversion maintains a difference between opposite-sex and same-sex couples in terms of their ability to convert their civil partnerships into marriage. Importantly, these two groups are not in a directly comparable position. The right to convert a civil partnership into marriage was introduced to enable same-sex couples to marry without having to dissolve their civil partnership, as marriage historically had been denied to them. That same consideration does not apply to opposite-sex civil partners, who have always been able to marry. ...

*col 1171* **Lord Cashman (Non-affiliated):** ... within these regulations, we reinforce the principle of discrimination. ... We reinforce the concept that religious organisations and bodies can choose to discriminate by saying that they do not or will not celebrate same-sex civil partnerships. Surely, rather than reinforcing the principle of discrimination within the regulations, we should be encouraging and reinforcing the principle of openness, and moving towards a universal celebration. Equally, opposite-sex couples cannot convert their civil partnership into marriage, so again we are reinforcing the principle of discrimination and inequality. ...

**col 1174 Lord Lexden (Conservative):** ... I have brought up on a number of occasions in this House the question of why the Government feel it is acceptable to continue to withhold from long-term cohabiting siblings who choose to live together for companionship and mutual support all the legal rights and fiscal safeguards they offer, through civil partnerships, to couples they presume to be in sexual relationships.

Do the Government think that two siblings who live together in mutually supportive and financially independent relationships are less in need of the legal protection and fiscal safeguards afforded by civil partnerships than sexual couples? If not, why do they continue to reject both the argument that they should extend civil partnerships to long-term cohabiting couples and the suggestion that they should address that discrimination through other means—for a start, by reforming the rules governing inheritance tax so that bereaved survivors of a sibling couple are at least spared losing the joint home to inheritance tax on the death of the first sibling? ...

**col 1175 Baroness Barker (Liberal Democrat):** ... at every step of the way, the Government have felt that they have to pick their way round strong religious sensitivities. ... there is a fundamental flaw in all the reasoning as a result. We were told, way back when we were looking at civil partnerships, in definite terms by evangelical Christians and all the rest, that civil partnerships would undermine marriage. ... at every stage we had to give in to the idea that civil partnerships were somehow a threat. ...

**col 1181 Lord Collins of Highbury (Labour):** ... When civil partnerships were first introduced in this House, the Church took a position against them. Now, I think the Church recognises their value. Certainly, the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury has written strong and powerful articles recognising the value of civil partnerships and the loving relationships which are so important. ...

**To read the full transcript see**

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-11-05/debates/3184F27B-407A-47E3-A4B8-F865CE5FF82A/CivilPartnership\(Opposite-SexCouples\)Regulations2019](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-11-05/debates/3184F27B-407A-47E3-A4B8-F865CE5FF82A/CivilPartnership(Opposite-SexCouples)Regulations2019)

## House of Commons Written Answers

### Textbooks: Middle East

**Andrew Percy (Conservative) [8223]** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department provided guidance to the authors of the Pearson Edexcel textbook, *The Middle East: Conflict, Crisis and Change*, before publication of that book.

**Nick Gibb:** The content of textbooks is a matter for individual publishers. The Department is aware concerns have been raised about this textbook and that Pearson has launched an independent review and will take action if necessary.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-10-31/8223/>

### Hate Crime

**Stephen Morgan (Labour) [8276]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of trends in the level of police (a) numbers and (b) funding on the ability of the police to investigate hate crime.

**Kit Malthouse:** The Home Office continues to monitor crime levels and officer numbers. Many factors impact on crime levels. More reporting of 'hidden' crimes, recording improvements and some genuine increases in offending, have all contributed to recent increases in recorded crime.

The Government is committed to recruiting 20,000 additional police officers over the next three years. In 2020/21 the Government is investing £750 million in policing to enable the first tranche of recruitment. Hampshire Police will be able to recruit

156 officers by the end of March 2021.

