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**Wednesday
29 March 2017**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements 1

Written Answers.....3

[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.

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

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 29 March 2017

Archives Unlocked

[HLWS571]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: My Rt Hon Friend the Minister of State for Digital and Culture (Matt Hancock) has made the following Statement:

I am delighted to announce the publication of *Archives Unlocked*, a new strategic vision for archives across England. It is available online at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk.

The National Archives leads 2,500 archives in England, a diverse landscape of national regional and local archives. Together they form a unique network of rich archival collections. *Archives Unlocked* is an ambitious vision that recognises and celebrates the value of archives within the wider culture sector, and across our society. At its heart is a recognition of the opportunities provided by new technologies and digital transformation – opening up our collections to all like never before and encouraging innovation across creative industries and businesses. As the UK strives to take its place as a world leading digital economy, *Archives Unlocked* will help drive the digital transformation needed across the archives sector.

Accompanying the strategic vision is an action plan focussed on building digital capacity; engineering resilience; and demonstrating impact. I believe that by working together with The National Archives, partners and funders, Britain's brilliant archives will be able to thrive and contribute fully to the nation's cultural, intellectual and economic future.

Foreign Affairs Council (3 April)

[HLWS573]

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 3 April. 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 Luxembourg.

Foreign Affairs Council

The agenda for the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is expected to include Syria, Libya and Yemen. There will also be a session with the Secretary General of the Arab League, Ahmed Aboul Gheit.

Syria

At the Foreign Affairs Council, Ministers will discuss the forthcoming conference on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region' in Brussels on 4-5 April, along with

Council Conclusions on Syria including the Joint Communication on the EU-Syria Strategy published by the EU External Action Service on 14 March. The UK will co-host the conference along with the EU, Germany, Kuwait, Norway, Qatar and the UN. The conference is an opportunity for the international community to come together and take stock of the humanitarian situation in Syria; build support for the refugee-hosting countries in the region; reconfirm multi-year commitments made in London; and raise vital new funding for 2017 and beyond.

Libya

Discussions will cover the latest developments in the Libyan political process. The EU has formed a new quartet on Libya with the UN, the League of Arab States and the African Union. Ms Mogherini will debrief Ministers on the quartet's first meeting on Libya and outline next steps.

Yemen

Ministers will discuss the appalling humanitarian situation in Yemen and the need for progress towards a political settlement. The UK will update EU Member States on recent diplomatic activity in support of the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, following the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the UK, US, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman which took place on 16 February in Bonn. The discussion will be an opportunity to explore ways in which the EU can further support the work of the UN Special Envoy and respond to the humanitarian crisis.

Future of Channel 4

[HLWS572]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Karen Bradley) has made the following Statement:

Since late 2015 the government has been working with Channel 4 to look at options to ensure a strong and successful future for the broadcaster.

Channel 4 broadcasts a range of great content and delivers significant public value in a variety of ways. The government has therefore concluded that Channel 4's public service model and remit would not be best served by privatisation.

However, the government believes that there is scope for Channel 4 to do more to serve the Nations and regions across the UK. Channel 4 already does much good work in the Nations and regions but as a publicly owned asset the Government believes Channel 4 can, and should, go further to ensure it is doing all it can to support the UK as a whole. The growth in the broadcasting and production sector has not been evenly distributed, with more than two thirds of UK producers presently based in London and the South East. This limits the spread of wealth and opportunity, including in terms of regional growth, and it also limits the representation of local tastes and interests on television.

The government will therefore launch a 12 week consultation to seek views on how Channel 4 can most

effectively increase its regional impact. Specifically, we want to look at:

- To what extent should Channel 4 be based outside London;
- Whether more programmes shown on Channel 4 should be made outside London;
- Whether Channel 4 should be able to make larger investments in production companies to support the development of emerging talent, including that from the

regions, and help bolster Channel 4's future financial position.

We are seeking the broadest range of views and evidence to inform our assessment, including from the broadcasting and production sectors, from regional authorities, and from audiences around the UK. Channel 4 is a key stakeholder in this process and the government will work closely with it throughout this process, including in finalising the consultation document.

