



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Back issues

Israel

House of Commons Written Answers

Palestinians: Development Aid

Steve McCabe (Labour) [77276] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2022 to Question 63915 on Palestinians: Development Aid, if he will publish the review of the Palestinian Authority's commitment to the Partnership Principles with the UK.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: The FCDO last conducted an assessment of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) commitment to the Partnership Principles in December 2021. In common with other countries where the FCDO works, we only publish a summary of findings. In summary, we found that the PA demonstrated a partially credible commitment to the Partnership Principles. Officials at the British Consulate General in Jerusalem raise these issues at the highest levels of the PA and will continue to do so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-02/77276>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-17/63915>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Israel: Palestinians

Caroline Lucas (Green) [77368] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policies of the announcement of 27 October 2022 by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory that it will investigate apartheid charges against Israel; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas (Green) [77369] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make it his policy to support the request in the report of 20 October 2022 by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory for (a) an urgent advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of and (b) an investigation from the International Criminal Court prosecutor into the continued refusal on the part of Israel to end its occupation; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Lucas (Green) [77370] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the report by the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory published on 20 October 2022, what assessment he has made of the recommendations that (a) member states of the UN investigate and prosecute persons suspected of crimes under international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and (b) the Security Council consider further action to require Israel to immediately bring its permanent occupation to an end; and if he will make a statement

Anne-Marie Trevelyan: The UK has been clear that we oppose the open-ended nature of the Commission of Inquiry on the situation in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza and its vaguely defined mandate. The cause of advancing human rights in Israel and the OPTs is not served by the disproportionate focus on Israel. We are also a firm supporter of the Human Rights Council and believe strongly in its mandate to protect human rights and secure accountability for abuses wherever these occur. However, this Commission of Inquiry does not further these goals. Any judgment on whether serious crimes under international law have occurred is a matter for judicial decision, rather than for governments or non-judicial bodies.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-02/77368>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-02/77369>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-02/77370>

The statement referred to above was made at a press conference. No transcript is available, but a video of the press conference can be watched at

<https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1j/k1jzwzf8qq>

(the relevant comments begin at 12.06 mins)

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/coiopt/2022-10-19/Report-COI-OPT-14Sept2022-EN.pdf>

Israel: Palestinians

Jim Shannon (DUP) [75919] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department has taken recent steps to help support Palestinian (a) civil society organisations and (b) human rights defenders in (i) Israel and (ii) the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Andrew Mitchell: Civil society organisations play an important role in upholding human rights and democracy, and they must be able to operate freely in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). The former Minister for the Middle East, Amanda Milling, met with human rights defenders, journalists and civil society organisations during her visit to Israel and the OPTs in June 2022. Officials at the British Embassy in Tel Aviv continue to call upon the Government of Israel to fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of human rights defenders and organisations and to allow them to freely operate in Israel and OPTs.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-01/75919>

House of Lords Written Answer

Palestinians: Human Rights

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL2984] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the UN Special Rapporteur's Report, Situation of human rights on the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, published on 21 September, with

particular reference to the Palestinian right to self-determination and the right of resistance to occupation.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains committed to making progress towards a two-state solution, resulting in a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State; based on 1967 borders with agreed land swaps, with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states. We believe that negotiations will only succeed when they are conducted between Israelis and Palestinians, supported by the international community. We will continue to press the parties strongly on the need to refrain from taking actions which make peace more difficult. The UK continues to engage with the Israeli Government on human rights issues in the context of the occupation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-27/hl2984>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://undocs.org/en/A/77/356>

Scottish Parliament Motion

Maggie Chapman (Green) [S6M-06713] Dundee TUC Marks International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People 2022 – That the Parliament recognises 29 November 2022 as the United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, providing an opportunity for the international community to focus its attention on the fact that the question of Palestine remains unresolved; believes that the Palestinian people have yet to attain what it sees as their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right to return to their homes and property, from which it considers they have been displaced; understands that Dundee has been twinned with the Palestinian city of Nablus since 1980; further understands that a delegation from Dundee Trades Union Council, including members of the FBU firefighters' union, general unions GMB and Unite and the Communication Workers Union travelled to the West Bank city to sign an agreement with the Palestinian General Union on 7 November 2022; commends Dundee trade unionists for pledging to donate a fire engine to firefighters in Nablus as part of the reported first solidarity agreement between workers in Britain and Palestine, which, it understands, is expected to be delivered in 2023; considers that what it sees as the socialist ideal of international solidarity has always been a priority for workers in Dundee and the trade union movement across Scotland and the wider UK, and encourages all parliamentarians to give their broadest support and publicity to the people of Palestine in observance of the Day of Solidarity.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-06713>

United Nations

Fourth Committee Hears Support for Referring Question of Palestine to International Court of Justice for Advisory Opinion

... **Mr. Gehlich (Iran)** ... said that the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories contains plenty of disturbing findings, including details of the horrendous experiences of innocent Palestinians and other Arabs, including children. ... adding that the Israeli occupation is at the epicentre of all conflicts in the Middle East. He condemned the forced eviction and forcible transfer of Palestinian families and also drew attention to violence, trespassing and intimidation by Israeli settlers as well as measures

to accelerate the Judaization of Jerusalem while erasing the city's Palestinian Christian and Muslim heritage. ...