The Home Office is supporting the police to respond to hate crimes committed online through funding of £200,000 this year to the National Police Chiefs' Council to run the National Online Hate Crime Hub, which assists the police to respond to reports more efficiently.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-10-31/8276/>

## House of Lords Written Answer

### Meat: Ritual Slaughter

**The Earl of Shrewsbury (Conservative)** [HL318] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their policy on the labelling of meat from the non-stun slaughter of animals.

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The Government encourages the highest standards of welfare at slaughter, would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter, and also respects the rights of Jews and Muslims to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs.

There are no domestic or European Regulations that require the labelling of Halal or Kosher meat, but where any information of this nature is provided it must be accurate and must not be misleading to the consumer. The Government expects industry to provide consumers with the necessary information for them to make an informed choice about their food.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-22/HL318/>

## Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia

### Media Guidelines: Reporting on Muslims and Islam

<http://seureservercdn.net/50.62.174.113/hnv.9d6.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Media-guidelines-reporting-on-Muslims-and-Islam-full-report.pdf>

## Welsh Government Fol Response

### Antisemitism

#### Q1. Definition of antisemitism

**Q1a. Has the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Antisemitism ('IHRA Definition') been adopted by the Welsh Government?**

**Q1b. If it has been adopted, please provide the date that the motion to do so was approved.**

**Q1c. Was the IHRA Definition adopted in its entirety including all of the examples?**

**Q1d. If all of the examples were not adopted, which ones were omitted?**

The Welsh Government fully adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Antisemitism ('IHRA Definition') on 16 May 2017. The following written statements, by the former First Minister, fully outline the adoption of the entire IHRA Definition:

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-has-adopted-international-holocaust-remembrance-alliances>

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-welsh-government-confirms-it-has-adopted-international-holocaust-remembrance>

## **Q2. Codes of Conduct**

**Q2a. Has the IHRA Definition been incorporated into the employees' code of conduct and conditions of employment?**

**Q2b. Who is responsible for investigating or monitoring alleged breaches of the employees' codes of conduct? Please provide their name, job title, e-mail address and direct telephone number**

Civil Servants are subject to the Civil Service Code set for the Civil Service by the UK Government Cabinet Office. Although separate Codes exist for the UK Government, Scottish Government and Welsh Government, the separate administrations are not able to vary the terms, rather the Codes differ only in terms of reference to the Ministers to whom officials of the different administrations are responsible.

Peter Kennedy, Human Resources Director is responsible for investigating and monitoring all cases of alleged staff misconduct, of whatever nature. On a day-to-day basis the lead is the HR Case Advisory Team which can be contacted at [HRCaseAdviserTeam@gov.wales](mailto:HRCaseAdviserTeam@gov.wales) and 03000 255454. Trained investigating officers, who are independent of our Human Resources Department, investigate any cases of alleged misconduct.

## **Q3. Complaints**

**Q3a. How many formal complaints of antisemitic conduct have the Welsh Government considered between 1st January 2017 and 31st December 2018 against employees?**

**Q3b. How many complaints resulted in disciplinary action?**

**Q3c. How many complaints resulted in no disciplinary action?**

There have been no complaints of antisemitic conduct within the Welsh Government between 1st January 2017 and 31st December 2018 against employees. ...

## **Q4. Equality, diversity & training**

**Q4a. Who is responsible for complying with the Welsh Government's legal obligations in relation to equality and diversity? Please provide their name, job title, e-mail address and direct telephone number.**

**Q4b. What training does the Welsh Government provide to its employees specifically on antisemitism as opposed to generally against all forms of discrimination prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?**

**Q4c. If such specific training on antisemitism is provided, is it conducted by the Welsh Government in-house or is it outsourced to a training provider?**

**Q4d. If such specific training on antisemitism is outsourced, which organisation(s) provide the training?**

... The Welsh Government expects its employees to have the opportunity to flourish and reach their potential - regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. It wants to encourage a rich and diverse workplace, where everyone feels able to be themselves, and no one feels discriminated against. The Welsh Government has set out actions to support this ambition in its Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan. The Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is overseen by the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, which is chaired by the Board Equality Champion. Steering Group members include diversity champions, staff network chairs, Trade Union Side and Human Resources. Secretariat is provided by the Equality in the Workplace Team.

