



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Israel

### House of Commons Oral Answers

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**Afzal Khan (Labour):** ... Israeli annexations are a violation of international law and jeopardise any chance of a two-state solution. I would like to believe that a two-state solution is not a lost cause, but that is only possible if we speak up. I urge the Government to take action and condemn violations such as the recent bulldozing of a historic Muslim cemetery in Jaffa. Does the Foreign Secretary agree that such contempt for international law warrants sanctions? If not, could he please explain his reasoning?

**Dominic Raab:** We certainly oppose not just the settlement building but other violations of international humanitarian law. The hon. Gentleman may have seen the letter that the Prime Minister recently published in the Israeli press, which made it clear that we are not giving up on a two-state solution. We oppose annexation and we want both parties to come to the table and negotiate a lasting settlement.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-07-06/debates/24B78A01-061C-48A8-AA92-8E53C17516E3/GlobalHumanRightsSanctionsRegime#contribution-00A6562B-2C0A-4EE3-8BFC-2741B2D862FF>

*The letter referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/as-israels-friend-i-urge-you-not-to-annex-pm-boris-johnson>

#### Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime

**Brendan O'Hara (SNP):** Can the Foreign Secretary assure the House that the application of the sanctions regime will be transparently even-handed and will not be blind to human rights abuses carried out by or in the name of our so-called allies and friends such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Israel or India, or indeed countries with which we are seeking to secure a post-Brexit trade deal?

**Dominic Raab:** If the hon. Gentleman looks at the designations, he will see that we have answered that in the first round that we are making today.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-07-06/debates/24B78A01-061C-48A8-AA92-8E53C17516E3/GlobalHumanRightsSanctionsRegime#contribution-8CEB1D10-E92B-447F-B7CA-50F33911E47A>

The first round sanctions list referred to above can be read at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/898218/uk-sanctions-list-06-July-2020-07\\_1510.odt](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/898218/uk-sanctions-list-06-July-2020-07_1510.odt)

Guidance relating to the new sanctions regime referred to above can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-human-rights-sanctions-information-note-for-non-government-organisations-and-others-interested-in-human-rights/global-human-rights-sanctions-information-note-for-ngos-and-civil-society>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-human-rights-sanctions-factors-in-designating-people-involved-in-human-rights-violations/global-human-rights-sanctions-consideration-of-targets>

## House of Lords Written Answers

### Palestinians: Elections

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL6096] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 12 June (HC55145), what discussions have they had with the Palestinian Authority about the holding of elections in the West Bank and Gaza.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is deeply concerned by the situation in Gaza and we continue to encourage the reconciliation process in which the PA resumes control of Gaza and restores effective and accountable governance. Genuine and democratic national elections for all Palestinians, are crucial to the establishment of a viable and sovereign Palestinian State. To this end, we call on all Palestinian factions to seek common ground and to work together to pursue a positive path towards democracy for the full benefit of the Palestinian people.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-23/HL6096/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-05/55145/>

### Israeli Settlements

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL6097] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the views of people who live in the Palestinian Territories on the proposed annexation of parts of the West Bank by the government of Israel; and what steps they are taking to ensure that any such views are reflected in their policies towards the government of Israel's proposals.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem engage regularly with a wide range of Palestinian individuals and communities across the entire West Bank, including in Area C. It has always been true that any peace settlement needs the support of both peoples. We urge the parties to find a means of restarting negotiations, and avoiding unilateral action. As the Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa outlined at the UN Security Council remote meeting on the Middle East Peace Process on 24 June, the UK position is clear: any unilateral moves towards annexation of parts of the West Bank by Israel would be damaging to efforts to restart peace negotiations and contrary to international law.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-23/HL6097/>

The Minister's speech to the UN Security Council, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/urging-a-negotiated-two-state-solution-between-israelis-and-palestinians>

### **Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

**Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated)** [HL6099] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports that (1) crops have been burnt by Israeli settlers, and (2) that Israeli soldiers prevented Palestinians putting out the fire.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have not made an assessment of these reports. We continue to raise with Israeli counterparts our concerns about settler violence and have also stressed the importance of the Israel security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-23/HL6099/>

### **Israel: Families**

**Lord Hylton (Crossbench)** [HL6167] To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last discussed with the government of Israel reports of cases of married couples, or parents and children, not being permitted to live under the same roof, because of residency or other requirements, particularly in and near Jerusalem; what was the outcome of those discussions; and what plans they have to continue to raise such issues with that government.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Whilst we have not raised this specific issue with the Government of Israel, we regularly make clear our concerns about the restrictions on movement imposed by the Israeli authorities on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. In East Jerusalem, the UK Government supports Palestinians to uphold their residency rights through the provision of legal aid services delivered through our legal aid programme.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-25/HL6167/>

## **Downing Street**

### **PM call with PM Netanyahu: 6 July 2020**

The Prime Minister set out his concerns about plans to annex parts of the West Bank unilaterally and cautioned that this would set back the prospects for peace in the region. He reiterated his personal support for Israel and urged Prime Minister Netanyahu to return to negotiations with the Palestinians. The leaders also underlined their ongoing commitment to UK-Israel trade and discussed the global response to coronavirus, agreeing to continue working together to tackle the pandemic.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-call-with-pm-netanyahu-6-july-2020>

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

### **UK Parliament**

#### **Assisted Dying Bill**

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

## **Education (Assemblies) Bill**

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

## **Genocide Determination Bill**

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

## **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/marriageact1949amendment.html>

## **Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill**

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

## **Scottish Parliament**

### **Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

### **Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

### **Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill** (closing date 24 July 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/115038.aspx>

### **Legislative proposals for religion, values and ethics [Wales]** (closing date 28 July 2020)

<https://gov.wales/legislative-proposals-religion-values-and-ethics>

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