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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

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Written Statements

Thursday, 28 March 2019

Fixed Recoverable Costs in Civil Cases

[HLWS1424]

Lord Keen of Elie: My Right Honourable Friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (The Rt. Honourable David Gauke MP) has made the following written ministerial statement:

"The Ministry of Justice is today publishing a consultation paper Extending Fixed Recoverable Costs in Civil Cases: Implementing Sir Rupert Jackson’s proposals. We are seeking views on implementing the proposals in Sir Rupert Jackson’s report on fixed recoverable costs (FRC) in civil cases in England and Wales, published on 31 July 2017.

In civil litigation in England and Wales, the winning party is generally entitled to recover their costs from the losing party. The legal costs of civil cases have, however, been too high and too uncertain for a long time, making litigation riskier and less accessible than it should be and thereby undermining access to justice.

FRC are a way of controlling the legal costs of civil litigation in advance by prescribing the amount of money that can be recovered by the winning party at set stages of litigation. They reduce overall costs, keep them proportionate and enhance access to justice. They are already an important part of our justice system in lower value personal injury cases and the time is right to consider their extension.

The consultation will run until 6 June 2019. I have placed a copy of the consultation in the libraries of both Houses."

Foreign Affairs Council 18 March 2019

[HLWS1425]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on 18 March. It was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Brussels.

Commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the illegal annexation of Crimea

The High Representative and Foreign Ministers marked the fifth anniversary of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by holding a short livestreamed session. The HRVP reiterated the key elements of the EU position; the EU did not, and would not, recognise this violation of international law, and stood in full solidarity with Ukraine, supporting its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Current Affairs

HRVP Mogherini expressed shock and solidarity with New Zealand over the attacks in Mosques in Christchurch.

The High Representative and Ministers welcomed the results of the third Brussels conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region, which reaffirmed EU support for the UN-led political process and Syrian people by successfully mobilising aid from the international community.

The High Representative briefed Ministers on the International Contact Group’s ongoing work on Venezuela. Foreign Ministers expressed their concern at the continuing deterioration of the humanitarian situation. They reiterated the urgent need to find a way towards a political process.

The High Representative and Ministers also noted the signature of the peace agreement in the Central African Republic and the recently announced US measures on the International Criminal Court.

China

The Council held a wide-ranging and comprehensive exchange of views on China and EU-China relations, ahead of its discussion with Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The discussion fed into the 21-22 March European Council meeting and EU-China summit on 9 April, in Brussels.

The discussion was informed by the joint communication by the High Representative and the Commission entitled ‘EU-China: A strategic outlook’ which had been adopted on 12 March. Ministers welcomed the assessment made in the joint communication and the proposed actions. While the 2016 China strategy remains the basis for EU cooperation with China, the joint communication provides useful guidelines on how to refine Europe’s approach to China to be more realistic, assertive and multi-faceted.

Republic of Moldova

The Council discussed the Republic of Moldova following its 24 February Parliamentary elections. Foreign Ministers agreed that the formation of a government should be a transparent and credible process that respected the outcome of the election. EU cooperation with Moldova will continue to be based on the implementation of the 2014 Association Agreement, with financial support conditional upon Moldova’s progress. The Council reaffirmed that the EU would continue to work to provide tangible benefits for the Moldovan people and support for civil society.

Yemen

Ministers recalled that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Yemen and that the only way forward was the full implementation of the Stockholm agreement. They stressed the need to keep up the political momentum and to push the parties to fulfil urgently their
commitments, as well as the need to see immediate progress on the ground.

The Council reiterated the EU’s full support for the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and his efforts in finding a lasting, sustainable, enforceable, inclusive and negotiated political solution within a UN-led framework. Foreign Ministers highlighted in particular the importance of fully involving Yemeni women in the political process, and expressed concern at the lack of improvement in the dire humanitarian situation, especially access for humanitarian aid. The Council reiterated that the EU and its member states would continue their humanitarian assistance efforts and lend political support as necessary.

**Lunch with Chinese State Councillor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi**

Over lunch, foreign ministers held an open and wide-ranging discussion with Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

**Council Conclusions**

The Council agreed a number of measures without discussion:

- The Council adopted conclusions on the EU guidelines on non-discrimination in external action.
- The Council adopted conclusions on the first European topical peer review for nuclear safety.
- The Council reviewed the sanctions regarding the situation in South Sudan, and agreed to maintain the restrictive measures currently in place against one person.
- The Council approved the specifications for the 2019 military crisis management exercise (MILEX 19).
- The Council established the EU’s position for the 15th meeting of the EU-Republic of North Macedonia Stabilisation and Association Council, which will take place on 19 March 2019 in Brussels.

**General Affairs Council March 2019**

[HLWS1423]

**Lord Callanan**: David Lidington, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, represented the UK at the General Affairs Council (GAC) meeting on 19 March in Brussels. A provisional report of the meeting and the conclusions adopted can be found on the Council of the European Union’s website at:


**Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 - 2027**

The Presidency presented a progress report outlining the latest developments on MFF-related sectoral proposals, which Ministers agreed to send to the European Parliament.

Ministers discussed the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027. Ministers agreed that funding migration policy should be a priority in the next MFF, however funding for the internal and external aspects of migration policy were still to be decided. Member States broadly agreed the Commission’s proposed 25% target of EU expenditure on climate objectives across all programmes. The new proposal aims to build on the last MFF by having 25% of the Union budget expenditures supporting climate objectives, instead of the 20% from the last MFF, in order to implement the Paris Agreement and achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Some Member States stated that higher targets within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and cohesion policy programmes would be more difficult to achieve under proposed cuts for these programmes.

The Commission encouraged Member States to be adaptable in their positions in order to reach an agreement on the negotiations in autumn 2019. The shared goal was to provide a simplified draft position in preparation for Leaders to discuss at the June European Council.

**Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance**

Ministers were presented with the Partial General Approach on the Regulation establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession in Assistance (IPA III). The IPA III is part of the MFF and supports EU enlargement policy by providing funding and support for implementing key political, institutional, social and economic reforms to comply with EU values, rules, standards and policies. The beneficiaries for the IPA III are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovinia, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Turkey. After formal adoption of the mandate at a future Council, discussions are expected to begin between the Council, European Commission and European Parliament under the Finnish Presidency.

**Preparation of the European Council 21-22 March 2019: Conclusions and European Council follow-up**

The Council discussed preparations and draft conclusions for the 21-22 March European Council. These included climate change, the upcoming EU-China summit, tackling disinformation and strengthening the European economic base. Member States were unanimous in calling for a wide-ranging discussion on the Single Market and Industrial Policy. As such, there were broad calls from Member States for the Commission to produce an integrated 2030 Industrial Strategy by March 2020.

Member States welcomed the recent Commission - European External Action Service communication on China. Member States also welcomed the inclusion of an acknowledgement of the fifth anniversary of the annexation of Crimea, and many Member States highlighted the need to counter the threat of disinformation, especially in the run up to the European Parliament elections.

The UK welcomed the joint communication on China, supported the addition of language on Crimea and restated our commitment to the policy of non-recognition of Russia’s annexation of Crimea. We also welcomed the inclusion of the issue of disinformation on the agenda and...
highlighted the need to build resilience against hybrid threats.

**European Semester**

The Presidency presented a report on the discussions and main political messages from the different Council configurations on 2019 European Semester package. The Council noted that although the European economy had entered its sixth year of growth, further action is needed to tackle global instability and economic challenges. The Commission welcomed the Presidency’s report and the emphasis on Country-Specific Recommendations.

**Historic England Tailored Review**

[HLWS1427]

**Lord Ashton of Hyde:** My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Rt Hon Jeremy Wright) has made the following Written Statement:

I am today announcing the start of a Tailored Review of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (more commonly known as Historic England). As a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), Historic England is required to undergo a tailored review at least once in each Parliament. This is the first review to take place since the organisation was split into two separate, though related, bodies in 2015: an Arm’s Length Body operating under the name Historic England, and a charity called The English Heritage Trust (trading as English Heritage).

The Review will be conducted by my officials and will comprise two stages. The first stage will be a robust challenge to the continuing need for the functions performed by Historic England and, if there is a continuing need, whether some or all of these functions should be delivered by alternative delivery models or continued to be delivered by a NDPB. It will also assess the current model and relationship with the English Heritage Trust to ensure it remains fit for purpose. This will include assessing the robustness and long term sustainability of the current financial and governance arrangements following the split of English Heritage from Historic England in 2015.

If the review finds that the functions should continue to be delivered by a NDPB, the second stage will review the structure, efficiency and effectiveness of Historic England. It will also consider the organisational control and governance arrangements in place to ensure that they are compliant with the recognised principles of good corporate governance and delivery of good value for money.

The findings of the Review will be examined by a Challenge Panel, chaired by a DCMS Non-Executive Director, which will rigorously and robustly test and challenge the assumptions and conclusions of the Review.

In conducting the review, officials will engage with a broad range of stakeholders across the UK from heritage, culture, planning and development sectors as well as a selection of local government authorities.


I will inform the House of the outcome of the Review when it is completed and copies of the report of the Review will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

**Leasehold Market Reform**

[HLWS1430]

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:** My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Government is committed to tackling unfair practices in the leasehold market and to promote transparency and fairness for leaseholders.

It is vital that we have a leasehold market that is transparent, fair and affordable for all those involved; where people know in advance what they are going to have to pay, are not saddled with mounting or unaffordable costs and are able to challenge fees if they feel they are unjustified or unfair.

Today I am announcing a package of measures to further support existing as well as future owners of leasehold homes.

This includes clamping down on unjustified legal costs for leaseholders, an industry pledge to tackle doubling ground rent charges and reforms to provide greater consumer protections and transparency around the use of event fees in retirement leasehold properties.

Under current rules, leaseholders may be liable to pay the legal costs of their landlord regardless of the outcome of a legal challenge. This has led to cases of leaseholders being forced to pay tens of thousands of pounds in legal fees, even when the court or tribunal has found in their favour. This can lead to leaseholders facing higher bills than the charges they were seeking to challenge in the first place. It can also deter leaseholders from taking their concerns to a tribunal.

We will bring forward legislation to close these legal loopholes that allow freeholders to unjustifiably recoup legal costs from leaseholders.

I am also pleased to unveil industry’s leaseholder pledge, which we have worked on closely with them. This will mean that developers, freeholders, lawyers and managing agents are committing to taking steps to help leaseholders, especially those who are affected by rapidly doubling ground rents. I would like to take this opportunity to commend all those who have already signed up, and to urge those who have yet to do so to do
the right thing. We expect all those who are involved to help put right problems for people who are affected.

Today I am also announcing the Government’s response to the Law Commission’s 2017 report on Event Fees in Retirement Properties.

Implementation of these recommendations will help older people and their families to be better protected from hidden costs and unfair fees charged in some leasehold retirement properties, where owners are required to pay an ‘event fee’ on certain ‘events’, such as sale, sub-letting or change of occupancy. A new statutory code of practice will ensure that these fees cannot be charged unexpectedly, while fees that breach it will be regarded as unenforceable. Developers and estate agents will be required to make all such fees crystal clear to people before they buy, so prospective buyers can make an informed decision before forming a financial or emotional attachment to a property.

I am committed to reforming the leasehold market so that it is fit for purpose and works for everyone – and today’s package of reforms builds on our wider leasehold reform programme to reaffirm this commitment.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency Business Plan

Baroness Sugg: My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Transport (Nusrat Ghani) has made the following Ministerial Statement.

I am proud to announce the publication of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency’s (MCA) business plan for 2019-20. The MCA does vital work to save lives at sea, regulate ship standards and protect the marine environment. The Agency affects not just those working on the coast or at sea, it upholds the legacy of our great maritime nation.

The business plan sets out:

i) the vision for a future aviation strategy, including the next phase of helicopter contracts;

ii) improvement to the already first class HM Coastguard; and

iii) the next phase of the Survey & Inspection Transformation Programme.