The Equalities team in the Welsh Government, has run two antisemitism training courses for Welsh Government officials and local authority Regional Community Cohesion Coordinators. The courses were run by a reformed synagogue in Cardiff and are available on request should any further training be required.

The Welsh Government also provides funding to the Holocaust Educational Trust to run their 'Lessons from Auschwitz' Programme, which includes meeting survivors and taking Welsh school students in Year 12 and 13 to Auschwitz. Every year Welsh Government

officials are offered a place on this Programme. ...

**To read the response in full see**

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/ATISN%2013469.pdf>

## Police Service of Northern Ireland

**Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2018/19**

<https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/2018-19/hate-motivated-incidents-and-crimes-in-northern-ireland-2004-05-to-2018-19.pdf>

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## Holocaust

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

**Edward Leigh (Conservative)** [6200] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 229098, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation (a) spending to date, (b) by the end of 2019 and (c) by the time construction of the memorial commences.

**Jake Berry:** The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation is an independent advisory body on which there is no spend from the public purse other than in staff costs for civil servant support which are not disaggregated.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-10-28/6200/>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-06/229098/>

#### **Channel Islands: Monuments**

**Andrew Rosindell (Conservative)** [6266] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of a memorial to people who suffered under Nazi occupation in Jersey and the Channel Islands during the Second World War.

**Jake Berry:** There are a number of memorial plaques to the people who suffered under Nazi occupation in the Channel Islands. We envisage that their story will be featured in the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens, Westminster.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-10-28/6266/>

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## Israel

**See also the House of Commons written answer on “Textbooks: Middle East” which has been included in the “Home Affairs” section above.**

### House of Commons Oral Answers

#### **Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

**T5. Bob Blackman (Conservative):** ... Five of the 15 members of the Hamas political bureau have been designated as terrorists by the United Kingdom and the USA, but in the UK we proscribe only the military wing of Hamas. Is it not time that we proscribed the entirety of Hamas, rather than only Hamas as a military organisation and a terrorist organisation? Does my right hon. Friend agree that until Hamas renounces violence, celebrates peace and brings peace to the middle east, there will never be a peaceful solution between Israel and the Palestinian state? [900327]

**The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa (Andrew Murrison):** ... I thank my hon. Friend for his important question. He is aware that we do of course proscribe the military element of Hamas, and we have a policy of non-engagement with Hamas in its entirety. Until Hamas sets its face against violence, accepts the Quartet principles and engages with the political process, it will be outside the tent.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-11-05/debates/9DFCE314-5095-4DBC-9778-E28B3C8E3D46/TopicalQuestions#contribution-4845312E-938A-484E-9A0F-0B88BB51FB7A>

#### **Topical Questions: Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

**T7. Alex Cunningham (Labour):** ... This morning, Israel’s Supreme Court confirmed its Government’s decision to deport Human Rights Watch’s director for Israel and Palestine, Omar Shakir. That decision comes amid the worrying closing of civil society space for those advocating human rights in that country. Will the Government urge Israel to reverse its decision and allow Human Rights Watch to continue its vital work? [900330]

**Dominic Raab:** I know at first hand from my time working on human rights in war crimes and for human rights NGO, Liberty, how important the work of Human Rights Watch is. We want to see that continue, and of course we support it in general terms. We discuss a whole range of issues with our Israeli partners. The Israeli Supreme Court has a strong record of independence and has held the Executive to account on many occasions. It is important that we respect the separation of powers there as well.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-11-05/debates/9DFCE314-5095-4DBC-9778-E28B3C8E3D46/TopicalQuestions#contribution-780A61E8-B509-4AC8-AFBB-A28ECC12387D>

### House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Palestinians: Press Freedom**

**Bob Blackman (Conservative)** [7719] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his counterpart in the Palestinian Authority on the effect of the implementation of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 on freedom of the press in that region.

