Home Affairs

House of Lords Debate

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2020 and Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2022

col 78GC Viscount Younger of Leckie: …It is important that we support the Scottish Government to provide equality of opportunity as they introduce these changes in Scotland. …

The main changes reflect that civil partnership in Scotland no longer includes a same-sex relationship; it now includes an opposite-sex relationship too. Therefore, amendments are made to the Equality Act 2010, for example, further to protect persons such as religious and belief celebrants who do not wish to take part in the registration of mixed sex-civil partnerships. These amendments to the 2010 Act, which is generally a reserved matter for Westminster, reflect that, in Scotland, religious and belief celebrants can register civil partnerships in much the same way as they can solemnise marriage.

col 79GC … the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 is also amended to ensure that children of marriages and children of civil partnerships are treated the same in cases of assisted reproduction and that the legal parenthood of these children is therefore clear. …

col 80GC Lord Tunnicliffe (Labour): … If one is respecting the devolution settlement, one should accede to the requests of the Scottish Government to change this stuff around the edge to meet what Scotland wants to do. Once again, I do not think it is really our business whether what Scotland wants to do is a good or bad idea. …

Motion agreed

To read the full transcript see https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-12-14/debates/C1337356-D073-45C8-B777-E05856F97C81/CivilPartnership(Scotland)Act2020AndMarriageAndCivilPartnership(Scotland)Act2014(ConsequentialModifications)Order2022
Islam: Marriage

Baroness Cox (Crossbench) [HL4544] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether British Muslim women have the rights set out in paragraph nine of Resolution 2253 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, published on 22 January 2019, specifically in relation (1) to obtaining the protection of legal marriage, and (2) to discriminatory practices in relation to religious divorce.

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The law has long made provision for couples, including Muslim couples, to marry in their place of worship in a way that gives them legal rights and protections. The Government shares the concern that some people may nonetheless marry in a way that does not give them these legal rights and protections, without appreciating the consequences.

We continue to explore limited reform and non-legislative options in this area with the greatest of care. This work will be informed by the forthcoming reports from the Law Commission on weddings, and from the Nuffield Foundation on religious weddings.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/hl4544

The Resolution referred to above can be read at http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=25353

Information about the Law Commission review referred to above can be read at https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/weddings/

Information about the Nuffield Foundation project referred to above can be read at https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/project/wedding-not-marriage-exploring-non-legally-binding-ceremonies

Israel

See also United Nations press release “Political Affairs Chief Calls for ‘Additional Effort and Patience’ to Revive Iran Nuclear Deal …” included in the Other Relevant Information section below.

House of Commons Written Answer

Israel: Palestinians

Caroline Lucas (Green) [87653] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the Israeli Government's policy of withholding the bodies of Palestinians, including children, who have been killed by Israeli forces.

James Cleverly: The UK position is that all sides should treat the dead with respect and to return any bodies that they are holding.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-06/87653

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL4554] To ask Her Majesty's Government what
assessment they have made of the Haaretz article What the Israeli Army Does to Soldiers Who Shoot Palestinians, published on 18 November, which states that 18 unarmed Palestinians have been killed or seriously injured by fire from Israeli forces without proper investigation or accountability.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Our Embassy in Tel Aviv raise cases of alleged excessive use of force with the Israeli Defence Forces directly. We raise the issue of the high numbers of Palestinians killed and injured by Israeli Defence Forces in the West Bank and Gaza with the Israeli authorities, encouraging them to carry out swift, transparent and thorough investigations. We also regularly raise 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/2021-11-30/hl4554](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/hl4554)


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**Gaza: Israel**

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL4555] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the government of Israel regarding Israeli forces firing on fishermen in Gaza while they fish in their designated area.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We regularly raise 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 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/2021-11-30/hl4555](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/hl4555)

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**Israel: West Bank**

**Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat)** [HL4556] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the government of Israel regarding house demolitions and confiscations by Israeli forces in the West Bank on 23 November.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and evictions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. 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. We regularly call on Israel to halt such counterproductive activity and instead urgently commit to creating a better environment for a just and lasting peace.

[https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/hl4556](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/hl4556)

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**Palestinians: Riot Control Weapons**

**Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat)** [HL4582] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel concerning the use of (1) rubber bullets, and (2) tear gas, against Palestinian protestors.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** 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. In our dialogue with the Israeli authorities we have recognised their legitimate need to deploy security measures to address violence. We encourage them to deploy these in a way which minimises tension and uses appropriate force. 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/2021-11-30/hl4582

Welsh Senedd Oral Answer

**Cadw website: Israel**

Darren Millar (Conservative): Trefnydd, I've been contacted by a member of the Welsh Jewish community with regard to access to the Cadw website. It appears that people who are attempting to access the website from Israel appear to be blocked from doing so. Now, using a virtual private network, I tried to take a look at this myself, and it seemed to me that the Cadw website was perfectly accessible from France, the United States, Spain and many other countries, yet not from an Israeli internet provider address. Now, it's my understanding that this has been raised with Cadw as far back as September but, as yet, no action has been taken to address the problem. I'd be very grateful if we could have the Minister responsible for Cadw take an urgent look at this to try and address it, and provide an explanation to the Senedd as to what's happened.

Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd (Lesley Griffiths):
Yes, I will certainly ask the Minister with responsibility for Cadw, Dawn Bowden, to look into this and report to Members as soon as she possibly can.

