

Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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UK Parliament Debate

Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100301/debtext/100301-0013.htm#10030158000001>

UK Parliamentary Questions

Entry Clearances

Diane Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of entry clearance applications for settlement in the United Kingdom submitted to the British consulate in Tel Aviv were granted prior to the transfer of the processing of such applications to the British embassy in Istanbul; what percentage of applicants were of (a) a Jewish and (b) a non-Jewish background; and if he will make a statement. [318460]

Phil Woolas: Prior to the transfer of processing entry clearance applications to the British embassy in Istanbul on 7 April 2008, 98 per cent. of entry clearance applications for settlement made at the British consulate in Tel Aviv were granted in the financial year of 2007-08.

A breakdown of this figure to show comparisons for applicants with Jewish and non-Jewish backgrounds is not captured in our database.

Diane Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of applications for entry clearance to the United Kingdom submitted to the British consulate in Tel Aviv between June 2008 and May 2009 and processed by the British embassy in Istanbul was granted; how many such applications there were; what percentage of applicants were of (a) a Jewish and (b) a non-Jewish background; and if he will make a statement. [318461]

Phil Woolas: Between June 2008 and May 2009, 1,559 applications for entry clearance were submitted to the British consulate in Tel Aviv and processed by the British embassy in Istanbul. 84 per cent. of these applications were granted.

A breakdown of this figure to show comparisons for applicants with Jewish and non-Jewish backgrounds is not captured in our database.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100301/text/100301w0011.htm#10030136000027>

Charities: Registration

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what categories of charity are exempt from registration. [319672]

Angela E. Smith: Within England and Wales, three categories of charity are not currently required to register with the Charity Commission:

- Small charities with an annual income of below £5,000.
- Excepted charities with an income below £100,000 are regulated by, but not registered with, the Charity Commission (although there is provision in the Charities Act 2006 for them to register voluntarily). The main groups of these charities are Parochial Church Councils, churches from certain Christian religious denominations, local scout and guide groups, and armed forces service non-public funds. Exception is conferred by Order of the Commission or the Secretary of State.
- Exempt charities, which are not registered with the Charity Commission and are currently not subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the Charity Commission. Examples of such charities include universities, Boards of Trustees of certain museums and galleries, Kew Gardens, and charitable Industrial and Provident Societies. Most categories of exempt charities are defined by Schedule 2 to the Charities Act 1993 ("the 1993 Act"). In a few cases, exempt status has been conferred on some charities by other Acts of Parliament.

The Charities Act 2006 contains provisions to improve the regulation of exempt charities as charities. Some groups of exempt charities will remain exempt but with an existing "principal regulator" promoting charity law compliance. Other groups of exempt charities will cease to be exempt and will become excepted charities.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100301/text/100301w0036.htm#1003026000003>

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UK Parliamentary Question

Gaza

Baroness Tonge: To ask Her Majesty's Government what action it is taking with its European partners to persuade Israel to lift the blockade of Gaza. [HL2239]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead): The UK and its key partners, including the EU, continue to press the Israeli authorities to ease border restrictions and permit the flow of humanitarian aid, reconstruction materials, trade goods, and people into Gaza. The EU Foreign Affairs Council made this clear in its statement of 8 December 2009.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100301w0002.htm#10030111000382>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Statement on Paul Martin

The FCO Spokesperson has made a statement on the continued detention of British journalist Paul Martin, currently being held by Hamas in the Gaza strip. Mr Martin has been in detention since 14 February.

The FCO Spokesperson said: "We are extremely concerned that the detention of the British film maker Paul Martin has been extended for a further 15 days. Our consular staff

have been in regular contact with Mr Martin, though we are also concerned that increased restrictions are now being placed on consular access. We call for Paul Martin's immediate release. We will continue to follow this case closely and are in touch with Mr Martin's family. Our thoughts are with them at this time."

