Home Affairs

House of Commons Oral Answer

Topical Questions: Home Office

Christian Wakeford (Conservative): I strongly welcome the Home Secretary’s decision to proscribe the Hamas terror group in its entirety. That will send the unmistakable message that the UK Government are committed to protecting our Jewish community and combating terrorism. The horrific murder of 26-year-old Eli Kay by Hamas terrorists yesterday in the old city of Jerusalem reinforces the importance of the decision. Will my right hon. Friend confirm that the new designation will ensure that anyone spreading the terror group’s genocidal, antisemitic ideology, including by waving flags, will feel the full force of the law? (904292)

Priti Patel: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. He clearly understands the importance and significance of proscribing Hamas in all its forms. When the motion comes to the House for debate this week, I hope that all Members of this House will support it, because clearly inciting and supporting terrorist activity is simply wrong.


House of Commons Written Answer

Universities: Antisemitism

Matt Vickers (Conservative) [75173] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to tackle rising levels of anti-Semitic abuse on university campuses.

Michelle Donelan: The government is clear that antisemitism is abhorrent, and we expect higher education (HE) providers to be at the forefront of tackling the challenge of it. The department has pushed for several years for greater action from HE providers
in addressing antisemitism. This has included encouraging institutions to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, in order to have clarity of what constitutes antisemitic behavior. This in turn enables providers to better understand and recognise incidences of antisemitism and take action to address them.

As part of this work, the former Secretary of State for Education wrote out to all HE providers urging adoption of the IHRA definition, stating that we would consider further action if institutions did not adopt. A follow-up letter was sent in May 2021, reinforcing the government’s expectation that providers adopt the IHRA definition, stressing the even greater importance of doing so in light of an increased number of antisemitic incidents recorded as a result of the conflict in the Middle East.

In response to this, on 10 November 2021, the Office for Students published a list of providers who have adopted the definition. I am pleased to report good progress in the last year, an increase from around 30 to over 200 providers having adopted. This includes the vast majority of universities. I will continue to urge all providers to adopt.

Adoption of the IHRA definition is only a first step towards ridding HE of antisemitism. I want to be very clear that, while the government considers that adoption of the definition is crucial, it is not enough on its own. I will continue to work with the sector to ensure it better understands antisemitism and does more to end it. I intend to bring together key stakeholders from the sector to examine what more can be done to make Jewish students and staff feel safe on campus.

I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure it is eradicated from our world-leading providers.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-15/75173

The Secretary of State’s first letter referred to above can be read at https://twitter.com/GavinWilliamson/status/1314506646115278848

He wrote a follow-up letter in February (not May) 2021 which can be read at https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/48277145-4cf3-497f-b9b7-b13df16f46b/ofos-strategic-guidance-20210208.pdf

and a letter to headteachers in May 2021 referring to an increased number of antisemitic incidents recorded as a result of the conflict in the Middle East. This can be read at https://twitter.com/gavinwilliamson/status/1398374786871537664

The list of providers who have adopted the definition, referred to above, can be read at https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/cddac91e-e9a5-49ff-8197-8a5a76c31cde/providers-who-have-adopted-the-ihra-working-definition-of-antisemitism.pdf

House of Lords Oral Answers

Emergency Services: Ministers of Religion

Lord Moylan (Conservative): To ask Her Majesty’s Government what plans they have to establish a multi-professional strategy for the emergency services concerning the attendance of ministers of religion at the scene of situations involving serious injury.

The Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford): My Lords, today of all days, we remember Sir David Amess, who tragically died carrying out his duties as a public servant. Our thoughts and prayers are with his loved ones, as well as with all those involved in scenes of traumatic injury. Decisions regarding the management of such situations remain an operational issue for the emergency services involved. There are no plans to establish a multi-professional strategy on this issue.

Lord Moylan: My Lords, the tragic death of Sir David Amess brought to national attention
a problem that experts and academics in the field of disaster and emergency response have recognised for some time—namely, the lack of a considered approach to the role of ministers of religion and their access to victims at end-of-life in disasters and emergencies. While I welcome the fact that the Archbishop of Westminster and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner have opened a dialogue on this topic, does my noble friend agree that a national standard is required? Will she undertake a study, preliminary to that, of other jurisdictions such as Israel, Italy and even Northern Ireland, where practice tends to be more nuanced and accommodating?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There are certainly lessons to be learned from other jurisdictions, as my noble friend said. I totally empathise with the situation that both David Amess’s family and the police found themselves in during that dreadful incident. Given the people who are involved, I hope and expect a sensible and pragmatic conclusion to be arrived at through the discussions.