**Andrew Murrison:** The UK supports calls for greater media freedoms in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The evidence is clear: where journalists and media organisations are free to do their work, societies are more prosperous and resilient. Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem regularly raise the

issue of freedom of expression, including the revision of relevant legislation, with the Palestinian Authority. Her Majesty's Consul General in Jerusalem raised this most recently on 30 October. We encourage the Palestinian Authority to ensure the harmonisation of Palestinian laws with International Human Rights conventions to which it has acceded, in order to guarantee that freedom of expression and the generally free and pluralistic media environment are preserved.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-10-30/7719/>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### Gaza: Freezing of Assets

**Lord Hylton (Crossbench)** [HL359] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, and intend to make, to the Palestinian Authority, following reports that it has frozen bank accounts belonging to Palestinian non-governmental organisations in the Gaza Strip.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Her Majesty's Consul-General to Jerusalem raised this issue with the Palestinian Authority on 5 November. Our Consulate-General in Jerusalem frequently urges the Palestinian authorities to take steps within its grasp to improve the conditions in Gaza. The UK also continues to encourage the reconciliation process in which the Palestinian Authority resumes control of Gaza and restores effective and accountable governance.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-23/HL359/>

### Israeli Settlements: Palestinians

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL476] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of violence by Israeli settlers against (1) Palestinians, their farmland and olive groves, and (2) human rights workers supporting Palestinians, in the West Bank.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are troubled by the increase in settler violence. Many recent incidents – including assaults on Palestinian farmers, the setting fire to olive trees and stealing of produce – have coincided with the Palestinian olive harvest, which began earlier this month. We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. Under international law, Israel, as the occupying power, has an obligation to take all measures in its power to protect the Palestinian population from acts of violence. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised the increase in settler violence with the Israeli authorities on 30 October. We have stressed the importance of the Israel security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance and bring those responsible to justice. We are also clear that no human rights or aid workers should be at risk of violence and that they must have the protection they need from the responsible authorities to allow them to do their jobs in safety.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-28/HL476/>

### Israel: Sanctions and UN Resolutions

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL477] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they take to ensure that UN resolutions and sanctions against the government of Israel are enforced.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We believe peace will only come through negotiations between the parties, but international action has a role in facilitating progress. We have long supported balanced UN resolutions, including United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 that addressed incitement and settlements. But resolutions that politicise neutral UN bodies or risk hardening positions on both sides, do little to advance peace or mutual understanding. We believe that imposing sanctions on Israel or supporting anti-Israeli boycotts would not support our efforts to progress the peace process and achieve a negotiated solution.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-28/HL477/>

#### **Israeli Settlements: Trade**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL478] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the call by the UN independent expert on human rights in the Palestinian territories for an international ban on all products made in Israeli settlements as a step to potentially end Israel's occupation of the West Bank; and what steps they intend to take in response to that call.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While it has long been our position that Israeli settlement activity is illegal, we believe that imposing sanctions on Israel or supporting anti-Israeli boycotts would not support our efforts to progress the peace process and achieve a negotiated solution. We understand the concerns of people who do not wish to purchase goods exported from Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). It was in order to enable consumers to make a more fully informed decision concerning the products they buy that, in December 2009, the UK introduced voluntary guidelines to enable produce from Israeli settlements in the OPTs to be specifically labelled as such. Products from Israeli settlements do not receive preferential tariff treatment under the EU-Israel Association Agreement which currently governs our trade with Israel, nor the UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement which will govern our trade after the UK leaves the EU.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-28/HL478/>

