



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Written Answers

Religious Hatred: Islam

Neil Coyle (Labour) [3768] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what progress he has made on adopting the APPG for Muslims definition of Islamophobia.

Luke Hall: It is unacceptable for anyone to feel unsafe while practicing their religion, and this Government will never allow prejudice and discrimination of any kind against the Muslim community. We will continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to Anti-Muslim hatred.

The definition proposed by the APPG is problematic as it is not in line with the Equality Act of 2010 and could also have consequences for freedom of speech. We recognise the importance of this matter and will explore and interrogate the issue in further detail.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-15/3768/>

Information about the APPG for Muslims definition of Islamophobia can be read at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d2febbd1a90cffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea3352f531a6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf>

Schools

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [3845] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of schools were run by (a) local authorities, (b) churches and (c) academies and (d) free schools on (i) 5 April 2010 and (ii) each subsequent year.

Nick Gibbs: Information on the number and type of schools is collected in the school census and has been published from 2010 onwards in the statistical release 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers>.

These include figures on the number of schools by both type (for example academy, voluntary aided or voluntary controlled) and religious character. A school may have

a religious character but not be run directly by a church body. The relevant table for 2010 is table 2b and the relevant table for the most recent year (2019) table 2a. Data is collected as at January each year so a count on 5 April 2010 is not available.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-15/3845/>

Welsh Government Ministerial Statement

Religion, Values and Ethics

Kirsty Williams (Minister for Education): In October 2019, Welsh Government issued a consultation which sought views on a proposed name change for Religious Education (RE). The possible names we consulted on were “Religion, Values and Ethics” or “Religions and Worldviews”.

The responses clearly showed support for changing the name of RE.

The most popular choice from respondents was ‘Religion, Values and Ethics’. I can therefore confirm that from 2022, RE will be renamed “Religion, Values and Ethics” in the new curriculum.

A Framework has been developed which will provide guidance on the relationship between Religion, Values and Ethics, the Agreed Syllabus and the Areas of Learning and Experience in our new curriculum. We plan to consult on the draft framework shortly.

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-religion-values-and-ethics>

TOP

Holocaust

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Communities Secretary visits Jerusalem for fifth World Holocaust Forum

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP called for a renewed commitment to stand up to antisemitism and prejudice as he joined the fifth World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem. ...

He also undertook a tour of the World Holocaust Remembrance Center and Israel’s official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem. ...

Following the visit, Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said: I was honoured to attend the World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem. It was heartening to see leaders of all faiths and nations come together to remember the Holocaust and renew our promise to victims and survivors.

My tour of Yad Vashem was equally as moving. I was especially touched by the memorial showing that out of so much darkness we can still find light and hope.

The UK takes a zero-tolerance approach to antisemitism at home and abroad, and as Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, I have a profound responsibility to root out antisemitism wherever it arises.

We will take a zero-tolerance approach in cracking down on those who spread this vile poison, which has no place in any civilised society. Our message is simple; such an atrocity must not, and will not, take place again. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/communities-secretary-visits-jerusalem-for-fifth-world-holocaust-forum>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon: On the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the UK renews its pledge to always remember and commemorate the millions of innocent lives lost during the holocaust and to continue to stand up against antisemitism and all forms of bigotry. #WeRemember

<https://twitter.com/tariqahmadbt/status/1220412163522777093>

Council of Europe

Ministerial Conference – International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Speech by the Deputy Secretary General

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 to ensure that human rights are protected against any abuse and misuse of power by the state. To ensure that individuals and groups within our societies are safe against state orchestrated hate and violence.

Promoting and protecting human rights in Europe was a response to what our continent witnessed around the Second World War.

In part the European Convention on Human Rights was a response to the holocaust itself. But fighting racism and hate is a never ending task.

Seventy five years later, antisemitism is on the rise threatening Jewish people and communities and our democracies as a whole.

Our European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, ECRI, has long drawn attention to the need for determined action against this scourge.

So remembrance is important.

It is a tribute to the millions of victims of the Holocaust.

It is imperative to our dignity.

Remembrance is also important because it helps us to understand the genesis of evil, its potential to return and the fragility of our democracies.

It is essential to stability and peace, for living together in Europe.

These are guiding principles for the Council of Europe; they underpin our fight against discrimination and hate speech, our work on education for democratic citizenship, our history teaching programme, including training of teachers, the European Cultural Route of Jewish Heritage and more.

An approach indeed underlined by the conclusions of our 47 foreign ministers last year in Helsinki, and now by the finalisation of a Recommendation on “Passing on Remembrance of the Holocaust and preventing crimes against humanity” by the Committee of Ministers. In this endeavour, the 2020 IHRA Ministerial Declaration of today, is very timely and welcome.

This is why we are pleased to be here today and are determined to continue to work with IHRA and other partners in this important endeavour in the future.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/deputy-secretary-general/-/ministerial-conference-international-holocaust-remembrance-alliance-ihra->

TOP

Israel

House of Lords Written Answers

West Bank: Health Services

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL355] To ask Her Majesty's Government what

representations they intend to make to the government of Israel about reports that the only vehicle available to a medical team that provides assistance to 1,500 Palestinians in the West Bank has been confiscated by Israel.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Free movement of patients and medical personnel is vital to the effectiveness of care in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). Ambulance and permit delays can lead to missed appointments and interrupted treatments, endangering the health and lives of patients. That is why we need a lasting peace agreement which ensures that all those who are in need of medical attention have access to healthcare provisions. We have made clear to the Israeli authorities the importance of medical assistance being available to Palestinians, most recently on 30 October 2019.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-13/HL355/>

Palestinians: Recognition of States

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL356] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to raise the legal status of Palestinians in international law by recognising Palestine as a state; if so, when; and if not, why not.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we are clear that we want to see the creation of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian state - living in peace and security, side by side with Israel. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objectives of peace and the two state solution. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-13/HL356/>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill

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

Education (Assemblies) Bill

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

Scottish Parliament

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill

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

TOP

Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 6 days**

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill (closing date 31 January 2020)

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

Harassment and sexual misconduct in higher education (closing date 27 March 2020)
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/76f6bdd3-bb14-4956-b089-cd1598323d55/consultation-on-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-in-higher-education.pdf>

[TOP](#)

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438