Lord Anderson of Swansea (Labour): My Lords, the noble Lord has spoken with compassion, but is there not a danger that the attendance of ministers of religion at the scene of an accident could hamper the work of the emergency services? If there are serious injuries, the victim will be taken to hospital, where they can, if desired, call on the excellent chaplaincy service, which works 24 hours a day.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The noble Lord is right that chaplains operate 24 hours a day in hospitals. My noble friend’s question, of course, was about Sir David Amess, who was at the point of death when his family wanted him to have the last rites from a Catholic priest. The noble Lord, Lord Anderson, is correct to point out that the criteria for the police to consider in such incidents are protection of life, the risks at the scene and the preservation of evidence at the scene.

The Lord Bishop of Coventry: My Lords, I greatly welcome the joint study group announced by the cardinal archbishop. Does the Minister agree that good outcomes from that study would include both further training and education to ensure that police officers understand the significance of spiritual comfort at the point of death, for the dying of whatever faith, and an increased role for police chaplaincy?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: I am sure that what will come out of that group are considerations of whether any changes are required to the guidance issued to police officers faced with such situations. I know that hospital chaplains are available around the clock to cater for a range of different needs and provide comfort, both during a period of illness and at the point of death.

Lord Moynihan (Conservative): My Lords, the circumstances surrounding access for the local priest to be with Sir David in his final hours put everyone concerned in an exceptionally difficult position. Will my noble friend the Minister look at the US model, where emergency managers can identify and engage with faith-based groups in emergency preparedness activities, building partnerships with them to establish protocols for use at the scene of serious injuries and integrating faith leaders into emergency situations involving serious injury?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: I will certainly take my noble friend’s point back. I know the College of Policing welcomes engagement with faith community leaders and others who have concerns about the current authorised professional practice to understand views and consider possible next steps for this issue.

Lord Paddick (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, surely there is a difference between the perpetrator sitting at the scene of a stabbing waiting to be arrested and an explosion where forensic recovery is essential. Can the Minister not bring together faith and police leaders nationally to discuss the potential use of discretion, in appropriate cases?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The noble Lord is right, in the sense that it sounds like the perpetrator was standing there, waiting to be arrested, but there has to be a framework around these things. Of course, forensic preservation is crucial at such scenes, even where it is apparent what has gone on. I am sure that the group will
consider the noble Lord’s proposals.

Lord Cormack (Conservative): My Lords, I know this is incredibly difficult but, as we can carry donor cards and things, would it not be possible to consider compiling a register of those of us who would wish to receive the last rites at the point of death? I am sure that would bring great comfort to many families.

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are talking here about the point of death of someone who was killed in very unusual circumstances. … there is a point there about pragmatism and considering someone’s last wishes at the scene of crime.

Baroness Masham of Ilton (Crossbench): My Lords, in these difficult times, is it not possible that people’s spiritual needs, as well as their physical needs, could be supported, and if possible adhered to, during serious injury and illness? Could the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social Care work together to send out a directive advising on these matters?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The group led by the National Police Chiefs’ Council, joined by the Catholic Church and the College of Policing, will determine what such a framework looks like. It was a surprise to me that this had not come up before, and therefore it needs some thinking about, including on whether changes are required to the guidance issued to police faced with such situations.

Lord Rosser (Labour): Our thoughts too are very much with the family and friends of Sir David Amess, particularly today. As has been said, Cardinal Vincent Nichols and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner have agreed to create a group reviewing last rites access for priests at crime scenes. Presumably, there is a need to ensure that a crime scene remains protected and not disturbed, and that the person seeking access is who they say they are. First, has this matter of access or lack of it for ministers of religion been a concern before and, if so, with representatives of which faiths? Secondly, is the question of such access presently covered by College of Policing or other guidelines?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: It does not seem to have come up as an issue before, and that is precisely why this group is meeting to see if there are any gaps in the guidance issued to police to deal with such incidents.

Baroness Fox of Buckley (Non-affiliated): My Lords, one of the cruellest aspects of the lockdown was the denial of visits from priests to give last rites to those dying in care homes. For Catholics, at least, that was as awful as not seeing beloved family. The official advice was to say prayers by Zoom. Would the noble Baroness note that, while there is an Amess amendment as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, this is less a regulatory or legislative matter and more a deficit of cultural capital when it comes to Christian practices? Would she also note that the overtechnocratic approach illustrated by some of the replies today misses what really matters in society?

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Not only do I empathise with what really matters to some people at the point of death—it made me think that, if I was in such a situation, I would want a priest there—but I am very glad that Cardinal Nichols is meeting with the NPCC. That group will consider a more nuanced approach that can be reflected in police guidance about facing such a situation.


Welsh Government

Introduction of Medical Examiners in Wales Consultation Response Report
Israel

See also Commons oral question 904292 “Topical Questions: Home Office” included in the Home Affairs section above.