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=21826191>

United Nations

UN rights chief deplores Egypt's use of 'lethal force' against migrants in Sinai

With dozens of unarmed migrants attempting to enter Israel via the Sinai Desert having been killed since mid-2007 by Egyptian security forces, the top United Nations human rights official today called on the nation's Government to call an end to the "deplorable" use of "lethal force."

High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay underscored the need for an urgent independent inquiry into the killings of some 60 people – and the wounding and disappearance of dozens more – on the Egyptian side of its Sinai border with Israel since summer 2007, when the two countries agreed to bolster border controls.

"While migrants often lose their lives accidentally while traveling in over-crowded boats, or trying to cross remote land borders, I know of no other country where so many unarmed migrants and asylum-seekers appear to have been deliberately killed in this way by Government forces," she said. ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=33934&Cr=migrant&Cr1=>

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Foreign Affairs

UK Parliamentary Question

Sweden: Anti-Semitism

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on anti-Semitic hate crimes in Malmö; what recent discussions he has had with the government of Sweden on anti-Semitism in Sweden; and if he will make a statement. [318687]

Chris Bryant: While our embassy in Stockholm monitors the domestic scene in Sweden closely, they have, to date, not seen specific reporting on this issue nor have representations been made to our embassy in Stockholm.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100301/text/100301w0003.htm#10030122000041>

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Relevant Legislation ** New or updated

UK Parliament

Children, Schools and Families Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/childrenschoolsandfamilies.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/068/amend/pbc0680203m.1145-1151.html>

**** Crime and Security Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/073/amend/pbc0730103a.1201-1204.html>

**** Equality Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/035/amend/ml035-ir.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>

Parliamentary Motion

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/business/motions/Default.aspx?motionid=18456>

Draft Census Order

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2010/draft/pdf/sdsi_9780111007907_en.pdf

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Other Relevant Information

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

Report on the United Kingdom (fourth monitoring cycle)

includes:

143. ECRI strongly encourages the authorities of the United Kingdom to continue and strengthen their efforts to counter all manifestations of antisemitism. It refers in this context to the recommendations formulated above on the implementation of existing criminal law provisions, and notably those against incitement to racial hatred. More generally, ECRI draws the attention of the authorities of the United Kingdom to its General Policy Recommendation No. 9 on the fight against antisemitism, which proposes a range of measures the authorities can take to combat antisemitism.

http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/United_Kingdom/GBR-CbC-IV-2010-004-ENG.pdf

Charity Commission

Only two charities in 10 years struck off for being political

... Only two charities have been struck off the register of charities since the turn of the century for having political purposes, according to information given to Parliament last week. Andrew Hind, chief executive of the Charity Commission, revealed the statistic in a written response to a question from Margaret Moran, Labour MP for Luton South.

Hind said that of 736 non-statutory investigations and statutory inquiries carried out by the regulator in the past three years, 29 had related to political activity. ... charities that were found to have a political purpose were removed from the register, he added. He said this had happened twice in the past 10 years. ...

a commission spokeswoman said that ... Brit Trumpedor of Great Britain had been removed from the register in 2004.

Brit Trumpedor of Great Britain had a charitable purpose "to educate Jewish youth in good citizenship and in the values of Jewish heritage and tradition." The Commission found that its activities were in furtherance of a political purpose, it had no properly appointed trustees and had submitted no accounts for four years.

<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/News/DailyBulletin/987051/two-charities-10-years-struck-off-political/DFEB6CB2E51B055022DB1295445D6ACD/?DCMP=EMC-DailyBulletin>

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Consultations

** new or updated

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

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6605.aspx

2011 Census Statistical Outputs (England and Wales) (closes 26 March 2010)

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011-census/consultations/open-consultations/2011-output-consultation---main-statistical-outputs/index.html>

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

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

Equality Bill: Draft Guidance (closes 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>

Humanitarian Assistance Strategic Guidance (closes 14 May)

http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/consultations/HA_strategic_guide_draft.pdf

2011 Census Statistical Outputs (Scotland) (closes 14 May 2010)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/census/censushm2011/preparations/consultation-and-research/formal-consultations/spring-10-consultation.html>

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