

# Political Affairs Brief

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Debate on the Queen's Speech

*includes:*

*col 55 Sir Gerald Kaufman...* I say something else to the Liberal Democrats: they will have to indulge in some internal house cleaning. Their candidate against me at the general election, Qassim Afzal, went round the constituency to mosques and other places where Muslims gather, telling people to vote against me because I am a Jew. That is what their candidate did. I was told that again and again by Muslim voters. My Muslim voters are possessed of a decency and generosity of spirit utterly alien to the Liberal Democrat candidate in my constituency, because they organised for me as they never had before and voted for me in many thousands.

The incidents that took place in my constituency as part of an anti-Semitic campaign went on and on. One of my constituents, a Muslim, told me how the Liberal Democrat candidate Qassim Afzal came to his house, which had a poster of mine in the window, and said, "You cannot have a poster in your window of a Jew. Take it down." I told two Liberal Democrat Members before Parliament was dissolved that that was what their candidate in Gorton was doing. They were horrified. They said that they would bring it to the attention of their leadership. I do not know whether they did. I do know that their Liberal Democrat candidate, against the decency and humanity of my Muslim constituents, went on conducting an anti-Semitic campaign right through to polling day.

I say to the Liberal Democrat leader, now the Deputy Prime Minister, that if he did not know about that before, he should have done. His MPs told me that they had told him. He knows about it now. I will wait to see what he does to deal with an overtly anti-Semitic candidate who fought an anti-Semitic, and personally anti-Semitic, election campaign. If the Deputy Prime Minister does not take swift action to deal with that person, I will know that he accepts that anti-Semitism is a run-of-the-mill form of campaigning by Liberal Democrats. Well, it is up to him. That is what their candidate did, disgusting thousands of Muslims in my constituency. It is up to the Liberal Democrats to decide whether those are acceptable campaigning tactics. ...

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100525/debtext/100525-0005.htm>



## Community Relations

### Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

OSCE/ODIHR gathers experts in Berlin to evaluate education programme to combat anti-Semitism

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) gathered experts from 12 countries in Berlin today to exchange experiences on implementing an education programme on combating anti-Semitism that was co-developed by ODIHR. The three-day event, organized jointly with the Berlin-based Center for Research on Anti-Semitism, Anne Frank Zentrum Berlin and Anne Frank House Amsterdam brings together 25 experts who have been involved in running the programme since its inception in 2006. "Learning about anti-Semitism makes young people understand the destructive consequences of hatred and intolerance and contributes to creating a tolerant and safe environment for all members of society. They can learn from our past for their future," said Norbert Hinterleitner, ODIHR's Adviser on Anti-Semitism Issues. Over the past four years, ODIHR, the Anne Frank House and national expert groups have developed and customized teaching materials on combating anti-Semitism for use in 12 countries across the OSCE region. The programme also includes training courses and teaching manuals for teachers. ...

[http://www.osce.org/odihr/item\\_1\\_44117.html](http://www.osce.org/odihr/item_1_44117.html)

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## Israel

### Foreign and Commonwealth Office

#### **UK remains committed to Middle East solution**

The Foreign Secretary, William Hague has outlined the UK's commitment to securing a deal on the two-state solution and peace in the Middle East.

The Foreign Secretary met the Secretary General of the Arab league, Amre Moussa in London on 25 May. Their discussion included the Middle East Peace Process, and other regional issues. During their discussion, the Foreign Secretary made clear that the UK remains committed to securing a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and supports the US-led proximity talks. He welcomed and recognised the importance of support from the Arab League for the proximity talks, and more widely the key role the Arab League plays in the region. Since his appointment, the Foreign Secretary has spoken to many of his counterparts in the Middle East and the Gulf, conveying the Government's desire to elevate Britain's links with the countries of the region and to build close working relationships in that process.

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22278601>

## United Nations

#### **Ban calls for promotion of trust alongside proximity talks**

The proximity talks between Israel and the Palestinians earlier this month must be accompanied by steps to foster mutual trust and more positive conditions on the ground, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underscored today. ... Israel, he said, must exercise particular restraint in East Jerusalem, ending demolitions, evictions and settlement expansion there. For its part, the Palestinian Authority must continue fulfilling its commitments to build institutions and promote security. ... These acts undermine the very basis of a negotiated settlement and destroy the credibility of the political process."

He stressed that “the sovereign State of Palestine, free from foreign occupation, is still just a vision. The sense of frustration is palpable among Palestinians and in the region in general both with the open-ended Israeli occupation and the open-ended peace process, which has proceeded by fits and starts, in bouts of inconclusive negotiations, raising expectations then failing to meet them.” ... By many measures, Palestinians, he said, are worse off today than they were when the peace process kicked off some two decades ago. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=34800&Cr=palestin&Cr1=>

### **UN humanitarian coordinator: Gaza blockade suffocating agriculture sector, creating food insecurity**

Humanitarian aid agencies call upon the Government of Israel for full and unfettered access into and out of the Gaza Strip for materials and exports necessary for the revival of the agriculture and fishing sectors and for the lifting of restrictions imposed on Palestinian access to farm land and fishing areas. ...

**To read the full press release see**

[http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/gaza\\_agriculture\\_25\\_05\\_2010\\_press\\_release\\_english.pdf](http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/gaza_agriculture_25_05_2010_press_release_english.pdf)

### **Quick progress in new Israeli-Palestinian talks vital to thwart spoilers**

... “After many setbacks and delays, we are entering a new phase in the efforts for Israeli-Palestinian peace,” Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry told the Security Council ... “it is essential for the parties to indeed address the core issues. That means that Jerusalem, the refugee issue, security, ...” ...He also condemned five recent extra-judicial executions by Hamas, calling for an end to any further such killings. ...

... In Lebanon, he noted Israeli concern over alleged transfers of sophisticated weaponry to Hizbollah. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=34735&Cr=palestin&Cr1=>

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

### **Scottish Parliament**

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

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

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## **Other Relevant Information**

### **Electoral Commission**

#### **2010 UK Parliamentary General Election Interim report: review of problems at polling stations at close of poll on 6 May 2010**

[http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/99091/Interim-Report-Polling-Station-Queues-complete.pdf](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/99091/Interim-Report-Polling-Station-Queues-complete.pdf)

### Elections Report

[http://www.thecst.org.uk/docs/Elections%20Report%20-%20General%20Elections%202010\\_for%20web.pdf](http://www.thecst.org.uk/docs/Elections%20Report%20-%20General%20Elections%202010_for%20web.pdf)

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated

### **Revised Guidance on Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (England and Wales only)** (closes 15 June 2010)

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1671&external=no&menu=1>

### **Continuing need for a controlled activity category in the Vetting and Barring Scheme (England and Wales only)** (closes 17 June 2010)

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1710&external=no&menu=1>

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

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

### **Amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001** (closes 15 July 2010)

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/cons-2010-pathogens-toxins/consultation-paper2835.pdf?view=Binary>

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