At the international level, MCA will work alongside the Department and with the input of other government departments to represent the UK’s interests at the International Maritime Organization, and at other relevant bodies.

Domestically, MCA will continue to work collaboratively to grow the maritime sector in the UK so that it continues to contribute positively to the economy. They will also provide a valuable contribution to the delivery the ambitions set out in Maritime 2050 and its accompanying route maps.

This plan allows service users and members of the public the opportunity to see how the agency is developing and using new technologies to improve its services and performance.

The Key Performance Indicators will assess how the agency is performing in operating its key services, managing reforms and the agency finances throughout the year.

The business plan will be available electronically on GOV.UK and copies will be placed in the libraries of both houses.

The Statement includes the following attached material:


The material can be viewed online at: http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2019-03-28/HLWS1429/

Motoring Agencies: Business Plans

Baroness Sugg: My Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Transport (Jesse Norman), has made the following Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to inform the House of the publication of the 2019-20 business plans for the Department for Transport’s Motoring Agencies - the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA).

The business plans set out:

the services each agency will deliver and any significant changes they plan to make;

the resources they require; and,

the key performance indicators, by which their performance will be assessed.

These plans allow service users and members of the public to understand the agencies’ plans for delivering their key services, implementing their transformation programmes, and managing their finances.

The business plans will be available electronically on GOV.UK and copies will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

DVLA (190328 - DVLA Business Plan 2019-20.pdf)
DVSA (190328 - DVSA Business Plan 2019-20.pdf)
VCA (190328 - VCA Business Plan 2019-20.pdf)

Troubled Families Annual Report

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

As required by the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, section 3(1), my Department has published the third annual report, setting out how the Troubled Families Programme (2015-2020) has been supporting
disadvantaged families. We are laying this report today and will place a copy in the House of Commons library.

This notice details what the report covers, for the period up to the end of March 2019, as well as for the next financial year, including setting out which families are eligible for the programme and how the progress of families will be measured.

‘Building Resilient Families: Third annual report of the Troubled Families Programme 2018/19’ details how the programme is spreading whole family working across local services so more families get access to the early, practical and coordinated support they need to overcome their complex problems.

This programme of whole family working has achieved significant progress over the past twelve months:

• Local authorities have been funded to work in a whole family way with 380,426 families in most need of help as part of the programme. However, we know that local authorities are working in a whole family way with a far greater number of families.

• 171,890 families have achieved significant and sustained progress against the problems that were identified when they entered the programme. This is up 79,645 on the previous year.

• Of all families worked with since the beginning of the programme, in 20,366 families one or more adults have succeeded in moving into continuous employment. An increase of 6,459 since last year.

When compared to a matched comparison group, the programme of targeted intervention was found to have:

• reduced the proportion of children on the programme going into care by a third
• reduced the proportion of adults on the programme going to prison by a quarter and juvenile convictions by 15%
• supported more people on the programme back in work with 10 per cent fewer people claiming Jobseekers Allowance

Families classed as ‘relevant households’ on the programme, as defined by section 3 of the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, are tackling at least 2 of the following challenges:

• Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
• Children who are not attending school regularly
• Children who need help; that is children of all ages who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a child protection plan
• Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness
• Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
• Parents or children with a range of physical and mental health problems

The rationale for these eligibility criteria and an explanation of the way in which local authorities should identify families using a range of indicators, suggested referral routes and information sources were set out in the refreshed version of the Financial Framework, published on 8 December 2017. The Financial Framework also sets out how the progress of families supported will be measured.
British Nationality: Children

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the status and citizenship of children born while overseas to (1) British nationals, and (2) those with permanent residence or indefinite leave to remain in the UK, in particular where their mothers had left the UK for more than a short holiday or visit. [HL14563]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: A child who is of the first generation born overseas to a British citizen will be a British citizen by descent. A child of a subsequent generation born overseas will not automatically be a British citizen, but has a statutory entitlement to register as such where close ties to the UK are retained.

There are exceptions to this position where the parent is based overseas undertaking activities such as Crown Service.

A child born overseas to a person who holds either indefinite leave to remain or permanent residence will not acquire British citizenship. Where the child does not have the ability to return to the UK in their own right, then there are provisions under which a child can seek to accompany a settled or EEA parent.

Burma: Nationality

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the Statement on discrimination and coercion faced by minority groups in citizenship registration process, published by the Burma Human Rights Network on 19 March, (2) the challenges faced by minority ethnic groups in Myanmar in applying for citizenship and identification cards, and (3) the ability of citizens of that country to assert their rights under Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. [HL14641]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The detailed report by the Burma Human Rights Network is extremely concerning. We continue to press the Government of Myanmar for the full implementation of the Rakhine Advisory Commission (RAC) recommendations including citizenship, and to investigate any reports of discriminatory practices in regards to citizenship. We support clear and non-discriminatory pathways to citizenship, as well as longer term reform of the 1982 Citizenship Law, as the RAC recommendations set out.

Burma: Religious Freedom

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement made by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi during a public meeting on 15 March in Bago that she would seek to address the discrimination against members of religious minorities so that they could exercise their rights as prescribed in the Constitution of Myanmar; and the subsequent demand by local authorities that trustees of the mosques in Bago were asked to sign a written note declaring that “the Office of Labour, Immigration and Population does not practice discrimination against members of the Islamic faith in their applications for their citizenship scrutiny cards.” [HL14640]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The British Government continues to raise our concern at restrictions on freedom of religion and belief in Myanmar; reports of the mischief of power by local authorities are worrying. I raised the UK’s concerns about the persecution of minorities in Myanmar in his speech to the Human Rights Council last February, and we continue to raise the issue with the Government of Myanmar. We welcome public statements from the civilian government about their intentions to address discrimination, and continue to call for all parts of government to support tangible steps towards equality, inclusivity and tolerance across Myanmar.

