



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Hate Crime

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [96162] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the timetable is for updating the Hate crime action plan 2016 to 2020; and what the process is for engaging stakeholders in its development.

Luke Hall: The Government remains committed to stamping out hatred in all its forms. Many of the initiatives outlined in the action plan will continue, and we also remain committed to delivering on our existing priorities. We are considering a range of options for our work from July 2020 and will work in close consultation with stakeholders.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/96162>

The action plan referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF

House of Lords Written Answer

Offences against Children

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL8244] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 21 July (HL6581), whether their paper on group-based child sexual exploitation will include any consideration of the religious characteristics of offenders.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Secretary announced on 19th May that the Government intends to publish a paper on group-based child sexual exploitation. This work is currently ongoing, and we will publish the paper by the end of this year.

We intend this paper to present the available evidence on this form of offending, bringing together all of the insights gathered in the course of the Home Office's work on this issue. We are not excluding any characteristics from our consideration,

and conclusions will be drawn from the demographic data that is available.

The paper will set the direction for future work to tackle this form of offending.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-17/hl8244>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-07-07/hl6581>

Welsh Government

Curriculum for Wales: Religion, Values and Ethics Consultation Analysis

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2020-10/rve-consultation-analysis-report_0.pdf

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House of Commons Written Answers

Trade Agreements: Israel

Stephen Crabb (Conservative) [94378] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of sectors requiring trade cooperation with Israel beyond the trade continuity agreement.

Ranil Jayawardena: As the Foreign Secretary noted during his recent visit to the region, the United Kingdom's relationship with Israel is strong. We wish to strengthen it even further. We have identified opportunities to do so in sectors such as financial services, infrastructure and technology. We will work with Israeli counterparts to realise these, including through reinstating plans to host a United Kingdom-Israel Trade and Investment Conference in London.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/94378>

Education: Overseas Aid

Stephen Crabb (Conservative) [94380] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that UK-funded educational material and teachers supported by UK aid do not promote violence in their teachings to (a) the Palestinian Authority and (b) other countries receiving aid.

James Cleverly: The UK does not fund textbooks in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. UK Aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA) helps to ensure it can deliver essential services, including by contributing to the salaries of vetted education and healthcare professionals in the West Bank. We have regularly raised our concerns about allegations of incitement in Palestinian textbooks, which the Foreign Secretary did most recently with the PA on 25 August. We have also lobbied our European partners to conduct an independent review of Palestinian textbooks, which is currently underway.

In 2019 we undertook an assurance check on contentious education materials for our education programmes and were satisfied that risks are being effectively managed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/94380>

Israel: Palestinians

Caroline Ansell (Conservative) [95155] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign,

Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to help secure peace between Israel and Palestine following the Israel-UAE and Israel-Bahrain peace agreements.

James Cleverly: We warmly welcome the agreement between Israel, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. We welcome both the decision to normalise relations, as well as the suspension of plans for annexation - a move the UK has opposed as it would have been counterproductive to securing peace in the region. We profoundly hope that this moment can be used as a step towards direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians, as there can be no substitute in order to reach a two-state solution and a lasting peace. The Foreign Secretary visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 24-25 August and encouraged the leaders of Israel and the Palestinians to build on this momentum. We urge the Palestinian Authority to resume co-operation with Israel, which is in the interests of the Palestinian people. We also call on both parties to make constructive and open steps towards a return to dialogue.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95155>

Israel: Foreign Relations

Caroline Ansell (Conservative) [95156] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to support steps to strengthen ties between Israel and its neighbours.

James Cleverly: We warmly welcome the normalising of relations, and the strengthening of ties between Israel and its neighbours. We urge others across the region to follow the example of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. During his visit to Israel on 24 August, the Foreign Secretary met Prime Minister Netanyahu, Alternate Prime Minister and Defence Minister Gantz, and Foreign Minister Ashkenazi. They discussed normalisation of relations in the region, alongside a range of other bilateral, regional, security issues. The changing regional context and converging Arab and Israeli interests presents an opening and the UK strongly supports such moves.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95156>

Israel: Palestinians

Andy Slaughter (Labour) [95026] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the fatal shooting of 16-year-old Mohammad Damer Hamdan Matar near the occupied West Bank village of Deir Abu Meshal on 19 August, what steps he is taking to ensure accountability for Israeli soldiers' use of live ammunition against Palestinian children in situations where lethal force was not necessary to protect life.

James Cleverly: Whilst we have not made representations on this specific incident, we remain deeply concerned by the ongoing cycle of violence. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular the need to protect children, and urge restraint in the use of live fire. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95026>

Israel: Palestinians

Andy Slaughter (Labour) [95027] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Palestinian counterpart on reports of night time family home arrests of Palestinian children by Israeli soldiers.

James Cleverly: We remain concerned about Israel's extensive use of

administrative detention which, according to international law, should be used only when security makes this absolutely necessary rather than as routine practice and as a preventive rather than a punitive measure. We continue to call on the Israeli authorities to comply with their obligations under international law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95027>

Israel: Palestinians

Andy Slaughter (Labour) [95028] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, he will make representations to the Government of Israel to release the 151 Palestinian children being held in Israeli military detention as called for by UN officials during the covid-19 pandemic.

James Cleverly: We remain concerned by the impact that COVID-19 could have on Palestinian detainees, including children. The British Embassy in Tel Aviv have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons. We remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to the practices surrounding children in detention in Israel and continue to make representations to the Israeli authorities on this issue. This includes the increased risk due to lack of hygiene, proper ventilation, population density and issues of due process. We continue to call for steps to be taken that will reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading in prisons whilst simultaneously respecting fundamental human rights.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95028>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Updated travel advice: Israel

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/israel>

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-22793.1 Jackson Carlaw, Eastwood (Conservative): TUC Congress Recognises Israel as a State Practising Apartheid – As an amendment to motion S5M-22793 in the name of John Finnie (TUC Congress Recognises Israel as a State Practising Apartheid), leave out from "reports" to end and insert "the multi-ethnic and religious basis on which it considers Israel stands out in a region blighted by religious persecution and civil war in Syria; regrets what it sees as the continued lodging of one-sided parliamentary motions on democratic Israel by a vocal minority of MSPs; considers the labelling of democratic Israel 'as a state practising apartheid' to be inflammatory and far removed from reality; despairs of MSPs who it considers are vocal about Israel, yet strangely silent on religious persecution and other human rights abuses across the Middle East; thanks outgoing Ambassador Regev and Deputy Ambassador Bar-li for their engagement with Scotland and the Parliament on trade, tourism and culture, and looks forward to showing the new Ambassador that the vocal minority do not represent Scotland by welcoming her and other Israeli diplomats to Parliament for the benefit of the people of Scotland."

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-22793.1>

The motion to which the above is an amendment can be read at

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-22793>

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

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>

Consultations ** new or updated today

Getting Married: A Consultation Paper on Weddings Law (closing date 3 December 2020)

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/weddings/#weddings-consultation-paper>

Hate crime laws (closing date 24 December 2020)

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>