Home Affairs

Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland

UK Government Minister visits the Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre

… Beginning in the historic synagogue, the group discussed the roots of Scotland’s Jewish communities before visiting the Scottish Holocaust-era Study Centre and displays. Here, the Minister was shown one of the Learning Kits – about Dorrith Sim – used by school groups who visit to learn about the stories of Jewish refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe. UK Government Minister for Scotland John Lamont said: For the past 200 years the Jewish community has made a significant contribution to life in Scotland and it was a real privilege to hear more about this while exploring the Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre. Established in 2021, in part through funds from the UK Government-backed Community Security Trust, visitors to Glasgow’s wonderful Category A-listed Garnethill Synagogue can learn about the history and culture of Scottish Jewry, including how Scotland responded to events in Nazi Germany and took in a number of refugees.

The UK Government is committed to supporting Jewish communities so they can live and worship safely. I thank those involved in the only Jewish Heritage Centre in Scotland and urge as many people as possible to visit – and make a donation if able – to support this vital project.


Israel

House of Lords Written Answers

Israel: Religious Freedom

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL7219] To ask His Majesty’s Government what
action they are taking with international partners and the government of Israel to preserve
the status quo of the Al-Aqsa compound and freedom of worship in occupied East
Jerusalem, following the storming of the Al-Aqsa mosque and the restrictions placed on
Muslims coming to worship there during Ramadan.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As the Foreign Secretary said in his statement on 7
April, the UK condemns Israeli police violence at Al Aqsa Mosque. When Israeli
security forces conduct operations, they must ensure they are proportionate and in
accordance with international law. The UK is a strong supporter of Freedom of
Religion or Belief (FoRB) and calls for places of worship to be respected. We value
the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's custodianship of the holy sites in Jerusalem
and urge all parties across the region to de-escalate tensions.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-04-18/hl7219

The statement referred to above can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/calls-for-de-escalation-at-jerusalems-holy-sites-
foreign-secretary-statement

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL7220] To ask His Majesty's Government what
representations they have made to the government of Israel to protect the freedom of
worship and property of Palestinian Muslims in occupied Hebron, in view of the closure of
the Ibrahimi mosque to Muslims for two days for Jewish Passover activities during
Ramadan.

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. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises issues of
religious freedom with the Israeli Government. We continue to call on all sides to
ensure those of all faiths in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories are able
to practise their faiths in peace and security. We engage the Israeli authorities to
ensure access to the holy sites for Palestinians across the OPTs. As set out in the
House of Commons on 24 April by Andrew Mitchell, Secretary of State for
Development and Africa, we welcome Israel's decision to prevent non-Muslims
from visiting al-Aqsa mosque during the final days of Ramadan, which we regard
as an important de-escalatory act.

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-04-18/hl7220

The Minister’s statement, referred to above (made on 20 not 24 April) can be read at

https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-04-20/debates/FA8242F1-F6CB-4E0E-
AC9F-A9F05F8C5E3E/HumanRightsProtectionsPalestinians#contribution-1D6CB13C-
2013-4C07-8806-6303D622DCDE

Israel: Palestinians

Baroness Janke (Liberal Democrat) [HL7221] To ask His Majesty's Government what
representations they have made to the government of Israel in response to the death of a
15-year-old child and injuries to Palestinian civilians during a raid by Israeli forces on the
Aqbat Jaber refugee camp near Jericho in occupied territory while searching for
Palestinians accused of attacks against Israelis.

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly raise the issue of the numbers of
Palestinians killed and injured by Israeli Defence Forces in the West Bank and
Gaza with the Israeli authorities. We encourage them to carry out swift, transparent
and thorough investigations and, if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be
held to account. We stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing
appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, particularly the need to
protect children, and urge restraint in the use of live fire. The Minister of State for
the Middle East, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon also raised this point with the Israeli Government during his visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) in January. 
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-04-18/hl7221

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

Holocaust Memorial Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421

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

Same Sex Marriage (Church of England)
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3438

Schools Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3156

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill

Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3163
The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438

Universal Jurisdiction (Extension)
https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3454

Scottish Parliament

** Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill

Stage 1 Report, Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

** new or updated today

** closes in 10 days
Prospective Scheme of Delegation for the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
(closing date 15 May 2023)

Supporting earlier resolution of private family law arrangements (closing date 15 June 2023)

Review of the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (closing date 18 June 2023)

Charities tax compliance (closing date 20 July 2023)

JPR 2023 Antisemitism in the UK Survey (closing date not stated)
https://www.jpr.org.uk/panel/UKantisemitism2023 (UK except Scotland) and
https://bit.ly/3Vg7DDH (Scotland)