The consultation will be published in the coming weeks.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 29 March 2017

Aircraft: Air Conditioning

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the European Aviation Safety Agency to publish its report on cabin air quality, commissioned in 2015. [HL6241]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: In spring 2015, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) launched a preliminary in-flight cabin air measurement campaign, which will develop a methodology, and put into place adequate equipment to perform cockpit and cabin air measurements.

The results of this campaign, which will be used to prepare for an envisaged large scale project in the future, were published on 23 March 2017. The results show that the cabin/cockpit air quality is similar or better than what is observed in normal indoor environments. No occupational exposure limits and guidelines were exceeded.

Bahrain: Human Rights

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the speech by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on 8 March at Geneva on the activities of his Office and recent human rights developments, calling on the government of Bahrain to undertake concrete confidence building measures and allow his Office mandate holders to conduct visits. [HL6085]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The British Government notes the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' speech of 8 March and his comments on Bahrain. The UK National Statement made mention of Bahrain under Item Two at the Human Rights Council on 9 March. We urge the Government of Bahrain to guarantee human rights and freedoms for all its citizens. The UK is committed to working with Bahrain to implement its reform agenda and strengthen human rights.

We encourage further cooperation between Bahrain and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Care Homes: Oxfordshire

Asked by **Lord Bradshaw**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord O'Shaughnessy on 7 February (HL4908), how many residential and nursing home places there were in Oxfordshire in (1) 2015, and (2) 2016. [HL6200]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The number of beds in residential and nursing homes Oxfordshire in April 2015 and April 2016 is shown in the following table. The table shows the number of beds at the beginning of each financial year as the numbers fluctuate slightly month on month.

Oxfordshire Local Authority

Month	Total care beds	Residential care beds	Nursing care beds
April 2015	4,897	1,353	3,544
April 2016	4,943	1,333	3,610

Source: The Care Quality Commission

Confiscation Orders

Asked by **Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in each of the last three years for which figures are available, how many confiscation orders were (1) authorised by the courts, and (2) put into effect; and how much money was recovered. [HL6128]

Baroness Buscombe: The volumes and values of confiscation orders granted and the total value of confiscation orders collected in the last three years is:

Year	Volume of orders granted	Value of orders granted	Total value of confiscation orders collected (all agencies)
2013/14	6,023	£215,839,389	£137,249,237
2014/15	5,907	£244,785,936	£154,139,997
2015/16	5,937	£451,977,460	£175,240,424

Consumers: Protection

Asked by **Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the green paper on consumers and markets, as announced in the Budget. [HL6288]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The Autumn Statement stated that the green paper will be published in the spring and we are working to that timescale.

Dental Health: Children

Asked by **Lord Condon**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to prevent tooth decay in children under the age of five, in the light of the increase in tooth extractions in England in the last ten years. [HL6225]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Improving the oral health of young children is a Public Health England (PHE) priority. PHE's Child Oral Health Improvement Programme Board provides national system leadership for the delivery of the

shared ambition that every child grows up free of tooth decay as part of getting the best start in life.

The two key actions to prevent tooth decay are reducing sugar consumption and getting fluoride onto teeth which can be by means of fluoride toothpaste, fluoride varnish and water fluoridation. PHE has published a number of toolkits to support local authorities in improving child oral health.

In addition the Government's Childhood Obesity Plan, launched in August 2016, contained proposals for a broad, structured sugar reduction programme to remove sugar from the categories of food that contribute the most to children's sugar intakes. The Government also announced the Soft Drinks Industry Levy last year, which will apply from April 2018.

To support families to reduce their sugar intake, PHE's Change4Life launched the Be Food Smart campaign in January 2017 which encourages families to download the app which reveals the amount of sugar, saturated fat and salt in food and drink.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Assets

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what land or buildings owned by, leased by, or under the control of, the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs they are seeking to dispose of, and for what purposes. [HL6086]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government has made a commitment to release surplus government owned property with capacity of at least 160,000 homes and raising at least £5 billion from land and property disposals by 2020.

