

Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community
Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

Contents

[Home Affairs](#)

[Other Relevant Information](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

Home Affairs

UK Parliamentary Question

Anti-Semitism

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps her Department has (a) taken since July 2010 and (b) plans to take during the next three months to combat anti-Semitism; and if she will make a statement. [14260]

James Brokenshire: The Department of Communities and Local Government have the policy lead in tackling anti-Semitism.

A cross-government working group to tackle anti-Semitism, which the Home Office is part of, was set up to take forward the Government's response to anti-Semitism.

The working group meets quarterly and last met in July 2010.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100915/text/100915w0002.htm#10091521000110>

Cabinet Office

Voters to register individually by 2014

... From 2014, voters will be asked to provide their date of birth, signature and national insurance number, all of which will be cross-checked, before they are added to the register. The process will replace the existing system of household registration, in which one person at each address is responsible for providing the names of eligible voters who live there. ...

No voters will be removed from the electoral register for not registering individually until after the next General Election, due to take place in May 2015, giving people at least 12 months to comply with the new requirements. Any new registrations from 2014 will be on an individual basis and from that point voters will also need to register individually to cast a proxy or postal vote. ...

To read the full press release see

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2010/100915-voters.aspx

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Queen welcomes Pope to UK

... Her Majesty the Queen officially welcomed the His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to the UK, and spoke of her memories of her own visits to the Vatican and meeting some of his predecessors. She said: "Much has changed in the world during the nearly thirty years

since Pope John Paul's visit. In this country, we deeply appreciate the involvement of the Holy See in the dramatic improvement in the situation in Northern Ireland. Elsewhere the fall of totalitarian regimes across central and eastern Europe has allowed greater freedom for hundreds of millions of people. The Holy See continues to have an important role in international issues, in support of peace and development and in addressing common problems like poverty and climate change".

The Pope thanked the Queen for her hospitality, and extended his own greetings to all the people of UK. He spoke of the force for good throughout Britain's long history, coming from a "respect for truth and justice, for mercy and charity" that benefits Christians and non-Christians alike. Speaking of the UK's international relations, he said:

"Looking abroad, the United Kingdom remains a key figure politically and economically on the international stage. Your Government and people are the shapers of ideas that still have an impact far beyond the British Isles. This places upon them a particular duty to act wisely for the common good. Similarly, because their opinions reach such a wide audience, the British media have a graver responsibility than most and a greater opportunity to promote the peace of nations, the integral development of peoples and the spread of authentic human rights. May all Britons continue to live by the values of honesty, respect and fair-mindedness that have won them the esteem and admiration of many". ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22875288>

Prime Minister on the Papal visit

... I welcome the fact that my predecessors first invited the Pope to visit this country and I am delighted that he accepted that invitation and the one he received from Her Majesty the Queen. He comes here as a Head of State and leader of a church with over 6 million members in Britain and almost 1.2 billion around the world.

Like other faith groups, the Catholic Church proclaims a message of peace and justice to the world and we work closely with it in the furtherance of these causes. ...

There has been a lot of exaggerated comment that Pope Benedict will this week be visiting a largely secular country. I do not agree with this and there is much evidence in polls and the attendance at religious services to contradict it. But in any case I believe such comment misses the point. The Pope's visit should not just be welcomed by British Catholics or people of faith more broadly but by all who welcome what faith groups contribute to our society and who understand that for many faith is a gift to be cherished, not a problem to be overcome. ...

To read the full transcript see

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22872409>

Scottish Government on the Papal visit

First Minister Alex Salmond today welcomed the 'tremendous start' to Pope Benedict XVI's State Visit following his arrival in Scotland. ... He said: "... I was honoured to meet the Holy Father and welcome him on behalf of the people of Scotland. We discussed St Ninian and the historical resonance of today being the saint's feast day. His Holiness is clearly well-versed about Scotland's first saint and even wore the St Ninian's tartan scarf as he travelled through Edinburgh. As was clear from his address, he is also knowledgeable about our culture and traditions, as well as the modern Scotland, including our Parliament not far from where he spoke. It was clear that Pope Benedict is a person of great warmth and generosity, who listens and responds to those around him....

