

# Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

S CoJeC

## Contents

[Community Relations](#)

[Israel](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

## Community Relations

### CST

#### **Antisemitic Incidents Report 2009**

<http://www.thecst.org.uk/docs/CST-incident-report-09-for-web.pdf>

*reporting includes:*

#### **Anti-Semitic attacks against Jews 'rise in the UK'**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8499450.stm>

#### **Record number of anti-Semitic attacks in Britain**

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/religion/7156244/Record-number-of-anti-Semitic-attacks-in-Britain.html>

#### **Gaza war saw anti-Semitic attacks rise to record high**

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/gaza-war-saw-antisemitic-attacks-rise--to-record-high-1889936.html>

#### **Gaza link to rise in anti-Semitism**

<http://itn.co.uk/60962defa56e8d0c424ad3cc49e5f51c.html>

#### **Gordon Brown 'troubled' by CST antisemitism report**

<http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/26857/gordon-brown-troubled-cst-antisemitism-report>

[TOP](#)

## Israel

### UK Parliamentary Questions

#### Labelling

**Rob Marris** (Wolverhampton, South-West) (Lab): One difficulty shoppers have is avoiding illegally produced goods from Israeli colonies, often called settlements, in the west bank. What are the Government doing to ensure that that illegally produced and exported food either does not enter the United Kingdom or, if it does, is properly labelled so that consumers like me can avoid it?

**Jim Fitzpatrick:** If my hon. Friend has not seen it—he may well have seen it—I can tell him that on 10 December the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs issued advice to retailers and importers who wished to respond to consumer demand for information about the origin of food produced in the occupied Palestinian territories. That means that consumers who buy food products that originate there will be able to distinguish between the produce of Palestinian farmers and that from the Israeli settlements. One of the largest retailers is already putting our advice into practice, and we hope that the rest will follow soon.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100204/debtext/100204-0001.htm#10020466000016>

### **West Bank and East Jerusalem**

**Lord Wright of Richmond:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what action the European Union is taking to support President Obama's call for a freeze on all future Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

**Lord Brett:** My Lords, the European Union has consistently urged Israel to freeze all settlement activity in both the West Bank and East Jerusalem. We supported the European Union's statement of 29 December, which made it clear that settlement activity prevented the creation of an atmosphere conducive to resuming negotiations on a two-state solution. We shall continue to make that clear.

**Lord Wright of Richmond:** My Lords, is the Minister aware that at least 1,200 illegal settlement units in the West Bank have been approved since President Obama's speech five months ago, and that not only settlement expansion but also the appalling eviction of Palestinians from East Jerusalem continue, both of them with devastating effects on Palestinian human rights? ...

**Lord Brett:** My Lords, the United Kingdom's message on settlements has been both robust and consistent. Israeli settlements are illegal; they violate international law and prevent the creation of an atmosphere conducive to resuming negotiations on the two-state solution. ...

**Lord Wallace of Saltaire:** Can the Minister confirm that our policy has been to support the United States in its negotiations on the Arab-Israeli peace process? ...

**Lord Brett:** ... I commend to the House the statement of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Union in December, which was comprehensive and strong, setting out the European position of which we can all be proud. ...

**Lord Howe of Aberavon:** Does the Minister recollect that the Balfour Declaration made nearly 100 years ago by Her Majesty's Government expressly provides that it is, "clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil ... rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine"? ...

**Lord Brett:** ... To some degree, it has been overtaken by the legislation of the United Nations in creating Israel as a state. The points made by the noble and learned Lord are well taken and in that sense they remain as valid as they were at the time of the Balfour Declaration.

**Lord Low of Dalston:** ... The inhabitants of Gaza are living in conditions of great deprivation as a result of the effective blockade of Gaza, which means that only the bare minimum of supplies of food and medicines, and barely any of the materials that are so badly needed to rebuild the broken infrastructure, can get in. ...

**Lord Brett:** ... It is also true to say that while there was only a trickle of commodities and lorries getting into Gaza, that is improving. However, it has not improved far enough or fast enough. ... We welcome the improved access and the taking away of blockades on the roads, but we ask for full removal so that we can provide assistance through DfID and others to help to bring the Palestinian people back from the misery in which they are currently living.

**Baroness Williams of Crosby:** My Lords, does the Minister agree that we are looking at the steady establishment by the Government of Israel of what are called "facts on the ground", and that we are already at the point at which a viable Palestinian state is virtually impossible because of the spread of settlements and the control of aquifers? ...

**Lord Brett:** My Lords, I cannot share the noble Baroness's pessimism that a viable Palestinian state is not possible. A great deal more good will on the ground, and a great more give and take, are required. ... We are very active at ministerial level-with Ministers in Israel and in our talks with the Palestinian Authority-in seeking both to assist and encourage. Frankly, it is not helpful to say that we have an impossible task, because the only certainty is that those who do not want us to succeed will agree with that.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100204-0001.htm#10020447000657>

[TOP](#)

## **Relevant Legislation** \*\* New or updated

### **UK Parliament**

#### **\*\* Children, Schools and Families Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/childrenschoolsandfamilies.html>

Public Bill Committee Proceedings

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/008/pro0080402p.35-41.html>

#### **\*\* Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/constitutionalreformandgovernance.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/004/amend/psc0040402a.781-783.html>

#### **\*\* Crime and Security Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/crimeandsecurity.html>

Ways and Means motion

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100204/debtext/100204-0008.htm#10020466000002>

Public Bill Committee Proceedings

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/003/pro0030402p.15-21.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/003/amend/psc0030402a.183-187.html>

#### **\*\* Equality Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/equality.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/020/amend/su020-vrb.htm>

#### **Flood and Water Management Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/floodandwatermanagement.html>

### **Scottish Parliament**

#### **End of Life Assistance Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/38-EndLifeAssist/index.htm>

[TOP](#)

## Consultations

\*\* new or updated

**Communities and Local Government: Creating a Single Equality Scheme for 2010 – 2013** (closes 28 February 2010)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/987402.pdf>

**Proposal to amend the Licensing Act 2003 to simplify the procedures for Licensing Statements; Interim Authority Notices; and Temporary Event Notices** (closes 9 February 2010)

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/consultations/6498.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6498.aspx)

**Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Order 2010** (closes 15 March 2010)

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/consultations/6605.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6605.aspx)

**Equality Bill: Draft Codes of Conduct** (2 April 2010)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legislative-framework/equality-bill/equality-bill-codes-of-practice-consultation/#1>

**Equality Bill: Draft Guidance** (16 April 2010)

<http://ehrc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

**Death Certification, Burial, and Cremation (Scotland)** (closes 21 April 2010)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300112/0093686.pdf>

[TOP](#)

The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charity SCO29438