Channel Ferries

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the contracts they signed with ferry operators for the
provision of services in the event of a no-deal Brexit specified the date of Brexit as 29 March; whether those contracts would have to be renegotiated if Brexit is delayed; and if so, what estimate they have made of the potential cost of any such renegotiation. [HL14670]

Baroness Sugg: The contracts do not specify the date of Brexit, but services will commence on 29 March. If there is a delay to Brexit, it will be for the parties to consider the nature of the delay, and whether to agree modifications in the light of changed circumstances.

Children: Human Trafficking

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the relationship between cuts to children's support services and child victims of trafficking going missing shortly after referral to the National Referral Mechanism. [HL14555]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The government takes the issue of any child going missing extremely seriously.

Funding for children’s services is an un-ring-fenced part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, it is for local authorities to spend it in the way they think best to meet local needs and their statutory duties. Over the 5 year period to 2019-20, councils have access, through the Local Government Finance Settlement, to over £200 billion to deliver local services, including children’s services. Core spending power has increased from £45.1 billion in 2018-19 to £46.4 billion in 2019-20. In addition to this, local authorities estimate that in 2019-20 the sector will keep around £2.5 billion in business rates growth. Local authorities have control over the way in which this money is used, and as such this growth can be directed to support existing services or to invest in further growth.

In the Autumn Budget, the government announced a further £410 million in 2019-20 for local authorities to invest in adult and children’s social care services. It also announced £84 million of extra funding, over the next 5 years, to support local authorities to invest in initiatives that improve social work practice and decision making. The government will continue to work closely with the sector to consider long-term children’s services funding as part of the upcoming Spending Review.

In order to address the particular vulnerability of these children, the government updated statutory guidance for local authorities on the ‘Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery’, attached, in November 2017. This includes guidance on preventing children going missing. Department for Education data collection guidance has been revised to clarify to local authorities that all cases of looked after children who go missing – many of whom might be at heightened risk of being trafficked - are reported, including all children who have gone missing within the first 24 hours of coming to the attention of the local authority.

In addition, the government has awarded £2.2 million from the Child Trafficking Protection Fund to seven organisations to protect vulnerable children in the UK and overseas who are at risk of trafficking. The projects cover a range of areas including tailored support for trafficking victims from various cultures, developing skills and expertise in local areas, and a specialist accommodation pilot. The fund is in addition to the provision of Independent Child Trafficking Advocates for children who have been trafficked.

The cross-government Missing Children and Adults Strategy will be published in the coming months and will include commitments aimed to prevent victims of child trafficking from going missing by ensuring they are given appropriate information and support. This includes work to encourage police forces to adopt the Operation Innerste process which aims to build trust between a child and the UK authorities, reducing the likelihood of them running away.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

- HL14555_Care_of_unaccompanied_migrant_children
  [HL14555_UASC_Care_of_unaccompanied_migrant_children.pdf]
- HL14588_Eggs
  [HL14588_Eggs_Classes_and_Registration.pdf]

Eggs: Imports

Asked by The Earl of Shrewsbury

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what measures will be in place to ensure that (1) eggs, and (2) egg products, imported into the UK after the UK leaves the EU meet the same environmental and animal welfare standards that are adhered to currently. [HL14588]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government shares the British public’s high regard for the environment and for animal welfare, and our current import requirements for eggs and for egg products will continue to apply when we leave the EU.

Electric Vehicles: Bicycles

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether electronically assisted pedal cycles categorised as EU type approved L1e-A are required to be registered with the DVLA for use in the UK. [HL14648]

Baroness Sugg: There is no requirement to register electronically assisted pedal cycles used in Great Britain.

However, these vehicles are currently classed as motor vehicles in Northern Ireland and must be registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency when used there. The use of electrically assisted pedal cycles on public roads in Northern Ireland is a transferred matter. Until the Northern Ireland Assembly re-convenes there are no plans to align the legislation.
Eritrea: Human Rights

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress achieved by the government of Eritrea towards (1) releasing political prisoners, (2) ending indefinite conscription, and (3) implementing human rights reforms since the rapprochement between the governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia which began in June 2018. [HL14609]

*Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:*

We have seen limited progress on these reforms since June 2018. These issues were raised at the Universal Periodic Review on Eritrea in January and most recently at the Article VIII dialogue discussions between EU Heads of Mission and the Government of Eritrea on 20 March.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the continuing eligibility of Eritrea for consideration under the United Nations Human Rights Council, Agenda Item 4, Human rights situations that require the Council’s attention. [HL14610]

*Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:*

It was clear from the Universal Periodic Review on Eritrea, conducted in January 2019, that the human rights situation in Eritrea remains of significant concern to the members of the Human Rights Council. We have encouraged the Government of Eritrea to consider fully all the recommendations made as part of that process, and continue to urge their cooperation with the Special Rapporteur. We look forward to her annual report, which will inform the Council's discussions on Eritrea at its 41st session in June.

Fire Prevention

*Asked by Lord Porter of Spalding*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk of manufacturers of glass-reinforced plastic composite fire doors becoming insolvent in order to avoid any potential liabilities. [HL14622]

*Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth:*

We are not party to details of the financial situation of companies manufacturing GRP composite fire doors. The Association of Composite Door Manufacturers (ACDM) have committed to developing an industry-led action plan for repair and replacement of fire doors which do not meet the required standard. The ACDM are engaging with the Local Government Association (LGA) and other key stakeholders directly in development of their plan.

Fire Regulations

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review fire safety guidance with a view to including escape provisions when the stay put policy has to be abandoned. [HL14573]

*Baroness Williams of Trafford:*

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the responsible person must undertake and review regularly a fire risk assessment of the premises and put in place and maintain adequate and appropriate fire precautions to mitigate the risk to life from fire. This includes ensuring adequate means of escape for building users.

The Local Government Association (LGA) produced guidance on fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats to support responsible persons to deliver an appropriate level of fire safety. In May 2018, the National Fire Chiefs Council published a guidance note on simultaneous evacuation, which should be considered alongside the LGA guidance:


Honours Forfeiture Committee

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Honours Forfeiture Committee is next due to meet. [HL14663]

*Lord Young of Cookham:*

We expect the next meeting to be held over the summer.