The details of the government land and property released over the previous financial year will be published as part of the Transparency Review in summer 2017.

Departments released a total of 468 sites in 2015/16, which generated receipts income of £973 million. DEFRA has disposed of 25 sites, contributing £16.4 million to the annual total.

Developing Countries: Cancer

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding they give to the International Atomic Energy Authority for the prevention and treatment of cancer in low- and middle-income member states. [HL6182]

Lord Prior of Brampton: The UK makes annual contributions to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Technical Cooperation Fund. In financial year 2016-2017 the UK contributed just over £3.1 million to the fund. This fund delivers a range of development projects including, but not limited to, those

that build human and technical capacity to diagnose and treat cancer, and those that promote and support improved access to quality cancer treatment services for local populations.

The UK also supports the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) – which provides comprehensive cancer care to low- and middle-income countries worldwide – as one of a wide range of IAEA activities funded through the UK's annual payments to the IAEA's Regular Budget.

Embassies: Crime

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures may be taken if a UK national working in a foreign embassy in the UK commits criminal activities from that embassy. [HL6117]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: With respect to allegations of offences which were not committed in the course of the UK national's official duties, law enforcement agencies may take whatever action they deem appropriate.

UK law enforcement agencies would require a waiver of an individual's immunity to allow them to investigate actions allegedly committed in the course of official duties. If a waiver is refused by the relevant diplomatic mission, Her Majesty's Government may inform the mission that it no longer considers the individual to be a member of the mission.

Employment: Disability

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish their response to the Green Paper consultation Improving Lives: Work, Health and Disability. [HL6171]

Lord Henley: The consultation on the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper closed on 17th February 2017. During the consultation period we engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, and received a large number of responses from people and organisations across society. We are currently evaluating all that we have heard before deciding what our next steps should be. In moving forward we are committed to continuing to engage with stakeholders, to build upon the discussion and debate that has been started by the Green Paper.

EU Nationals

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many non-UK EU citizens currently live in the UK; and how many of those are married to UK nationals. [HL6084]

Lord Young of Cookham: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply, and I will place a copy of their letter in the House Library.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UKSA Response to HL6084 [HL6084 v.04 (003).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-03-15/HL6084>

Financial Services: Greater London

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent of future movement of financial service companies from London to Edinburgh, in the event that Scotland leaves the UK but retains passporting rights into the EU. [HL6112]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The PM has been clear that now is not the time for another referendum on Scottish independence, following the decisive vote in 2014. The Government is focused on negotiating a good deal for the UK as a whole, a deal which will give firms in London and Edinburgh the maximum freedom to trade with and operate within European markets.

Higher Education: Admissions

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the advice given to higher education providers regarding widening participation, and the minimum threshold qualifications that students are required to have before being accepted on a degree course. [HL6116]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Higher education institutions are independent and autonomous. As autonomous organisations, higher education providers are responsible for their own admissions policies and procedures. Decisions on who to admit are a matter for individual institutions, and the Government does not have the right to intervene in these internal processes. Higher education providers are best placed to determine their entry requirements, and to decide who has the ability and the potential to succeed on a particular course.

Providers wishing to charge above the basic fee amount must have an access agreement, agreed by the independent Director for Fair Access, which sets out the measures they will put in place to support access to, and participation in, higher education by disadvantaged students and under-represented groups. The Director for Fair Access issues annual guidance to institutions on strategic priorities for access agreements. The Director for Fair Access must have regard to guidance issued by the Government setting out its expectations on the areas that institutions should focus on. In 2017/18, institutions plan to spend £833 million through their access agreements.

Indian Ocean: Piracy

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contribution they are making to the international task force dealing with piracy in the Indian Ocean. [HL6134]

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their plans for the UK's future role in the international task force dealing with piracy in the Indian Ocean. [HL6135]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK plays a leading role in the fight against piracy in the Western Indian Ocean. We contribute the Commander and Operational Headquarters for the EU's counter piracy mission, EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta, as well as the Deputy Commander for the international Combined Maritime Force, Task Force 151. The UK will continue to play an active role in both missions.