Ms. Ozgur (Türkiye) stated that the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is fuelling tension and conflict, diminishing prospects for lasting peace in the region and undermining prospects for a two-State solution. ...

Mr. Al-Barati (Yemen) said that without the establishment of a viable Palestinian State, there is no way that stability in the Middle East can be ensured. The Security Council must implement resolution 2334 (2016), and the occupying Power should put an end to all settlement activity. The siege of Gaza and the detention and assassination of Palestinians must end. ...

Richard M. Mills, Jr. (United States), stressing that a negotiated two-State solution remains the best way to ensure Israel's security and fulfil the Palestinian desire for a State of their own, highlighted the importance of direct negotiations. Reiterating his country's opposition to the General Assembly's annual resolutions against Israel, he said that the failure to acknowledge the shared history of the Haram al-Sharif and Temple Mount in those texts demonstrates that they are intended only to denigrate. New language in this year's draft resolution which requests an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice was inserted late in negotiations without sufficient time for consultations. ... The signing of the Abraham Accords and other normalization agreements means that Government officials, businesspeople and students are traveling between Israel and those States that signed them. "Yet here in conference room four, all still seems to be the same," he said, calling for the abandonment of resolutions that are biased against Israel. ...

The representative of South Africa said that the facts on the ground lead to only one conclusion, and that is that Israel is perpetrating an apartheid system against the Palestinian people. "It is a strong comparison to make, and it is not one South Africa makes lightly for we understand the term beyond any doubt," he said, emphasizing that calling out Israel for documented atrocities against Palestinians is not antisemitic. ...

Gilad Menashe Erdan (Israel), describing his country as the only vibrant liberal democracy in the Middle East, said that by supporting their lies and distortions, the Committee is showing the Palestinians that they can continue spreading their culture of hatred while denying Israel's right to exist. As long as they continue to get support from an immoral, politicized anti-Israel majority at the United Nations, the Palestinians will never make any concessions that are essential for reconciliation and peace. The Palestinians are only interested in the destruction of the Jewish State by any means, he added. ...

Condemning counterproductive resolutions that support the Palestinians' destructive approach, he said that the text before the Committee this session is different because the United Nations is about to hammer the final nail in the coffin. The Palestinians are exploiting the International Court of Justice "as a weapon of mass destruction in their jihad war of Israel demonization", he said, adding that co-opting the Court will put the conflict on a suicidal crash course. Weaponizing an international body to force Israel to submit to outrageous Palestinian demands will destroy any chances for future dialogue, he said. Unilateral Palestinian steps will be met by unilateral steps by Israel, he added ...

Nasria Elardja Flitti, observer for the League of Arab States ... said that Israel's settlement policy is aimed at the total annexation of Palestinian and Arab lands through demolition, evacuation, illegitimate detention and the killing of Palestinian people. Condemning all Israeli violations in the occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan, he said that such abuses deprive people of hope as they fight for their inalienable right to self-determination as well as the right to natural resources. ... Stressing the need to put an end to apartheid measures, he also noted the increased violence against journalists, such as Shireen Abu Akleh, who was killed while wearing a vest that identified her as a member of the media.

The observer for the State of Palestine, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel's disdain for the United Nations is one reason why multilateralism and the

international system is in crisis. The country disrespects and violates a plethora of resolutions because it believes it is above the law. Shielded in the Security Council, and absent true measures of accountability, Israel is accustomed to getting away with its crimes. How is turning to the International Court of Justice escalatory and violent, when doing so is actually a peaceful and legitimate choice? she wondered.

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/gaspd770.doc.htm>

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/77/501)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/77/501>

UN Security Council 2334 (2016)

<https://www.un.org/webcast/pdfs/SRES2334-2016.pdf>

Fourth Committee, Concluding Its Work, Approves Six Draft Resolutions, Including Request for ICJ Opinion on Israeli Occupation

... The Committee ... approved the draft resolution “Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East” (document A/C.4/77/L.9) by a recorded vote of 164 in favour to 6 against ... with 5 abstentions

It then approved the draft resolution “Assistance to Palestine refugees” (document A/C.4/77/L.10), by a recorded vote of 165 in favour to 1 against ... with 10 abstentions

Next, it approved the draft resolution on “Palestine refugees’ properties and their revenues” (document A/C.4/77/L.11), by a recorded vote of 160 in favour to 7 against ... with 7 abstentions ...

