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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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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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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
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<b>Earl Howe</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Anelay of St Johns</b>	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Whip
<b>Lord Bates</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Development
<b>Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Wales Office
<b>Lord Bridges of Headley</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
<b>Baroness Buscombe</b>	Whip
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<b>Lord Dunlop</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office and Northern Ireland Office
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Henley</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Keen of Elie</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
<b>Baroness Mobarik</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Nash</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
<b>Baroness Neville-Rolfe</b>	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
<b>Lord O'Shaughnessy</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
<b>Lord Price</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Prior of Brampton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Baroness Shields</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Culture Media and Sport
<b>Lord Taylor of Holbeach</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Lord Young of Cookham</b>	Whip
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

Thursday, 12 January 2017

## BBC Monitoring

[HLWS410]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

Following the written statement by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire Moorlands (HCWS358), on a Royal Charter for the continuance of the BBC, the Government and the BBC have agreed a new BBC Monitoring Agreement. The Agreement took effect on 1 January 2017. BBC Monitoring will continue to be a publicly funded service under the Licence Fee arrangement.

I have placed a copy of the “BBC Monitoring Agreement” in the libraries of both Houses.

## Bereavement Support Payment Regulations

[HLWS413]

**Lord Henley:** My honourable Friend The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Welfare Delivery (Caroline Nokes MP) has made the following Written Statement.

I am pleased to announce that today I intend to lay regulations to provide some of the detail of the new Bereavement Support Payment. These are affirmative regulations which will be debated in Parliament shortly. It is intended that the changes detailed in these regulations will come into force on 6 April this year.

Bereavement Support Payment is a new benefit which replaces the current suite of bereavement benefits (Bereavement Payment, Bereavement Allowance and Widowed Parent’s Allowance) for those whose spouse or civil partner dies on or after 6 April this year. These changes will not affect those already in receipt of bereavement benefits. These people will continue to receive their current benefit for the natural lifetime of the award.

The design of Bereavement Support Payment reaffirms the Government’s commitment to provide financial support to people whose spouse or civil partner has died. The new benefit modernises and simplifies the current complex system of bereavement benefits.

It shifts the focus of bereavement benefits from replacing the deceased spouse or civil partner’s earnings to helping with the additional and more immediate costs of bereavement.

Bereavement Support Payment will not be taxable, will not be included in the assessment of benefit income which will be subject to the household benefit cap, and will also be subject to a disregard in the calculation of income-

based benefits. Additionally, Bereavement Support Payment will not affect the bereaved person’s concurrent entitlement to contribution-based Jobseeker’s Allowance or contributory Employment and Support Allowance, where appropriate. Also, unlike the current bereavement benefits, a bereaved person who remarries or re-partners will be able to keep their Bereavement Support Payment.

To allow people to better understand their entitlements and plan accordingly, the new benefit is simpler, introducing a uniform payment structure with a single National Insurance contribution condition. There is a higher rate of payment for pregnant women and people with dependent children in recognition of the greater costs borne by these families.

Having considered representations from the Social Security Advisory Committee, the Work and Pensions Select Committee and groups supporting bereaved people, we have decided to extend the duration of the benefit from 12 months to 18 months.

Recipients with children can receive an initial larger payment of £3,500 and up to 18 subsequent monthly payments of £350, and those without children can receive an initial payment of £2,500 and up to 18 monthly instalments of £100.

## Foreign Affairs Council: 16 January

[HLWS409]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My right Honourable Friend, the Minister 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 will attend the Foreign Affairs Council on 16 January. The Foreign Affairs Council will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini. The meeting will be held in Brussels.

### *Foreign Affairs Council*

The agenda for the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is expected to include Syria, Egypt, Libya and the Middle East Peace Process.

### *Syria*

Ministers will discuss the announcement of a nationwide ceasefire for Syria agreed by Russia, Turkey and Iran on 29 December. The intention is that political talks will follow later this month. UN Special Envoy Staffan De Mistura has welcomed the planned talks, but stresses they should contribute to UN-led negotiations scheduled for 8 February.

Discussions will focus on the EU’s humanitarian aid response to the crisis in Syria. More than 700,000 people remain in besieged areas within Syria: humanitarian aid has yet to reach these areas as the Syrian regime and its backers have not allowed the UN immediate full and unhindered humanitarian access across all of Syria, as required by UN Security Council Resolutions.

The 2016 UN Joint Investigative Mechanism Report concluded that the Asad regime had used chemical weapons (as has Daesh). The UK has been working with France and the rest of the Security Council to draft a resolution which makes clear that there can be no impunity for the use of Chemical Weapons. The resolution seeks to impose various sanctions designations and ban on exports of helicopters, helicopter parts and certain chemicals. The EU should stand firm should the UNSC vote fail. The UK will call for collective EU support to designate individuals linked to the use of chemical weapons in Syria who are not currently sanctioned by the EU.

#### *Egypt*

Ministers will discuss Egypt's bilateral relationship with the EU and Egypt's role in the region. We expect discussions will cover Egypt's political and human rights situation, including the growing restrictions on civil society. Ministers are also likely to discuss how the EU can best help strengthen Egypt's internal security, cooperate on bringing stability to Libya, and work together on combating illegal migration in the region.

#### *Libya*

Discussions will cover the latest developments in the Libyan political process. We will encourage the EU to consider how it can best continue to support the Presidency Council and Government of National Accord.

#### *Middle East Peace Process*

Ministers will discuss progress on the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) and may reflect on obstacles to peace including incitement, terrorism, demolitions and settlement expansion, as highlighted in the recent UN Security Council Resolution 2334. Ministers may also consider the outcomes of the Paris Conference on the MEPP which takes place on 15 January.