Human Trafficking: Children

*Asked by Baroness Doocey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the findings in the report by Every Child Protected Against Trafficking and Missing People Still in Harm's Way: An update report on trafficked and unaccompanied children going missing from care in the UK, published in December 2018, what plans they have to investigate the causes behind the rising number of child victims of trafficking going missing from care after referral to the National Referral Mechanism. [HL14552]

*Baroness Williams of Trafford:*

The updated report by Every Child Protected Against Trafficking and Missing People, Still in Harm's Way, does not show a rising proportion of child victims of trafficking going missing from care. The report recognises the improvements in the identification of child trafficking victims over the last two years.
The Government is committed to protecting all children who go missing and recognises the specific needs of trafficked children, which is why we have announced a range of actions to better protect child victims and keep them safe. The Government has committed to expanding Independent Child Trafficking Advocates to one third of all local authorities by April 2019. The Child Trafficking Protection Fund which, as well as providing victim support and recovery, aims to reduce vulnerability to exploitation by preventing trafficked children from going missing and potentially being retrafficked. In November 2017, the Department for Education published a Safeguarding Strategy for unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children. The Strategy commissioned a further 1,000 training places for carers and support workers to equip them with the skills they need to identify when a child is at risk of going missing and of potentially being trafficked onwards. The Refugee Council are delivering this training and will have delivered 1,000 places by the end of March 2019.

The Home Office is also working with the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) through the Home Office National Law Enforcement Data Programme (NLEDP) to deliver a National Register of Missing Persons (NRMP). This will enable real time information about police reported missing persons incidents to be accessed by police forces across England and Wales. Over time the NRMP will build a national picture of historic missing persons incidents. This will assist officers when they are looking for, or encounter a missing person, particularly if that missing person is outside their home force area. We are currently working towards the NRMP to be in use operationally in 2020/2021.

**Asked by Baroness Doocey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 13 December 2018 (HL12284), why data are not published on the time taken for victims of child trafficking to receive positive conclusive grounds decisions from the National Referral Mechanism. [HL14556]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The responsibility for the collection and publication of National Referral Mechanism (NRM) data currently sits with the National Crime Agency (NCA). The NCA does not publish data about the time taken for victims of trafficking to receive positive conclusive grounds decisions, be they adults or children.

However, responsibility for NRM data will pass to the Home Office when the new Single Competent Authority for NRM decision making goes live in April 2019. We will then review what data we publish going forward.

**Asked by Baroness Doocey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 21 December 2018 (HL12231), when they plan to publish the updated version of the Government's Missing Children and Adults Strategy. [HL14553]

**Asked by Baroness Doocey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 21 December 2018 (HL12231), whether the updated Government's Missing Children and Adults Strategy will include specific measures to prevent child victims of trafficking going missing shortly after referral to the National Referral Mechanism. [HL14554]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Government is committed to protecting all people who go missing, but recognises that the needs of children, particularly vulnerable children such as trafficked children, are different to those of adults and we have an even greater responsibility to protect them.

Home Office is working with partners to address the issues faced by all children who go missing through its refreshed Missing Children and Adults Strategy which will be published in the coming months. The refreshed Strategy will include cross-Government commitments aimed to prevent victims of child trafficking from going missing by ensuring they are given appropriate information and support. This includes work to encourage police forces to adopt the Operation Innerste process which aims to build trust between a child and the UK authorities, reducing the likelihood of them running away or going missing after a referral to the National Referral Mechanism.

**Iran: UN Commission on the Status of Women**

**Asked by Lord Balfe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the gender-related policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran before supporting its election to the UN's Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women of the Commission on the Status of Women; whether, before supporting its election to the Working Group, they took account of the reported sentencing by a court in Iran of the human rights lawyer, Nasrin Sotoudeh, to 38 years in prison and 148 lashes; and whether the gender-related policies of that country are consistent with their objective of promoting gender equality. [HL14614]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK has serious concerns about Iran's human rights record, including with respect to women's rights. The UK did not support the Islamic Republic of Iran's election to the UN's Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women. Iran was nominated by the Asian Group without objection; there is no mechanism for Member States to object to the nomination of a representative from another UN regional group. Separately, the Foreign Secretary publicly shared his concerns on 12 March in relation to Nasrin Sotoudeh's...
sentence, stating that 'human rights must be defended, not prosecuted'.

**Israel: Elections**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the banning of the alliance of Israeli Arab parties from fielding candidates in April's general election. [HL14631]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are not planning to make representations as this is a matter for the Israeli authorities. We have discussed with our international partners, including Israel, the importance of free, fair and pluralistic elections in upholding the principle and practice of democracy.

**Israel: Palestinians**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 11 March (HL14070), what action they will now take to protect such Palestinian children in line with international law. [HL14633]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have made clear to Israel our concerns about the use of live ammunition by the Israel Defence Forces to respond to protests in Gaza. In particular we have stressed the importance of protecting children. Where instances of wrongdoing is found, we have made clear that those responsible should be held to account. We regularly raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities about their treatment of Palestinian minors, in particular those in Israeli military detention.

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel about the confiscation of Palestinian security cameras during raids in Palestinian communities by Israeli forces. [HL14679]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have not raised this specific issue with the Israeli Government. We repeatedly make clear to the Israeli authorities our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israeli Defence Forces police the Palestinian communities. While we recognise Israel's legitimate need to deploy security measures, we encourage them to deploy these in a way which minimises tension. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations.

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the deterioration in conditions at the Bethlehem Checkpoint 300; and whether they have raised with the government of Israel any issues about the humanitarian situation at that Checkpoint. [HL14700]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not raised this particular case, we remain deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of movement within the West Bank. Through our Embassy in Tel Aviv we have lobbied the Israeli authorities on the issue of freedom of movement and access on numerous recent occasions, including recently raising checkpoint closures.