To read the full press release see

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2010/09/15155431>

Transcript of the Queen's speech at the Palace of Holyrood House

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=22872888>

Transcript of the Pope's speech at the Palace of Holyrood House
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=22873187>

Pope Benedict's Homily, Bellahouston Park, Glasgow
<http://www.scmo.org/articles/pope-benedicts-homily-bellahouston-park-glasgow-16910.html>

[TOP](#)

Relevant Legislation ** New or updated

UK Parliament

Daylight Saving Bill
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/daylightsaving.html>

Face Coverings (Regulation) Bill
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/facecoveringsregulation.html>

Fixed Term Parliaments Bill
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/fixedtermparliaments.html>

**** Identity Documents Bill**
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/identitydocuments.html>

Third Reading, House of Commons
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100915/debtext/100915-0002.htm#10091526000004>

Report Stage Proceedings
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/001/pro0010915p.47-50.html>

**** Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill**
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/parliamentaryvotingsystemandconstituencies.html>

Notice of amendments
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/063/amend/pbc0630915.167-172.html>

Scottish Parliament

End of Life Assistance Bill
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/38-EndLifeAssist/index.htm>

[TOP](#)

Other Relevant Information

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

OSCE media freedom representative and Council of Europe hold forum on preserving freedom of Internet while countering hate speech
The international community must work to identify effective ways to address hate speech on the Internet without endangering freedom of expression, said the OSCE

Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatovic, and Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, today at the Joint OSCE-Council of Europe Open Forum on Hate Speech vs. Freedom of Expression in Vilnius.

The meeting focused on possible alternatives to relying solely on governmental or legislative approaches to address the problem of hate speech without infringing on freedom of expression and silencing legitimate criticism.

“We have to identify effective ways to address hate speech on the Internet without endangering freedom of expression. I am confident that this impressive group of leading international experts gathered under the umbrella of the OSCE and the Council of Europe will help the international community advance in this field,” said Mijatovic.

De Boer-Buquicchio said: “Hate speech is a direct attack on the right to be and to think differently. It might not stop at rhetoric, as it has the potential to shape the minds and attitudes of individuals who will believe they have the right to undermine other people’s rights. A democratic society cannot afford the freedom to oppress. Instead, we have to identify how to strike the adequate balance between rights and freedoms.”

The event was held as part of the Internet Governance Forum, a global platform, and was jointly organized by the Representative’s Office and the Council of Europe. This was the first initiative of this scale implemented by the two international bodies promoting free expression. ...

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1668271&Site=DC&ShowBanner=no&Target=self&BackColorInternet=F5CA75&BackColorIntranet=F5CA75&BackColorLogged=A9BACE>

[TOP](#)

Consultations

** new or updated

**** closes in 4 days**

Policing in the 21st century: reconnecting police and the people

(closes 20 September 2010)

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/consultations/policing-21st-century/>

Taking action on rights, support and protection of victims of crime and violence

(closes 30 September 2010)

http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_0053_en.htm

Data protection legislative framework (closes 6 October 2010)

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/dpa-call-evidence-02-07-2010.pdf>

General Medical Council (GMC) Equality Scheme 2011 – 2014 (closes 15 October 2010)

https://gmc.e-consultation.net/econsult/consultation_Dtl.aspx?consult_Id=140&status=2&criteria=

Guidance on Concessionary Schemes for Surface Water Drainage Charges

Applies in England only (closes 22 October 2010)

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/surface-charges/index.htm>

Consultation on the change to policy direction for the Big Lottery Fund (closes 29 October 2010)

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/consultations/7313.aspx>

Equality Act 2010: The public sector Equality Duty: Promoting equality through transparency (closing date 10 November 2010)

http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/402461_GEO_EqualityAct2010ThePublicSectorEqualityDuty_acc.pdf

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