The Committee then took up draft resolutions relating to Israeli practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories. Those were titled “Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem” (document A/C.4/77/L.12/Rev.1), “The occupied Syrian Golan (document A/C.4/77/L.13) and “Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan” (document A/C.4/77/L.14).

The representative of Israel, making a general statement on all three drafts, said their only purpose is to demonize Israel and exempt the Palestinians of any responsibility of their current situation. Recalling that Israel signed four peace agreements with other States in the last two years, and that Israelis pray for peace three times a day, he said that involving the International Court of Justice will decimate any chances of reconciliation. Noting the “unilateral approach of the resolutions”, he urged delegates to vote against them.

The representative of the United States said there are no short cuts to the two-State solution and there is nothing in the package of draft resolutions before the Committee that will ensure this. Calling on all Member States to vote against this package of counterproductive resolutions, he said his country will support the UNRWA budget through voluntary contributions, and urged the Agency to uphold its commitment to neutrality, impartiality and humanity.

The Committee approved the draft resolution “Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem” (document A/C.4/77/L.12/Rev.1) by a recorded vote of 98 in favour to 17 against, with 52 abstentions.

It then approved the draft resolution “The occupied Syrian Golan” (document A/C.4/77/L.13) by a recorded vote of 148 in favour to 3 against ... with 22 abstentions.

Next, it approved the draft resolution “Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan” (document A/C.4/77/L.14) by a recorded vote of 150 in favour to 8 against ... with 14 abstentions. ...

The representative of France ... stressed the need for language on Jerusalem’s holy sites to reflect their importance and historical significance for the three monotheistic religions. ... He added that proposals to request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice should be thoroughly discussed and consulted on with the United Nations membership in a timely manner.

The representative of Australia said her delegation voted against “L.12” because it does not support a referral to the International Court of Justice. Doing so will not help bring the parties together for negotiations, she said, adding that advisory opinions should not be used to settle bilateral disputes. ...

The representative of Singapore ... [said] it was not appropriate to involve the Court in this manner. ... he added that references to Haram al Sharif should in fact read Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif to reflect the site’s shared and complex history. ...

The representative of New Zealand echoed the concern regarding “L.12/Rev.1” ...

The representative of Kenya said that it ... dissociates itself from operating paragraph 18 as it is too prescriptive and pre-emptive of the proposed International Court of Justice process. Rather than increasing the chances for negotiations, it risks creating another barrier ...

The representative of Austria ... expressed regret about the manner in which the proposal for an advisory opinion was included in this resolution. ...

The Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine said the reaffirmation of the rights of Palestine refugee and support to UNRWA sends a crucial message of hope. Spotlighting the support for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice, he expressed regret that some States had wavered, adding that the broad majority of Member States remain committed to justice for the Palestinian people. “This overwhelming support is also the clearest answer to the false, libellous statements that have been made in this Committee by the Israeli representative”, he added. ...

The representative of the United Kingdom ... said that his delegation does not believe that referral to the International Court of Justice will bring the parties back to the negotiating table. It also disagreed with the language that refers to the Haram al Sharif/Temple Mount site in purely Islamic terms.

The representative of Timor-Leste ... dissociated himself from ... operative paragraph 18. Urgently requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice might undermine the peace, especially efforts to achieve a two-State solution. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/gaspd771.doc.htm>

Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/C.4/77/L.9)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/77/L.9>

Assistance to Palestine refugees (A/C.4/77/L.10)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/77/L.10>

Palestine refugees’ properties and their revenues (A/C.4/77/L.11)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/77/L.11>

Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (A/C.4/77/L.12/Rev.1)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/77/L.12/Rev.1>

The occupied Syrian Golan (A/C.4/77/L.13)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/77/L.13>

Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan (A/C.4/77/L.14)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.4/77/L.14>

Second Committee Approves Two Resolutions, Including on Sovereignty of Palestinians over Their Natural Resources, Oil Slick on Lebanese Shores

... The Second Committee (Economic and Financial) first took action on the draft resolution titled "Oil slick on Lebanese shores" (document A/C.2/77/L.20), approving it by a recorded vote of 150 in favour to 8 against ...

By its terms, the Assembly would reiterate, for the seventeenth consecutive year, its deep concern about the adverse implications of the destruction by the Israeli Air Force of the oil storage tanks in the direct vicinity of the Lebanese Jiyeh electric power plant for the achievement of sustainable development in Lebanon.

Also by the text, it would acknowledge the conclusions in the report of the Secretary-General, in which he stated that studies show that the value of the damage to Lebanon amounted to \$856.4 million in 2014.