**Israeli Settlements: Jerusalem**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the violent seizure of a Palestinian home in the Old City of Jerusalem by Israeli settlers who were supported by the Israeli police on 5 March. [HL14629]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** While we have not raised the specific case in question, we condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians and have stressed the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

**Israeli Settlements: Palestinians**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the refusal of that country to allow Palestinian farmers to access their land and the subsequent destruction of that land by Israeli settlers using bulldozers. [HL14630]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to raise with our Israeli counterparts our concerns about the destruction of Palestinian agricultural land that has been caused by settlement-related activity.

**Jerusalem: Religious Freedom**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Israel regarding freedom of worship in Jerusalem following the sealing of the door of a mosque by Israeli settlers. [HL14632]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to encourage Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan to do all they can to work together to continue to uphold the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem. We are committed to working with all parties to maintain calm, avoid provocation and ensure the safety and the security of the Al Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount compound and all who worship there.
London-Exeter Railway Line  
*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the ability to join and split trains at Yeovil Junction on the number of services that might be run between Salisbury and Exeter Central. [HL14666]

**Baroness Sugg:** Network Rail’s Wessex Route Study concluded that the forecast levels of growth did not justify the need for additional infrastructure expenditure along this section of the West of England line, including any works associated with splitting and joining trains at Yeovil Junction.

Medical Records: Data Protection  
*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether NHS Digital is compliant with all legal obligations under the national data opt out Direction 2017, in particular the requirements in that Direction under the subheading Analysis of the impact of national opt outs; and if so, what analysis NHS Digital has undertaken. [HL14600]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** NHS Digital has complied with all aspects of the national data opt-out Direction 2017. The national data opt-out, including the systems to collect and store national data opt-out preferences, was implemented on 25 May 2018. Since July 2018, NHS Digital has published regular statistical publications on the number of people with a national data opt-out. Since November 2018 the analysis has included a breakdown by age, gender and geography.

Since July 2018, NHS Digital has published regular statistical publications on the number of people with a national data opt-out. Since November 2018 the analysis has included a breakdown by age, gender and geography.

NHS Digital has also produced some analysis of the impact on Hospital Episode Statistics. The analysis is based on recent national data opt-out data and will be published by April 2019.

Methadone  
*Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford on 11 March (HL14049), whether they will now answer the question put, namely what the annual cost of prescribing methadone on the NHS in England spent on prescribing methadone in each of the last five years. [HL14594]

**Baroness Sugg:** NHS Digital has produced some analysis of the impact of national opt outs. Since November 2018 the analysis has included a breakdown by age, gender and geography.

As part of its formal framework agreement with the Department, NHS Digital collects, processes and publishes data from across the health and social care system in England, including data on prescribing and medicines. NHS Digital reports that it does not hold the prescription level data requested but does hold data on the net ingredient cost of Methadone Hydrochloride prescription items written in the United Kingdom and dispensed in the community in England, via an FP10 prescription form. This is provided in the following table. Data is not available broken down into the cost of ordering, storage, transport, security, administration and prescription costs.

Data on local methadone prescribing and supply may be held by individual National Health Service bodies, for example, clinical commissioning groups or NHS trusts.
British National Formulary (BNF) Chemical Name | BNF 3.9.1 Cough Suppressants | BNF 4.7.2 Opioid Analgesic | BNF 4.10.3 Opioid Dependence | Total Net Ingredient Cost
---|---|---|---|---
2013 Methadone Hydrochloride £1,025 £986,129 £20,139,545 £21,126,699
2014 Methadone Hydrochloride £1,692 £964,223 £18,852,099 £19,818,014
2015 Methadone Hydrochloride £1,586 £858,415 £18,456,074 £19,316,075
2016 Methadone Hydrochloride £362 £596,809 £17,054,254 £17,651,425
2017 Methadone Hydrochloride £590 £517,711 £15,252,240 £15,770,541

Source: Prescription Cost Analysis, NHS Digital

Notes:

i) Information is provided for the five calendar years from 2013 to 2017, which is the latest data currently available. Information for 2018 is due to be released later in March 2019.

ii) Data is provided for Methadone Hydrochloride, which is listed in the BNF within sub-paragraphs BNF 3.9.1 cough suppressants, BNF 4.7.2 Opioid Analgesic and BNF 4.10.3 Opioid Dependence.

iii) NHS Digital only has information about NHS prescription items dispensed to patients in the community in England using a FP10 prescription form. Accordingly, NHS Digital does not hold data on drugs dispensed in hospitals, on private prescriptions, on prescriptions written but not dispensed and about other supply routes such as directly through a Patient Group Direction.

The NHS Business Services Authority is a special health authority and arm’s length body of the Department and processes 1 billion prescription items for pharmacists who have dispensed prescriptions in England. The NHS Business Services Authority has provided data of remuneration costs from 2014 to 2018, for English pharmacies only, for the dispensing of methadone. This is provided in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Remuneration for Methadone (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>41,556,608.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>41,647,409.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>41,720,280.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>45,319,400.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>45,932,852.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NHS Business Services Authority Information Services Data Warehouse

Notes:

i) The data is based on items dispensed in the community in England.

ii) The data is based ondispensed prescription items that were processed by the NHS Business Services Authority, not including items not dispensed, disallowed and returned, also excluding items prescribed but not presented for dispensing or not submitted to NHS Prescription Services by the dispenser.

Overseas Trade: Local Government

*Requested by Lord Porter of Spalding*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the International Trade Committee UK trade policy transparency and scrutiny, published on 28 December 2018 (HC1043) and their subsequent response UK trade policy transparency and scrutiny: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report, published on 6 March (HC2027), what steps they intend to take to provide local government with a meaningful role in all aspects of the trade policy process. [HL14623]

Baroness Fairhead: The Department for International Trade has regular engagement with local government through the Department’s regional network.

In a recent series of events across the UK, to support consultations on future free trade agreements, there was attendance by representatives from local government, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and local growth hubs. The department invited a representative from the Local Government Association.

The Department is exploring further options for its engagement with local government.