Israel: Gaza

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the detention since 2005 of 18 Palestinian residents of Gaza under the Internment of Unlawful Combatants Law. [HL6001]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have not made any representations to the Israeli authorities on this specific issue.

However, we have raised our broader concerns with the Israeli authorities on many occasions over the treatment of Palestinian detainees and the extensive use of administrative detention, including at Foreign Minister, Attorney General, and National Security Adviser levels.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the extent of progress made on negotiations between Israel and Palestine over the past 20 years, what is their strategy to move the peace process forward. [HL6003]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government believes that a two-state solution offers the best prospects of achieving a sustainable Israeli-Palestinian peace. Ultimately we believe that peace will only come through negotiations between the parties, but international action could play a role in supporting progress. We are in close consultation with international partners about what kind of renewed process might have a better chance of success, including one with a greater role for regional partners.

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of

Israel on the eight month delay by the Israeli Prison Service in supplying disaggregated, up to date prison statistics relating to the number of Palestinians, both adult and children, held in its facilities; and whether they have received any undertakings on when these will be provided. [[HL6029](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We continue to encourage the Israeli authorities to publish information of interest to the wider public in line with the UK's transparency and good governance initiative "Open Government".

Israeli Settlements

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding the case for measures to prevent and monitor the closure of Palestinian roads by Israeli settlers. [[HL6000](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this specific issue, officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv most recently discussed settler violence and intimidation with the Israeli authorities on 9 March. We continue to stress the importance of thorough investigations and accountability, as well as the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Judges: Retirement

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to raise the mandatory retirement age for judges. [[HL5995](#)]

Baroness Buscombe: There are no plans to raise the mandatory retirement age of 70, which aims to strike a balance between allowing judges time to develop and progress and ensuring that career opportunities are also available for more recent appointments.

There is no general consensus, including amongst the judiciary, about whether the retirement age should be changed.

Mountains

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will take steps to support the British Mountaineering Council's Mend our Mountains project. [[HL6122](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: I very much welcome the success of the British Mountaineering Council's *Mend our Mountains* campaign which last year raised almost £104,000 to help repair damaged and eroded paths on some of our most iconic mountains and upland landscapes in our national parks.

The Government will be providing over £190 million for the national park authorities in England until 2020. The national park authorities will look to work with the British Mountaineering Council in providing any help they can give to future projects which can help make a difference to the health and condition of these treasured and much used landscapes.

Nuclear Disarmament

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government with which ambassadors to the UK they have held meetings in the last six months to discuss UN General Assembly Resolution 71/258, Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. [[HL6100](#)]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the UK will send a representative or an observer to attend the negotiations to be held in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 71/258, Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. [[HL6101](#)]

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the long-term aims of the multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations to be held in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 71/258, in the light of the aims of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. [[HL6102](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government has discussed nuclear disarmament issues, including UN General Assembly Resolution 71/258, with numerous States over the last six months. Those discussions have taken place with Embassies in London, through UK Embassies overseas, in international organisations and directly between capitals. The UK Government will not attend the substantive negotiations, which started on 27 March. We do not believe these negotiations will lead to effective progress on global nuclear disarmament. The best way to achieve this goal is through gradual multilateral disarmament negotiated using a step-by-step approach and within existing international frameworks.

Nuclear Power

Asked by Lord Oxburgh

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many full time equivalent staff there are in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy working in the civil nuclear policy area and how many of them have qualifications in chemistry, physics or materials, and at what level. [[HL6115](#)]

Lord Prior of Brampton: As at March 2017, there are approximately 150 posts in the Department for Business,

Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) whose work relates predominantly to civil nuclear policy.

BEIS holds details of qualifications only where that qualification was a requirement for the post when it was advertised. These records are held on individual staff files and the department would incur disproportionate costs in order to obtain the information. Staff are recruited against the Civil Service competency framework, demonstrating that they possess the required experience and skills.

