Home Affairs

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Cabinet Office

Updated Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Wedding and civil partnership ceremonies, receptions and celebrations

Israel

House of Lords Written Answers

Middle East: Peace Negotiations
Baroness Altmann (Conservative) [HL4981] To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with (1) the government of Israel, and (2) Palestinian representatives, about the Middle East peace process.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains committed to making progress towards a two-state solution. The Foreign Secretary discussed the Middle East Peace Process with Israeli FM Lapid on 29 November and Minister Cleverly raised with Deputy FM Roll on 9 November. Minister Cleverly met with Israeli Minister Frej and Palestinian Prime Minister Shtayyeh on 17 November in Oslo at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-15/hl4981

Middle East: Peace Negotiations
Baroness Altmann (Conservative) [HL4982] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, (1) to strengthen the Abraham Accords, and (2) to expand those accords to additional nations.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-15/hl4982
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom (UK) warmly welcomed the normalisation agreements between Israel, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan. These were historic steps which see the normalisation of relations between friends of the UK. Restoring cooperation is an important and constructive step towards peace, and shows both sides are willing to put the needs and security of both Israelis and Palestinians first. We need to build on this momentum through further dialogue and compromise to move towards a two state solution and a lasting solution to the conflict. The United Kingdom will continue to work towards a more peaceful and prosperous future for Israelis and Palestinians alike. 

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-15/hl4982

Israel: Golan Heights

Lord Grocott (Labour) [HL4835] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 22 November (HL3795) detailing the steps they are taking regarding Russia's occupation of Crimea, what steps they are taking regarding Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK position on the status of the Occupied Golan Heights is well-known and has not changed. In line with international law, and relevant Security Council resolutions, notably Resolutions 242 and 497, we do not recognise Israel's sovereignty over the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967, including the Golan Heights, and we do not consider them part of the territory of the State of Israel. 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.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-09/hl4835

The answer referred to above can be read at
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/hl3795

The Resolutions referred to above can be read at
https://undocs.org/S/RES/242(1967) and

Israel: Defence and Trade Agreements

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL4915] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of how goods produced in the Israeli settlements should be treated in negotiations on trade and defence with the government of Israel.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK does not recognise the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including Israeli settlements, as part of Israel. Goods imported from the settlements are therefore not entitled to benefit from trade preferences under the UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement. The UK also supports accurate labelling of settlement goods, so as not to mislead the consumer. There are currently no plans for legislation to ban the import of products from Israeli settlements.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-13/hl4915

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL4914] To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning the targeting of Palestinian medics by Israeli border police.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israel Defence Forces police
non-violent protests and the border areas. 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, which includes Palestinian medics attempting to provide services.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-13/hl4914

Foreign Affairs

House of Lords Written Answers

France: Antisemitism

Lord Shinkwin (Conservative) [HL5028] To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the government of France regarding steps to counter levels of antisemitism in the UK and France.

Lord Goldsmith of richmond Park: The UK and France stand together in opposing antisemitism. The UK works with France and other partners in the UN, OSCE, G7 and Council of Europe to promote and protect freedom of religion or belief for all.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-15/hl5028

Religious Freedom

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4894] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to uphold religious freedom in other countries; and what representations they are making to the governments of countries with restrictive blasphemy or apostasy laws which restrict that freedom.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities. Bilaterally, Ministers and officials regularly raise specific cases of concern, and do not shy away from challenging publically or in private those we believe are not meeting their obligations.

Multilaterally, we work with the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, G7 and other fora to promote FoRB. In May this year, we secured the inclusion of language on FoRB in the G7 communiqué for the first time, ensuring FoRB remains firmly on the international agenda.

The Government is deeply concerned by the use of blasphemy laws as they generally limit freedom of expression and are only compatible with international human rights law in narrow circumstances. The Government regularly applies diplomatic pressure on countries that misuse blasphemy laws.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-13/hl4894
**Relevant Legislation**  
**new or updated today**

**UK Parliament**

Animal Welfare (Sentence) 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

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**

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

**Outdoor marriages and civil partnerships** (closing date 24 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