Planning Permission

*Requested by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many planning applications (1) have been called-in, and (2) are awaiting a decision, by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government; and how long each such application has been awaiting determination. [HL14572]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Following a decision to call in a planning application, a public inquiry is held by an independent Planning Inspector before the case comes to the Secretary of State for determination.

As the Noble Lord’s question specified no timeframe, the answer below covers the position since the commencement of the current Parliamentary session in June 2017.
In that period, the Secretary of State has called in 17 cases for his determination, of which 12 remain undetermined.

Of the 12 undetermined cases, 6 are yet to come before the Secretary of State, and 6 are currently with him. Of the 6 cases with him, 2 have been before him for 7 months, and 4 have been before him for 5 weeks.

Poultry: Slaughterhouses

Asker by Lord McColl of Dulwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether chickens are still being killed commercially by electrocution, upside down, on a conveyer belt; if not, how they are killed commercially; and if so, what assessment they have made of the use of that method on the spread of campylobacter. [HL14533]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: A 2018 survey conducted by the Food Standards Agency on all slaughter methods used in approved slaughterhouses in England and Wales showed that during the survey period around 70% of broiler chickens were gas stunned and around 20% were stunned in an electrical water bath. The results of the survey can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farm-animals-survey-of-slaughter-methods-2018.

The particular features of permitted stunning methods are based assessments by the EU Food Safety Authority (EFSA) of the scientific evidence relating to welfare at slaughter. In terms of food safety, all permitted stunning and slaughter methods have to meet the same official controls and requirements on the spread of campylobacter.

Pupils: Diabetes

Asker by Baroness Byford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of primary school children who have type 1 diabetes. [HL14693]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Pupils: Sanitary Protection

Asker by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether free sanitary products will be made available in primary schools. [HL14558]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: No one should be held back from reaching their potential because of their gender or background. That is why my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in his Spring Statement on 13 March 2019 that the Department for Education will lead a scheme to provide access to free sanitary products in all secondary schools and colleges in England. As we develop the plans, we will consider options for supporting primary school children.

Racial Discrimination

Asker by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking following comments by the Prime Minister of New Zealand calling for a global response to tackle racism. [HL14721]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The shocking attack by a terrorist, who targeted Muslims in Christchurch while they were praying, underscores the need for us all to continue our work to tackle hatred head on. As the Prime Minister has said, there can be no place in our societies for the vile ideology that drives and incites hatred and fear. The events in New Zealand must strengthen our resolve on this issue.

On racism, the Government is committed, both domestically and internationally, to eliminating any form of racial discrimination. At home, our focus is on creating a fair society where all people, regardless of ethnic origin or background, are valued and able to participate fully and realise their own potential. Internationally, we believe that one of the most effective ways to tackle injustices and advocate for respect amongst different ethnic groups is to encourage countries to uphold their human rights obligations, including by working with international institutions, such as the United Nations. For example, the UK strongly supports the work of UN special procedure mandate holders, including the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and we encourage other States to also support their work. The UK continues to engage on resolutions which consider racism, and work with member states at a ministerial and official level.

Railways: Yeovil

Asker by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the double-track railway lines between Dinton and Tisbury stations will be re-instated to allow the operation of two trains per hour in both directions between Waterloo and Yeovil. [HL14664]

Baroness Sugg: Network Rail’s Wessex Route Study concluded that the forecast levels of growth along the line did not justify the need for additional sections of double track between London Waterloo and Yeovil.

Russia: Sanctions

Asker by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of sanctions imposed by the United States and the EU, in response to the 2014 occupation and annexation of Crimea, on relations between Russia and the UK. [HL14624]
**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Sanctions imposed alongside our international partners, including the US, in 2014 have had a coordinated impact on Russia by increasing economic pressure to change its Ukraine policy and sending a clear, united message that Russian aggression in Ukraine will not be tolerated. This impact has been strengthened by the continuation and maintenance of 2014 sanctions since their implementation. The current bilateral relationship is not the one the UK wants and we remain open to a different relationship with Russia - one where Russia desists from attacks that undermine international security and actions that undermine the territorial integrity of its neighbours.

**Saudi Arabia: Females**

*Asked by Baroness Helic*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Saudi Arabia at ministerial level following that government’s decision to prosecute Loujain al-Hathloul and other women’s human rights defenders; and what further action they plan to take in that regard. [HL14559]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are closely following the case of Loujain al-Hathloul and other women’s rights defenders. We continue to raise our concerns with the Saudi authorities about the alleged mistreatment of women’s rights activists in detention. Most recently, the Foreign Secretary raised these concerns with his Saudi counterparts on 2 March.

*Asked by Baroness Helic*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that churches have been burnt down in Saudi Arabia, including women’s rights defenders in detention in Saudi Arabia; and what representations they have made to the government of Saudi Arabia about such reports. [HL14560]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We regularly raise our concerns with the Saudi authorities about the alleged mistreatment of women’s rights activists in detention. We consistently and unreservedly condemn torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and it is a priority for us to combat it wherever and whenever it occurs. Most recently, the Foreign Secretary raised these concerns with his Saudi counterparts on 2 March.

*Asked by Baroness Helic*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions the Foreign Secretary has had with (1) United States, and (2) European counterparts about making joint diplomatic representations to the government of Saudi Arabia to demand the release of imprisoned women human rights defenders in that country. [HL14561]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We maintain an open and regular dialogue with our European and American counterparts about a range of issues, including human rights and the detention of human rights defenders. The UK was signatory to the joint statement on 7 March at the UNHCR which raised significant concerns about reports of continuing arrests and arbitrary detentions of human rights defenders in Saudi Arabia, including women’s rights activists.

**Sudan: Churches**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that churches have been burnt down in Sudan; who they believe to be responsible; and what assessment they have made, if any, of the motivation behind such activity. [HL14608]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of recent reports of churches being burnt down in the Nuba Mountain region of Sudan. Our staff are unable to access the areas in question so have been unable to verify these reports. We engage with the Government of Sudan frequently to promote freedom of religion or belief, including on the destruction of churches. Most recently this included supporting an event in Khartoum with the Bishop of Leeds on 29 January to press for greater religious freedom for all Sudanese people. We will continue to raise our concerns with the Government of Sudan, including those related to church demolitions and the situation in the Nuba Mountains, as part of our frequent engagement on human rights issues.