The Cadw website, referred to above, can be read (by those not in Israel) at https://cadw.gov.wales/

Other Relevant Information

**European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)**

ECRI's opinion on the concept of “racialisation” (adopted at ECRI’s 87th plenary meeting on 8 December 2021)
https://rm.coe.int/ecri-opinion-on-the-concept-of-racialisation/1680a4dcc2

**United Nations**

Political Affairs Chief Calls for ‘Additional Effort and Patience’ to Revive Iran Nuclear Deal, as Security Council Delegates Urge Sides to Negotiate in Good Faith

... Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, presented the Secretary-General’s latest report (document S/2021/995) on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), which endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran’s nuclear programme. ... she said the status of the talks indicates that full restoration of the Plan of Action and resolution 2231 (2015) will require additional effort and patience, given that the Plan itself was the result of more than a decade of determined diplomacy. “The endeavour, however, was worth it,” she affirmed. ... 

... she appealed to Washington, D.C., to lift or waive its sanctions, as outlined in the Plan of Action, and extend the waivers regarding the trade in oil with Iran. ... 

In addition, she called on Iran to reverse steps taken that are inconsistent with its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan of Action. ...
... Regarding the ballistic missile-related provisions, she said France, Germany, Iran, Israel, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States provided information to the Secretary-General and the Security Council concerning a ballistic missile launch in May 2021 and two space launch vehicle tests in June 2021 by Iran. The information reflects divergent views among those Member States as to whether those launches are inconsistent with paragraph 3 of resolution 2231 (2015). …

The Secretariat also had the opportunity to examine the debris of an alleged Iranian unmanned aerial vehicle intercepted by the Israel Defense Forces as the object entered Israel’s airspace via the border with Jordan. Israeli authorities believe that it was launched from either Iraq or Syria. The Secretariat is still analysing the information collected and will report back to the Council on these issues in due course. …

**Björn Olof Skoog, briefing the Council for the European Union** … stressed that there is not much time left in light of Iran’s accelerating nuclear programme, voicing concern that the country has continued to expand its nuclear activities — accumulating more enriched uranium at 20 per cent and 60 per cent, installing more advanced centrifuges and producing uranium metal — activities not only inconsistent with the Plan of Action, but raising serious non-proliferation concerns, particularly since Iran decided to suspend implementation of the Additional Protocol and transparency provisions as of 23 February 2021. Those actions substantially decreased IAEA access to information on the nuclear programme — a lack of cooperation that is a source of grave concern. …

**Linda Thomas-Greenfield (United States)** recalled President Joseph R. Biden’s statement that the United States is prepared to return to compliance with the Plan of Action so long as Iran does the same. The United States is fully prepared to lift sanctions inconsistent with its Plan of Action commitments and reach an understanding on mutual return if Iran approaches talks in Vienna with urgency and good faith. However, “the United States cannot allow Iran to accelerate its nuclear programme and slow walk its nuclear diplomacy, which is unfortunately what is happening at the talks in Vienna,” …

**Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom)** reiterated her country’s priority to see the United States return to the agreement and Iran to return to compliance. … “The process is not moving fast enough and time is running out,” she stressed, noting that Iran’s nuclear escalation is undermining international peace and security and the global non-proliferation system. … “The Iranian nuclear programme has never been more advanced than it is today,” she warned, adding that the country’s total stockpile contains enough fissile material to produce several nuclear weapons. Moreover, Iran is producing highly enriched uranium, which is unprecedented for a State without a nuclear weapons programme, as well as uranium metal, which provides weapons-applicable knowledge. If Iran continues its current path of nuclear escalation, in weeks, not months, it will be responsible for collapsing the Plan of Action and provoking a serious crisis, which would require a robust response from the Council, she asserted. …

**Dmitry A. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation)** … urged the international community to demonstrate strategic restraint, along with parties to the agreement and members of the Council. He expressed discouragement in Western colleagues making hasty comments about Iran’s negotiating position, which is still developing, meaning that any far-reaching conclusions outlined in New York are inappropriate. … The United States must confirm its words with deeds, but instead, it continues its policy of maximum pressure on Iran, whose actions have been in reaction to those destructive steps. … Iran is the most thoroughly verified State in the world, he stressed, and the deal is the most significant confidence-building measure at the international level, as trust is impossible without it. …

**Majid Takht Ravanchi (Iran)** said … Iran is not imposing any preconditions or new conditions, solely those embedded in the Plan of Action and resolution 2231 (2015); but without full satisfaction of those terms, the accord is useless for the Iranian people. Attempts to link implementation to extraneous issues or raising ideas such as renegotiation to expand its scope or extend its timelines or proposals are totally
unacceptable and doomed to fail … The unlawful and inhumane sanctions imposed by the United States represent an all-out economic war against Iran, equivalent to economic terrorism. …

Iran’s peaceful nuclear programme has been under the most robust and intrusive nuclear verification ever conducted in a country, he stressed. Iran has exercised maximum restraint and paid a heavy price to preserve the Plan of Action. … He further noted that launches by Iran of ballistic missiles and space vehicles are completely outside of the purview of resolution 2231 (2015), as developing a conventional missile programme is an inherent right under international law. …


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** 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
Report Stage, House of Lords
https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-12-14/debates/C51B945E-5539-417E-ADAA-0504D902B942/CharitiesBill(HL)

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

Consultations ** new or updated today

** closes in 7 days
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)

Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights (closing date 8 March 2022)

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