House of Commons Written Answers

Manufacturing Industries: Israel

Neil Coyle (Labour) [76707] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that British manufacturers that make products for Israeli distributors are not being used to demolish homes in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Ranil Jayawardena: For items that are subject to an export licence, HM Government takes its strategic export responsibilities seriously and will continue to assess all export licences in accordance with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria (the ‘Consolidated Criteria’).
HM Government will not grant a licence authorising the supply of controlled items anywhere in the world, if to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated Criteria, including if there is a clear risk that the items might be used for internal repression.
We continue to monitor the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories closely, and we will take action to suspend, refuse or revoke licences – in line with the Consolidated Criteria – if circumstances require.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-17/76707

UNRWA: Finance

Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op) [76783] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much the Government has (a) pledged to UNRWA in the financial year 2021-22 and (b) dispersed to UNRWA as of 17 November 2021.

James Cleverly: In Financial Year 2021/22 the United Kingdom (UK) has provided £11m to United Nations Relief and Works Agency's (UNRWA) core programme budget to help UNRWA provide basic education to more than 533,000 children a year (half of which are girls), access to health services for 3.5 million Palestinian refugees and social safety net assistance for around 255,000 of the most vulnerable across the region. The UK also provided £3.2m to the UNRWA's emergency appeal in May 2021 to help provide basic services, such as healthcare and clean water following the Gaza conflict.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-17/76783

The following two questions both received the same answer

UNRWA: Finance

Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op) [76784] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions she has had with her international counterparts on increasing financial support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op) [76785] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment she has made of the impact of the continued funding gap for UNRWA following the annual pledging conference on the 16 November 2021 on (a) UNWRA and (b) Palestinian refugees.

James Cleverly: The United Kingdom (UK) is a long-term supporter of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). We recognise UNRWA's unique mandate from the United Nations General Assembly, to provide protection and core
services including health and education to Palestinian refugees across the Middle East. The UK's annual contribution to UNRWA's programme budget helps UNRWA to provide basic education to more than 533,000 children a year (half of whom are girls), access to health services for 3.5 million Palestinian refugees and social safety net assistance for around 255,000 of the most vulnerable across the region. The UK is working with UNRWA and other donors to improve UNRWA's financial viability. This includes broadening UNRWA's donor base, encouraging the full disbursement of pledges and encouraging support through multi-year funding. I reiterated this at the International Ministerial Conference on UNRWA in Brussels on 16 November.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-17/76784
and
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-17/76785

House of Lords Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

**UNRWA: Finance**

The Lord Bishop of Southwark [HL3843] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the reduction in their funding of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees for 2021 compared to 2020.

The Lord Bishop of Southwark [HL3844] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the financial position of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, and (2) the sustainability of the Agency’s provision of services to Palestinian refugees.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom (UK) is a long-term supporter of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). We recognise UNRWA’s unique mandate from the United Nations General Assembly, to provide protection and core services including health and education to Palestinian refugees across the Middle East. The UK's annual contribution to UNRWA's programme budget helps UNRWA to provide basic education to more than 533,000 children a year (half of whom are girls), access to health services for 3.5 million Palestinian refugees and social safety net assistance for around 255,000 of the most vulnerable across the region. The UK is working with UNRWA and other donors to improve UNRWA's financial viability. This includes broadening UNRWA's donor base, encouraging the full disbursement of pledges and encouraging support through multi-year funding.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3843
and
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3844

**Palestinians: Non-governmental Organisations**

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3808] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning the allegations that the secret evidence used against four NGOs—Defense for Children International - Palestine, the prisoners’ rights group Addameer, the human rights group Al-Haq and the Bisan Center for Research and Development—was based in part on prisoners’ confessions obtained under torture.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is aware of the decision by the Israeli authorities to designate six Palestinian Civil Society Organisations. We are in contact with the Government of Israel to understand the basis of the designations. We have made clear that human rights and civil society organisations have a vital
role to play in both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including those focused on Israel's conduct in the Palestinian Territories.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3808

**Palestinians: Third Sector**

The Earl of Sandwich (Crossbench) [HL3831] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel following the designation, on 22 October, of six Palestinian civil society groups as terrorist organisations; and what assessment they have made of the consequences of the government of Israel's actions for the UK's support for civil society in the West Bank and Gaza.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of the decision by the Israeli authorities to designate six Civil Society Organisations. We are in contact with the Government of Israel to understand the basis of the designations. We have made clear that human rights and civil society organisations have a vital role to play in the development of thriving, open societies. Israel's long-standing commitment to democratic values is one of its great strengths as a fellow democracy, and we continue to make clear that a strong, vibrant civil society is in Israel's own interest. As a friend of Israel, we are concerned by any developments that may undermine this commitment.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3831