When developing policy in this area, BEIS also works closely with the Chief Scientific Adviser, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, the National Nuclear Laboratory, and industry experts.

Nuclear Reactors

Asked by Lord Oxburgh

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to announce the result of the competition for small modular nuclear reactors. [\[HL6114\]](#)

Lord Prior of Brampton: Phase one of the small modular reactor (SMR) competition remains underway. The focus of phase one is engagement with industry, with all eligible participants given the opportunity to engage with government to help inform policy development. Phase one does not involve the down-selection of a reactor design. We will provide further information on the next steps for the SMR competition in due course.

Nuclear Weapons

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what conclusions they drew following their attendance at the 2014 Vienna conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. [\[HL6103\]](#)

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review sets out the Government's approach towards our independent nuclear deterrent. As a responsible nuclear weapons state we are committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons and will work with our international partners to tackle proliferation and to make progress on nuclear disarmament.

Primodos

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Sky News documentary *Primodos: The Secret Drugs Scandal*; and whether they will consider establishing a public inquiry into the alleged failure of the regulator at that time to protect public safety. [\[HL6207\]](#)

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding they are providing to researchers based in (1) Cambridge, and (2) Aberdeen, who are examining the composition of the drug Primodos and its likely effects on the child in the womb. [\[HL6208\]](#)

Lord O'Shaughnessy: An Expert Working Group of the Commission on Human Medicines is conducting a comprehensive scientific review on the evidence for a possible causal association between Hormone Pregnancy Tests (HPTs), including Primodos, and birth defects. Any important new evidence identified in the Sky News documentary will be reviewed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and provided to the Expert Working Group for their consideration and advice.

While the evidence for any association between HPTs and congenital defects is still under consideration it would be premature to comment on the need for a public inquiry.

The Government is not providing any funding to researchers in Cambridge or Aberdeen who are examining the composition of the drug Primodos and its likely effects on the child in the womb.

Social Security Benefits: Disability

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of increasing work-related benefits on the level of other benefits which severely disabled people would be entitled to claim. [\[HL6166\]](#)

Lord Henley: Increases in the level of Employment and Support Allowance payments – the main income-replacement benefit for disabled people and people who have a health condition – will have no impact on the levels of disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance, because these benefits are not means-tested.

Sudan: Overseas Trade

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government why, in a video published by the British Embassy in Khartoum on 19 February, to promote UK business and investment in Sudan, the British Ambassador to Sudan did not refer to human rights and genocide charges brought against the regime. [\[HL5985\]](#)

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have imposed a requirement for unhindered humanitarian access and the cessation of hostilities prior to increasing the number of UK trade deals with the Republic of Sudan. [\[HL5986\]](#)

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK promotes trade with Sudan because this can help open up its political and economic systems. In working towards a peaceful Sudan, progress towards a stable economy is required for long-term stability. However, we are clear that the current conflicts and the poor human rights situation will remain

an obstacle to a sizeable increase in interest from British companies. As part of our dialogue with the government of Sudan we continue to urge progress on a cessation of hostilities, allowing full humanitarian access to the conflict areas and improving the human rights situation.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1

Archives Unlocked	1
Foreign Affairs Council (3 April).....	1
Future of Channel 4	1

Written Answers.....3

Aircraft: Air Conditioning.....	3
Bahrain: Human Rights	3
Care Homes: Oxfordshire.....	3
Confiscation Orders.....	3
Consumers: Protection.....	3
Dental Health: Children.....	3
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Assets	4
Developing Countries: Cancer	4
Embassies: Crime	4
Employment: Disability.....	4
EU Nationals	4
Financial Services: Greater London	5
Higher Education: Admissions.....	5
Indian Ocean: Piracy	5
Israel: Gaza.....	5
Israel: Palestinians.....	5
Israeli Settlements	6
Judges: Retirement	6
Mountains.....	6
Nuclear Disarmament.....	6
Nuclear Power	6
Nuclear Reactors	7
Nuclear Weapons.....	7
Primodos.....	7
Social Security Benefits: Disability.....	7
Sudan: Overseas Trade	7