



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### Public Health England and Department of Health and Social Care

**Updated guidance: COVID-19: arranging or attending a funeral or commemorative event**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

### Charity Commission

**Updated guidance: Managing faith charities as trustees**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/faith-based-charities/managing-faith-charities-as-trustees>

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answers

#### Israel: Arms Trade

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2152] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister for Middle East and North Africa on 15 June (UIN900776), what assessment they have made of whether British arms exported to Israel have been used in assaults on Palestinian (1) people, and (2) property, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and what assessment they have made of the implications of any such use for the UK's export control responsibilities.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** HM Government takes its export control responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. We consider all export applications thoroughly against

a strict risk assessment framework and keep all licences under careful and continual review as standard. HM Government will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. If extant licences are found to be no longer consistent with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, those licences will be revoked. HM Government publishes quarterly and annual statistics on all export licensing decisions, including details of export licences granted, refused and revoked. These can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data>  
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-19/hl2152>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-27/900776>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2151] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports this month that the Israeli military blocked the UN from delivering aid to Palestinians whose homes had been demolished in the Jordan Valley.

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2153] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by the UN Resident Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory on 9 July that attempts by Israeli authorities to force the Palestinian community of Humsa Al Bqai'a to relocate to an alternative location raise "a serious risk of forcible transfer".

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of these reports. The UK regularly raises the issue of demolitions and forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes with the Government of Israel, most recently on 12 July. The Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and are clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-19/hl2151>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-19/hl2153>

*The statement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/statement-lynn-hastings-humanitarian-coordinator-occupied-palestinian-territory-demolitions-humsa-al-bqai>

#### **Israel: Gaza**

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2154] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about that government's ban on bringing construction raw materials into the Gaza Strip; and what assessment they have made of the impact of this ban on efforts to repair damage to Gaza's water and sewage infrastructure caused by the conflict in May.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza on 20 May, which is an important step to ending the cycle of violence and loss of civilian life. The UK priority now is ensuring timely humanitarian access into and out of Gaza, including for essential health services. We are urging the Government of Israel to ensure this access is maintained. We have made clear our concern about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza, including significant

damage and destruction of civilian infrastructure including homes, schools, hospitals, and clinics.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-19/hl2154>

### **Gaza: Humanitarian Aid**

**Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2238] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 8 June (HL535), what information was contained in the (1) "qualitative analysis", and (2) "sectoral analysis of thematic trends".

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** During the FCDO ODA allocation process, officials considered the risks and impacts across overall bilateral programming to inform their advice to Ministers. An overarching Equalities Impact Assessment analysed impacts across bilateral country spend and this was considered by Ministers as they reviewed plans. The assessment showed no evidence that programmes targeting those with protected characteristics are more likely to be reduced or discontinued than other programmes.

The internal allocations process also assessed alignment with the Strategic Framework for ODA, alongside UK capabilities and comparative advantage to deliver, and our public and legal commitments.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-20/hl2238>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-24/hl535>

### **Jerusalem: Religious Buildings**

**Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2241] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the reports of increasing number of incursions by Jewish settlers into the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, and (2) the calls by extremist groups for raids to take place on the Mosque during Muslim holidays.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government strongly condemns all forms of violence and incitement to violence, including the use of racist, hateful or anti-Palestinian language and any actions that could stir up hatred and prejudice. We are concerned by the number of Palestinians, including children, killed in the West Bank and Gaza. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we urge the Government of Israel to conduct swift and transparent investigations. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance to bring those responsible to justice and end the culture of impunity. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-20/hl2241>

### **Israel: Palestinians**

**Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat)** [HL2242] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel about reports of sexual threats made to Palestinian women during raids in Hebron by Israeli soldiers and settlers.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We expect any such allegations to be thoroughly investigated by the Israeli authorities. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-20/hl2242>

## Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

### Updated Travel Advice: Israel

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

### Updated Travel Advice: The Occupied Palestinian Territories

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

## Scottish Government FoI Release

### School material on Israel and Palestine

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-202100219662/>

## Ofcom

### Complaint by UK Lawyers For Israel about Channel 4 News

The programme included a report on the experience of British Palestinian people in the UK and how the community was perceived by others. Part of the report featured a discussion about the impact on Palestinians when complaints are made about charitable organisations which advocate on behalf of Palestinians. The report included two images of website pages which referred to the Charity Commission's response to complaints to it made by UK Lawyers for Israel ("UKLFI") and the Lawfare Project about two charities. UKLFI complained that the inclusion of these website pages in the programme resulted in unfairness to them. Ofcom found that material facts were not presented, disregarded or omitted in the programme in a way that was unfair to UKLFI. Nor did we consider, in the particular circumstances of this case, that it was necessary for the broadcaster to have provided UKLFI with an appropriate and timely opportunity to respond in order to avoid unfairness to it.

**To read the findings in full see**

[https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/222109/complaint-uk-lawyers-for-israel-channel-4-news-14-december-2020.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/222109/complaint-uk-lawyers-for-israel-channel-4-news-14-december-2020.pdf)

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

### UK Parliament

#### Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875>

#### Charities Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877>

#### Education (16 to 19 Academies) (Religious Character) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2946>

## **Education (Assemblies) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878>

## **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

## **Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3025>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3017>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2900>

## **Nationality and Borders Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

## **Online Safety Bill (Draft)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

## **Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2942>

## **Northern Ireland Assembly**

### **Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill**

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/primary-legislation---bills-2017---2022-mandate/organ-and-tissue-donation-deemed-consent-bill/>

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated today

**\*\* closes in 2 days**

**Animal welfare [EU legislation]** (closing date 3 August 2021)

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation_en)

**Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill** (closing date not stated, but no later than 23 September 2021)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2021/july/have-your-say-on-the-higher-education-freedom-of-speech-bill/>

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