**Israel: Jordan**

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3809] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the government of Israel concerning (1) the demolition of tents, livestock pens, and water tanks, and (2) the confiscation of a battery and metal poles by Israeli forces from the community of Ein al-Meyteh in the northern Jordan Valley.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK regularly raises the issue of demolitions, confiscations and forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes with the Government of Israel, most recently with Israel's Ministry of Defence on 19 October. The former Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May. The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. We continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to avoid actions which make peace more difficult to achieve.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3809

**Hebron: Rural Areas**

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3810] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the government of Israel about the closure of the village of Sussia by the Israeli army.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of movement within the West Bank, including to and from East Jerusalem. We continue to stress to the Israeli authorities the damage that their restrictions on movement, access and trade are doing to the living standards of ordinary Palestinians.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3810

**Israel: Palestinians**

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL3812] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the reports of the killing of 13-year old Palestinian Mohammed Daadas by Israeli forces in the West Bank, and (2) the riot dispersal methods
used in such circumstances by Israeli forces.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: On 6 November Minister Cleverly publicly expressed condolences to the family of 13 year old Mohammed Da'das, who was killed near Nablus following clashes between Palestinians and Israeli Defence Forces. We urge the Israeli authorities to carry out a swift and thorough investigation. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of the Israeli security force’s adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. 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.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3812

The condolences referred to above can be read at
https://twitter.com/jamescleverly/status/1456976599010746375

Israel and Russia: Politics and Government

Lord Grocott (Labour) [HL3795] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking in response to UN member states that have annexed parts of neighbouring states, in particular, in respect of (1) Russia's annexation of Crimea, and (2) Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights.

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Annexation of territory by force is prohibited under international law. Any declaration of a unilateral border change goes against the foundation of the rules-based international order and the UN Charter. The UK does not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by Russia. We continue to make clear to Moscow that Crimea is, and will remain part of, Ukraine.

We have used our G7 Presidency to keep Crimea high on the international agenda, as shown by our G7 Foreign Ministers' statements on Crimea in March and April and the G7 Cornwall Summit communiqué in June, in which leaders reiterated their support for the Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and called on Russia to withdraw troops and materiel from Crimea. We strongly support the establishment of the International Crimea Platform, as a means to raise global ambition on Crimea and hold Russia to account for its actions. We will continue to call for international monitoring missions to have access to Crimea, currently denied by Russia.

The UK's position on the status of the Occupied Golan Heights is well-known and has not changed. We do not consider them part of the territory of the State of Israel.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3795

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Liz Truss Israel is our great friend and fellow freedom-loving democracy. Great meeting President @Isaac_Herzog to discuss: Deepening our economic partnership, inc. trade and investment, Closer tech ties and ensuring the free world shapes tech standards, Security & defence

https://twitter.com/trussliz/status/1462859038279012359

James Cleverly It was great to meet Israel’s President @Isaac_Herzog this afternoon. Israel remains a strong economic partner, tech partner, and security & defence partner.

https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1462905154165002248

James Cleverly Tackling climate change requires fresh thinking, creativity and cross
border cooperation. Delighted that #Israel, #Jordan, and the #UAE have agreed a landmark solar/water agreement. This will help ensure both Israel's energy needs and Jordan’s water needs are met.
https://twitter.com/JamesCleverly/status/1462909494845968389

Court of Justice of the European Union

The Court of Justice upholds the acts of the Council maintaining Hamas on the European list of terrorist organisations

By a judgment of 4 September 2019, Hamas v Council, the General Court annulled … four acts of the Council of the European Union adopted in 2018 by which Hamas was maintained on the list … as an organisation involved in terrorist acts and was, on that basis, subject to measures freezing its funds and economic resources. Although it rejected seven of the eight pleas in law relied on by Hamas to challenge its listing, the General Court annulled the acts at issue in so far as they concerned that organisation because of the Council’s failure to authenticate, by means of a signature, the statements of reasons relating to those acts, those statements of reasons having been set out in separate documents. …

The Court of Justice … sets aside the judgment of the General Court of 4 September 2019. It finds that the General Court erred in law in ruling that the statements of reasons relating to the retention of Hamas on the lists annexed to the acts at issue should … have been signed by the President and the Secretary-General of the Council. …

To read the full press release see

The full judgement can be read at

Relevant Legislation  ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867

Assisted Dying Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875

Charities Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877

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

Evidence session, Joint Committee on Human Rights
https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/3043/html/
and
https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/3047/default/

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

Consultations ** new or updated today

Labelling for Animal Welfare (closing date 6 December 2021)

Proposed Assisted Dying for Terminally ill Adults (Scotland) Bill (closing date 22 December 2021)

Animal Welfare – revision of EU legislation (Food Safety) (closing date 21 January 2022)

Marriage Law (Northern Ireland) (closing date 18 February 2022)
The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan 2022-2025
(closing date not stated)