#### **West Bank: Children**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL479] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they intend to take to protect Palestinian children in the West Bank from violence, including the use of live ammunition by the Israeli army.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Government is very concerned at the high numbers of Palestinians killed by Israel Defense Forces both in the West Bank and Gaza. We have raised the issue with the Israeli authorities, encouraging them to carry out transparent investigations into whether use of live fire had been appropriate. The UK has repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israel Defense Forces police non-violent protests and the border areas, including the use of live ammunition. We will continue to do so. We also stress the importance of protecting civilians, especially children and medical personnel. We call on Israel to adhere to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-28/HL479/>

#### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL480] To ask Her Majesty's Government what

representations they are making to the government of Israel about the number of injuries to unarmed Palestinians caused by live ammunition.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the way Israel Defense Forces police protests and the border areas, including the use of live ammunition. We call on Israel to adhere to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-28/HL480/>

### **West Bank: Energy Supply**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL481] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the reduction of power supplies to the West Bank and the reported denial by the government of Israel to alternative sources of power on the human rights of those living there; and what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel about increasing power supply to the West Bank.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The British Government is aware of the decision of the Israel Electric Corporation to cut power to parts of the West Bank, citing outstanding payments from Palestinian power distributors. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised this issue with the Israeli authorities on 30 October. We continue to urge both sides of the dispute to reach a prompt and pragmatic resolution, ensuring minimum disruption to the lives of ordinary Palestinians. We recognise the need for improvements in infrastructure, employment, energy and water supply to improve living conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-28/HL481/>

### **Jerusalem: Religious Buildings**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL537] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the government of Israel's Public Security Minister on 11 October that non-Muslims may soon be allowed to worship inside the al-Aqsa Mosque, what assessment they have made of the impact of any such change on the status of religious sites, in particular the al-Aqsa Mosque; and what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel about that proposal.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Haram Al-Sharif / Temple Mount and Jerusalem hold particular significance for many groups around the globe, especially the three Abrahamic faiths of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The UK is committed to working with all parties to maintain calm, avoid provocation and uphold the status quo to ensure the safety and the security of the Al Haram Al Sharif / Temple Mount and all who worship there.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-29/HL537/>

### **Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL538] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of incursions by Israeli settlers, supported by the Israeli army, into Palestinian religious and archaeological sites in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, including the al-Aqsa Mosque.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance and bring those responsible to justice. We have also stressed the importance of the Israel security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. In our

meetings with the Israeli authorities we regularly raise the need to respect the status quo of the holy sites in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised this issue with the Israeli authorities on 16 October.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-29/HL538/>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL539] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about reports of an elderly mosque imam being seriously injured after being hit by seven bullets in Ramla city on 12 October.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government strongly condemns all forms of violence and incitement to violence. The perpetual cycle of violence does not serve anyone's interests, and must end.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-10-29/HL539/>

## **Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

### **West Bank settlements: Foreign Office statement**

A Foreign Office spokesperson said: The UK condemns the Israeli authorities' recent advancement of plans for over 2,300 housing units across the West Bank.

Settlements are illegal under international law and undermine the physical viability of the two-state solution. The UK calls on Israel to halt such counterproductive action.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/west-bank-settlements-foreign-office-statement>

## **United Nations**

### **Palestine refugee agency chief resigns amidst mismanagement probe**

Outgoing UNRWA chief, Pierre Krähenbühl, was placed on leave earlier in the day, as UN chief António Guterres named Christian Saunders acting Officer-in-Charge of the agency, based on preliminary report findings from the UN's internal oversight body, OIOS.

The findings excluded "fraud or misappropriation of funds" on the part of Mr. Krähenbühl, however, there are "managerial issues that need to be addressed", the UN said, in a statement to correspondents in New York. ...

Mr. Dujarric said the Swiss national's resignation was "effective immediately" but gave no other details ... Allegations of misconduct first surfaced in media reports last July, detailing a leaked internal UN ethics probe, which allegedly accused Mr. Krähenbühl and other senior team members of abuses of authority for personal gain, and suppressing internal dissent at the agency. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/11/1050801>

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## Other Relevant Information

### European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

#### **National antisemitism data collection falls short of what is needed**

Without adequate data, government and civil society cannot formulate effective responses to antisemitism that continues to haunt Europe. FRA's latest annual overview of antisemitism data 2009-2019 identifies large gaps in recording antisemitic incidents in a way that allows to collect adequate official data across the EU.