### **Hendry Review (Tidal Lagoons)**

[HLWS408]

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Energy and Industry (Jesse Norman) has made the following written ministerial statement:

In February 2016, the Government commissioned an independent review into the feasibility and practicality of tidal lagoon energy in the UK. The review has been led by the Rt Hon Charles Hendry, who was appointed in May. The purpose of the review was to assess:

- whether, and in what circumstances, tidal lagoons could play a cost effective role as part of the UK energy mix;
- the potential scale of opportunity in the UK and internationally, including supply chain opportunities;
- a range of possible structures for financing tidal lagoons;
- different sizes of projects as the first of a kind;

- whether a competitive framework could be put in place for the delivery of tidal lagoon projects.

Charles Hendry will publish the report today. I am grateful to Charles and his team for the hard work that has gone into the Review and for the time and care he has taken over this important commission.

The issues considered by the Review are complex, as they relate to an untried technology in the marine environment. As the Review notes, tidal lagoons face considerable challenges in relation to their role in the UK's energy mix and their potential environmental impact. The Government will now require a period of time to assess the recommendations set out in the Review, and to consider the issues which would arise from a broader lagoon programme. A Government response will be published in due course.

The Government's energy planning is focused on ensuring secure, affordable, low-carbon energy. Any decisions arising from the Review will, therefore, need to balance the priorities for security of supply, low carbon generation and affordability. The Government will consider the Review's recommendations and determine what decision is in the best interests of the UK energy consumer in the long term.

It is this Government's job to consider both the advantages and the disadvantages of tidal lagoons, to scrutinise the evidence carefully, and to take measured decisions where there are a wide range of issues to consider and significant uncertainties over what is, in the case of this technology, a long period of time.

The Hendry Review report can be found at: <https://hendryreview.wordpress.com/>.

### **Night Flights**

[HLWS406]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** In July 2014, the Government announced the current regime for night flight restrictions at the designated airports; Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. These restrictions are due to expire in October this year.

Today this Government has launched a consultation on our proposals for the next night flight regime at these airports. We are proposing to set these restrictions for a period of five years to 2022, so this will not therefore cover the period in which a proposed new runway at Heathrow would be operational. Any ban on night flights at an expanded Heathrow would be consulted on separately.

We will continue to balance the economic benefits night flights offer with the cost they have on communities. We therefore want the next night flights regime to maintain the status quo in terms of the number of flights, but also give the industry incentives to continue the improvements in noise performance that are already taking place. The Government therefore proposes an environmental objective to *encourage the use of quieter aircraft to limit or reduce the number of people*

*significantly affected by aircraft noise at night, while maintaining the existing benefits of night flights.*

Our consultation includes proposals on how we intend to deliver this objective, including limits on the number of flights and new noise quotas for each airport and adjustments to the structure of the regime to ensure it keeps up with changes in aircraft technology. This consultation is seeking views and evidence relating to these proposals and is accompanied by an impact assessment exploring the costs and benefits of our proposals.

We will publish a final decision on night flights later this year after we have carefully reviewed the responses to this consultation.

### **Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture**

[HLWS412]

**Lord Keen of Elie:** My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Minister for Prisons and Probation (Sam Gyimah) has made the following Written Statement.

"The Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), which the UK ratified in December 2003, requires States Parties to establish a "National Preventive Mechanism" (NPM) to carry out visits to places of detention in order to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The Government established the UK NPM in March 2009 (Hansard 31 March 2009, Vol. 490, Part No. 57, Column 56WS).

I am informing the House that the following is formally designated as an additional member of the UK NPM:

The Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation (IRTL)"

### **Prison Service Pay Review Body**

[HLWS411]

**Lord Keen of Elie:** My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Minister for Prisons and Probation (Sam Gyimah) has made the following Written Statement.

"I am pleased to announce that the Prime Minister has re-appointed Peter Knight as the Chair to the Prison Service Pay Review Body, for 12 months, commencing March 2017. The re-appointment has been conducted in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice on appointments to Public Bodies."

### **Leveson Inquiry and its Implementation**

[HLWS407]

**Baroness Buscombe:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Karen Bradley) has made the following Statement:

The consultation 'The Leveson Inquiry and its implementation' closed on 10 January after running for ten weeks. We know there is a significant level of interest in the consultation and we are grateful for all the responses submitted. The total number of individual responses to the consultation received is estimated to be over 140,000 and a petition estimated to have over 130,000 signatures has also been received.

## Written Answers

*Thursday, 12 January 2017*

### **Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration**

*Asked by Lord Paddick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the independence of the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration of the Home Secretary deciding when to publish his reports. [HL4353]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICI) reports are laid before Parliament in compliance with the UK Borders Act 2007.

### **Slavery: Children**

*Asked by Lord Smith of Hindhead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children under 16 years of age were, in 2015, removed from premises where they were being exploited as

modern slaves or had been victims of people trafficking. [HL4245]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Modern slavery including the trafficking of children is an abhorrent crime and this Government is committed to tackling it. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's approach to identifying and supporting all victims of modern slavery.

In 2015 there were a total of 365 children under the age of 16 who were identified as potentially trafficked via an NRM referral.

### **Syed Muzaffar Shah Qadri**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why Syed Muzaffar Shah Qadri has been given permission to enter the United Kingdom; and what assessment they have made of the reported decision by the government of Pakistan to ban him from preaching in Pakistan. [HL4256]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office does not routinely comment on individual cases.

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