

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

Law on Assisted Suicide

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100310/debtext/100310-0020.htm#10031082000002>

UK Parliamentary Questions

Census

Mr. Maude: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the timetable is for the completion of the Beyond 2011 review into the way the Census is conducted; and what (a) research and (b) representations will be considered as part of the review. [320731]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated 8 March 2010:

... The Beyond 2011 Project was established with the Registrars' General in Scotland and Northern Ireland to consider options to deliver population data for the UK of the required coverage and quality beyond the next Census. It is therefore not reviewing the way that the current 2011 Census exercise is conducted, rather it is looking at options and their feasibility beyond 2011.

A detailed work programme is currently being developed to enable a decision on a way forward to be taken by 2014.

Extensive technical and methodological research is planned. This is drawing on internal ONS expertise in population statistics, the use of administrative data, household survey and census taking, but also uses a number of external experts in the area of population statistics to help advise and peer review our work. We are also drawing on the expertise of other countries. The project outputs, including the research on the statistical feasibility and user requirements, will be made publicly available.

Formal consultation on options will take place after the 2011 Census, but we have already begun to discuss the issues with stakeholders and have established a

website at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/methodology-and-quality/imps/beyond-2011/index.html>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100310/text/100310w0018.htm#10031086000056>

Census (England and Wales) Regulations 2010

Mr. Maude: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what her timetable is for the (a) laying before Parliament and (b) coming into effect of the Census Regulations. [320714]

Angela E. Smith: The Census (England) Regulations 2010 were laid before both Houses on 4 March and will come into force on 31 March.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100310/text/100310w0018.htm#10031086000057>

Ministry of Justice

Comment on historic reforms to the coroners' system

Individuals and organisations are being asked to comment on how a reformed national coroners' system will work in practice, in a consultation document issued today.

The consultation calls for views on how the changes to the system, which were introduced in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, should be implemented. Ideas and comments received as part of the consultation will be used to inform secondary legislation and national guidance to allow the new system to be ready by April 2012.

Reforms to the system include:

- making it easier to transfer inquests between different coroner areas
- the appointment of a chief coroner and national leadership team
- ensuring that bereaved family members have the right to request information which is being used by coroners to make their decisions
- introducing a national appeals system
- ensuring that inquests answer the questions of bereaved families as well as possible
- improving standards and ensuring consistency across the country.

To read the full press release see

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/newsrelease110310a.htm>

Note that the consultation includes consideration of when it may be appropriate to carry out a non-invasive post-mortem examination, for example by means of MRI scan.

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Israel

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Statement on the release of Paul Martin

Foreign Office Spokesperson statement on the release of British journalist Paul Martin
An FCO spokesperson said: "We can confirm that the British film maker Paul Martin, who has been held by Hamas in Gaza for the last 26 days, was released this morning to British Consular officials and is now in the care of the British Consulate in Jerusalem. Our consular staff in Gaza have been in regular contact with him throughout his detention. We have also been in regular contact with Mr Martin's family in the UK and we are sure they will be relieved to hear the news."

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=21869324>

European Parliament

Gaza conflict: implementing the Goldstone recommendations

Respect for human rights by all parties to the Gaza conflict, independent investigations of alleged violations of human rights, a strong EU common position on the follow-up of the

Goldstone report and close monitoring of its implementing measures are Parliament's key demands in a resolution adopted on Wednesday.

The resolution, tabled by the S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups, was approved with 335 votes in favour, 287 against and 43 abstentions. ...

The European Parliament "urges both sides to conduct investigations within five months that meet international standards of independence, impartiality, transparency, promptness and effectiveness." ...

The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and EU Member States should work towards a strong EU common position on the follow-up to the Fact-Finding Mission report on the conflict in Gaza and southern Israel, says the resolution.

They should also publicly "demand the implementation of its recommendations and accountability for all violations of international law, including alleged war crimes, and urge both sides to conduct investigations that meet international standards of independence, impartiality, transparency, promptness and effectiveness", it adds.

Furthermore, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Member States should "monitor actively the implementation of recommendations included in the Goldstone Report by consulting the EU's external missions and NGOs working in the field", it says. ...

To read the full press release see

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-70271-067-03-11-903-20100309IPR70270-08-03-2010-2010-false/default_en.htm

European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2010 on implementation of the Goldstone recommendations on Israel/Palestine

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0054+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

United Nations

As Gaza blockade nears 1,000-day milestone, UN official warns situation worsens

The situation in the Gaza Strip is becoming increasingly dire as the Israeli blockade approaches its 1,000th day, allowing an illegal economy to flourish, the new head of the United Nations agency tasked with assisting millions of Palestinian refugees [said](#) today.

... Last March, nations gathered in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh and pledged nearly \$5 billion to help rebuild Gaza. However, those funds cannot be disbursed, Mr. Grandi pointed out. "Virtually no materials or equipment destined for reconstruction by the UN and by the private sector... can be transported from Israel because we don't have permission to do so." As a result, an illegal economy "is being imposed, almost, on the Gazans, ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=34042&Cr=palestin&Cr1=>

Charity Commission

Inquiry Report: Viva Palestina, formerly known as Lifeline for Gaza

72. In summary the Inquiry found that:

- a. the Founding Trustee's decision to attempt to amend the purposes of the Charity in such a manner that it became a non-charitable organisation was not legally effective;
- b. Viva Palestina was a charity that continued to be governed by its January Constitution, was exclusively charitable for the public benefit and any funds raised continued to be held on charitable trusts;

- c. from the material it examined the Inquiry found no evidence that the Charity's property was provided to Hamas;
- d. it was misleading to the public for the Charity to claim on its website to have raised over £1 million during the first convoy as this was not a monetary sum raised by or under the control of the Charity's trustees. This amount included the estimated value of the goods raised by third parties during the course of the convoy and which were donated on arrival in Gaza;
- e. the Commission had some concerns about how long it took the trustees to secure new banking arrangements, particularly given the impact this had on the Charity and its ability to secure the funding it received from the public;
- f. because of the lack of a written agreement with NMAW and the lack of communication between NMAW, the Founding Trustees had exposed the Charity's funds to unnecessary risk. This amounted to mismanagement in the administration of a charity; and
- g. BVP was an independent entity to the Charity and had no financial links to it

To read the full Inquiry Report see

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/investigations/pdfs/viva.pdf>

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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>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/036/amend/am036-b.htm>

Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill

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

Crime and Security Bill

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

**** Equality Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/039/amend/am039-a.htm>

**** Flood and Water Management Bill**

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

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/028/amend/am028-b.htm>

Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/prosecutionoffencesact1985amendment.html>

Scottish Parliament

End of Life Assistance Bill

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

Consultations

** new or updated

**** closes in 4 days**

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>

Call for Evidence on the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill (12 May 2010)

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/endLifeAsstBill/currentInquiries.htm>

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>

**** Reform of the coroner system** (closes 1 July 2010)

Includes questions as to when it may be appropriate to carry out a non-invasive post-mortem examination, for example by means of MRI scan.

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/reform-coroner-system.htm>