In [FRA's survey of Jews](#) in 12 EU Member States, 85% believe that antisemitism has increased in their country over the last five years. Meanwhile in a [public survey](#) last year across the EU, half of the respondents say that antisemitism is a problem in their country.

Despite this, the antisemitism overview identifies six EU Member States that lack official data on reported antisemitic incidents for 2018. ...

It also draws attention to the problem of high-levels of under-reporting by victims. This can mask the true extent of antisemitism. It underlines the need for authorities to encourage victims to come forward and to be able to properly record antisemitic acts. ...

The updated report compiles available data on antisemitic incidents collected by international, governmental and non-governmental sources, from 1 January 2008 until 31 December 2018.

Findings from FRA antisemitism survey complement the official and unofficial data sources.

It also outlines, for the first time, how the 13 Member States, which have adopted or endorsed the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's [non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism](#)([link is external](#)), use or plan to use it. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2019/national-antisemitism-data-collection-falls-short-what-needed>

#### **Antisemitism – Overview of data available in the European Union 2008–2018**

[https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/fra-2019-antisemitism-overview-2008-2018\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-antisemitism-overview-2008-2018_en.pdf)

## United Nations

### **Antisemitism, intolerance, can be unlearned, Guterres tells New York commemoration**

António Guterres was speaking at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York which was marking the 81st anniversary of the Kristallnacht pogrom carried out by the Nazi regime. ...

“Decades after the Holocaust, the world’s oldest hatred is still with us”, he remarked, before listing recent incidents across the world targeting Jews.

They ranged from the vandalization of Jewish graves and the defacement of a Holocaust memorial, to the mass shooting at a synagogue in Pittsburgh last year - the worst antisemitic attack in United States history.

At the same time, other forms of intolerance are also taking a deadly toll, Mr. Guterres stated, citing examples such as church bombings, massacres at mosques, and assaults on migrants and refugees.

“Hatred kills,” he said. “But hatred also works in insidious ways to undermine relations between people and the foundations of society.”

Terrorists and neo-Nazis are ramping up recruitment and radicalization, he continued, while the Internet has helped to spread bigotry and violent misogyny....

The Secretary-General called for urgent action by parents, teachers and political leaders “before underground hatred becomes an overt and alarming new normal.” ...

“Education must be a key part of this preventive approach, and I am announcing today that

I intend to convene a conference on the role of education in addressing and building resilience against hate speech,” he revealed.

“We are also focusing on the protection of religious sites in the wake of deadly attacks on mosques in New Zealand, the Easter church bombings in Sri Lanka and other assaults. Just last month in Germany, a gunman killed two people while trying to storm a synagogue on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar.” ...

“People are not born to hate; intolerance is learned and so can be prevented and unlearned,” he stated. “I will continue to call out antisemitism, racism and other forms of hatred.”

**To read the full press release see**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/11/1050911>

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

### **UK Parliament**

#### **\*\* Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/divorcedissolutionandseparation.html>

The Bill failed to complete its passage through Parliament before Dissolution. This means the Bill will make no further progress.

#### **\*\* Domestic Abuse Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/domesticabuse.html>

The Bill failed to complete its passage through Parliament before Dissolution. This means the Bill will make no further progress.

### **Scottish Parliament**

#### **Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112997.aspx>

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## **Consultations** \*\* new or updated today

#### **Welsh Government Strategic Equality Objectives 2020-24** (closing date 19 November 2019)

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-09/strategic-equality-objectives-2020-2024-consultation.pdf>

#### **\*\* Draft content of the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Specified Type A Procedures) (Scotland) Regulations** (closing date 11 December 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/population-health/human-tissue-regulations-2019/>

#### **\*\* Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill** (closing date 31 January 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/113449.aspx>

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