It would further reiterate its request to the Government of Israel to assume responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon for the aforementioned damage and to other countries directly affected by the oil slick, such as Syria. ...

The representative of the United States ... welcomed the historic and difficult decision by Israel and Lebanon to agree on a maritime boundary — the type of engagement the United Nations should be encouraging. Instead, the same worn and patently unfair resolutions are voted on each year. The unbalanced resolution is unfairly critical of Israel, demonstrating a clear institutional bias against one Member State. Such one-sided resolutions only distract from efforts to advance peace ...

Speaking after the vote, **the representative of Israel** stressed that the draft resolution is based on a deeply misleading premise because it has again failed to mention that the events in question was a direct result of a conflict instigated by Hizbullah. ...

The representative of Lebanon noted that the fact that an overwhelming majority had voted in favour sends a clear message that "time is not a vehicle for impunity". While the oil spill has caused the worst recorded environmental disaster in the Mediterranean Sea, she pointed out, the socioeconomic and environmental damages have yet to be addressed. ...

The Committee next took up the draft resolution titled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources" (document A/C.2/77/L.14), approving it by a recorded vote of 151 in favour to 7 against ... By its terms, the Assembly would demand that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of the natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

Further to the draft, it would recognize the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and express hope that this issue will be dealt with within the framework of the final status negotiations.

Also by the text, it would call upon Israel to halt all actions, including those perpetrated by

Israeli settlers, harming the environment, including the dumping of all kinds of waste materials, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan and ceasing its destruction of vital infrastructure. ...

The representative of the United States stated that Israelis and Palestinians equally deserve to enjoy safe and secure lives, in freedom, dignity and prosperity. He expressed disappointment that this body had once again taken up this unbalanced resolution that is unfairly critical of Israel, demonstrating a clear and persistent institutional bias directed at one Member State. ...

Speaking after the vote, **the representative of Syria** ... stressed that his country's citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan have lost the ability to use 6,000 hectares of arable land, threatening their livelihoods as well as their food security and access to water. Underscoring that the Israeli occupation cannot change the internationally recognized truth that "this territory is Arab", he urged the international community to force Israel to respect relevant resolutions.

The observer for the State of Palestine ... called on Member States that voted in favour to uphold their positions and address the human rights violations, apartheid policies and practices as well as war crimes being perpetrated by Israel. She reiterated that the State of Palestine will not accept being "dehumanized and blamed for the injustice our people have been enduring for more than 55 years of foreign colonial occupation".

The representative of Israel said his delegation called for the vote and voted against the text, rejecting the one-sided political narrative, the clearly biased report on which it is based and the false allegations made by several delegations. Instead of supporting a shared vision, the main sponsors prefer to demonize Israel and divert the attention of the international community from their unwillingness to engage in genuine dialogue. Israel is the only country singled out in the Committee ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2022/gaef3576.doc.htm>

Oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/C.2/77/L.20)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.2/77/L.20>

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (A/C.2/77/L.14)

<https://undocs.org/en/A/C.2/77/L.14>

UN Human Rights Council inquiry hears testimonies on Shireen Abu Akleh killing

A UN Human Rights Council-appointed probe into alleged rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), including East Jerusalem, and Israel, wrapped up a week of public hearings in Geneva on Friday that included testimony on the killing of veteran US-Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. ...

One woman, Lina Abu Akleh, has sought justice and accountability for the killing of her aunt, Ms. Abu Akleh, on 11 May 2022. ...

Following her killing, the UN human rights office, OHCHR, [alleged](#) that Israeli forces were behind the fatal shooting, and not indiscriminate Palestinian firing.

In September, the Israeli authorities announced that there was a "high possibility" that Ms. Abu Akleh had been hit accidentally by the [Israeli military](#).

"It is really important for these public hearings to be held because it allows us the space to share our testimonies, the experience and the suffering we had to endure over the past six months, but also it allows our voices to get across and our messages and our demands. It's because it's unfortunate that the Commission of Inquiry cannot access the territories",

said Lina Abu Akleh.

“The lack of accountability, the lack of justice is what pushed me to advocate for my Aunt Shireen”, she added. “It’s the importance of getting justice and getting her message across, is what continues to push me towards our pursuit”.

To read the full press release see

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130482>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Bill of Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

Education (Non-religious Philosophical Convictions) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3186>

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

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

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/48461/documents/2448>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3325>

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3217>

Private Burial Grounds and Cemeteries Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3188>

Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163>

Schools Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156>

Scottish Parliament

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

TOP

Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes tomorrow**

Mapping Exercise - Youth Workers supporting young people facing racism & antisemitism in Scotland (closing date 14 November 2022)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Z5YX2C7>

TOP

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