**Syria: USA**

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcements by the government of the United States on 18 December 2018 and 21 February about the withdrawal of United States troops from Syria and the deployment of a small United States peacekeeping force in Syria, what is their current estimate of the number of United States troops who will remain in Syria; and whether those decisions have any implications for UK deployments. [HL14698]

**Earl Howe:** The territorial defeat of Daesh was announced by the Syrian Democratic Forces on 23 March 2019, but this does not signal the end of the Coalition or the campaign. Even without territory, Daesh will continue to pose a threat in Iraq and Syria as well as to the wider world. Like the United States, we remain committed to the Global Coalition and its objective of ensuring Daesh's enduring defeat. We are in close contact with the US and other allies regarding the next steps in the successful campaign against Daesh.

**Turkey: Arms Trade**

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the intention of the government of
Turkey to buy weapons from Russia while being a member of NATO. [HL14668]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have repeatedly raised our concerns at Ministerial and official level about the proposed Turkish purchase of S-400 missiles. Turkey is a valued NATO ally, on the front line of some of the UK and the Alliance's most difficult security challenges. Defence equipment procurement decisions are for nations, but all NATO allies have committed to reducing their dependence on Russian-sourced legacy military equipment. The proposed purchase would pose real challenges for the interoperability of NATO systems.

 Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether Turkey’s pending purchase of the Russian S-400 missile defence system presents a security issue for NATO. [HL14702]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have repeatedly raised our concerns at Ministerial and official level about the proposed Turkish purchase of S-400 missiles. Turkey is a valued NATO ally, on the front line of some of the UK and the Alliance's most difficult security challenges. Defence equipment procurement decisions are for nations, but all NATO allies have committed to reducing their dependence on Russian-sourced legacy military equipment. The proposed purchase would pose real challenges for the interoperability of NATO systems.

Undocumented Migrants: France

 Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take to ensure that refugees and migrants, including unaccompanied children, living near Calais and Dunkirk receive practical help and protection. [HL14564]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK and France enjoy a special relationship based on shared values and priorities, including promoting the rule of law, protecting the rights of individuals and ensuring the security of our citizens.

As part of the Sandhurst Treaty, signed between the UK and France on 18 January 2018, both parties agreed to further enhance cooperation in a number of areas, including illegal migration and asylum. The commitments set out in the Sandhurst Treaty improve joint working with France and support the delivery of existing obligations under the Dublin Regulation and section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

In order to implement the terms of the Sandhurst Treaty, the UK made a commitment of £45.5 million. This funding package has been allocated to a variety of projects, including improvements to improving access to French domestic asylum procedures and ensuring that vulnerable migrants are provided with the support and care that they require.

Within this package, £3.6 million was specifically allocated to funding the development of the Dublin process to support transfers of eligible children to the UK, including training for those working with unaccompanied children, family tracing and targeted information campaigns. This full package of £3.6 million was paid to the French Government at the end of 2018.

Voluntary Schools: Capital Investment

 Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of expressions of interest in the new capital funding scheme for voluntary-aided schools were for schools with a religious character; and what is the number of those expressions of interest broken down by faith group. [HL14650]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The capital scheme for voluntary-aided schools is designed to be small. Registering an interest in the scheme prior to submitting a bid for funding was not compulsory.

As well as exploratory discussions with stakeholders, we received expressions of interest for 22 new voluntary-aided schools, 19 of which we have the details of the proposed religious character. We received expressions of interest by faith group as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faith type</th>
<th>Number of expressions of interest received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Church of England</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Catholic</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian other/no denomination</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (no faith given)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voluntary Schools: Governing Bodies

 Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they collect information on the diversity of religion or belief amongst school governors in voluntary-aided schools that select 100 per cent of their pupils based on their religion; and what assessment, if any, they have made of the impact of the religious diversity of these school governors on local social cohesion and integration. [HL14649]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Department for Education does not collect any data on the religion or belief of school governors. We expect governors to play an
important role in ensuring that schools promote community cohesion and fundamental British values.

The department is committed to increasing the diversity of school and academy governance boards and we are supporting the joint Inspiring Governance and the National Governance Association “Everyone on board” programme to help achieve this.

Yemen: Arms Trade

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have received any information from third parties about use of weapons supplied by British companies in the Yemen conflict. [HL14604]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: A number of third parties, including NGOs and international organisations, publish regular reports and analysis which detail political and humanitarian developments in Yemen. This information is taken into account and considered as a serious part of any licencing decisions made by the Export Control Joint Unit, the UK's arms export control licensing authority, which is responsible for making assessments against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. The FCO also engages in regular dialogue with NGOs and international organisations about the latest developments and any details provided about the changing situation are also taken in account for any export licence decisions made.

Yemen: Humanitarian Aid

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of access to humanitarian aid (1) entering, and (2) being distributed in Yemen. [HL14603]

Lord Bates: The vital Red Sea ports of Hodeidah and Saleef remain operational. Over the past three months, the average total commercial and humanitarian imports into Yemen met 90% of the country’s food needs and almost 80% of fuel needs.

We are acutely aware of the restrictions humanitarian actors face delivering aid across Yemen, particularly in Houthi-controlled areas. This includes bureaucratic obstacles such as long waits for visas and permits to start aid projects, as well as multiple permissions required to travel through checkpoints.

In response to these challenges, former Minister of State, Alistair Burt recently hosted a telephone conference call with the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, Lise Grande, and the key UN agencies operating in Yemen where he discussed the steps needed from donors to lobby for better access as well as the work needed from the UN to ensure the humanitarian response prioritises those most in need.

The UK continues to raise humanitarian concerns calling on both parties to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 2451 by facilitating safe, rapid, and unhindered access for both the humanitarian response and commercial supplies.
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