

Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

Contents

[Home Affairs](#)

[Holocaust](#)

[Israel](#)

[Foreign Affairs](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Other Relevant Information](#)

[Consultations](#)

Home Affairs

UK Parliamentary Questions

Animal Welfare

Mr Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has (a) undertaken and (b) evaluated on levels of pain caused to cattle slaughtered by the halal method. [24198]

Mr Paice [*holding answer 16 November 2010*]: DEFRA and the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry commissioned and joint-funded research to investigate the effects of slaughter by ventral neck incision on the electroencephalogram (EEG) in calves (Project Number MH0129). This work commenced in January 2005 and the final report was published in the New Zealand Veterinary Journal in April 2009. It can be viewed at:

<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&Completed=0&%20ProjectID=13009>

The work indicates that the neck cut associated with religious slaughter evokes a pain response in anaesthetised calves.

[The above url is incorrect. The report can in fact be viewed at

http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=MH0129_7931_FRP.pdf

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101118/text/101118w0001.htm#10111865000090>

Food: Labelling

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs with which food industry (a) representatives and (b) organisations she has had recent discussions on the labelling of halal meat. [23926]

Mr Paice: I discussed the labelling of halal meat with chief executives of the major grocery retailers on 21 October. The issue was also discussed at a meeting with Shechita UK and Members of this House on 3 November. This topic was also covered in a meeting with the Business Services Association on 9 November. I also intend to raise this issue when I meet representatives from the food manufacturing, retail and food service sectors later this month.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101118/text/101118w0001.htm#10111865000091>

Downing Street

Latest Peerages announced

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/latest-news/2010/11/peerages-honours-and-appointments-2-57256>

[TOP](#)

Holocaust

European Union

Launch European Holocaust Archives

... This year the world commemorates the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Nazi death camp, which has become the symbol of the Holocaust and the destruction of European Jewry. Future generations must know and acknowledge the European tragedy of the Holocaust, which led to the killing of over six million Jews. That was also the plea of the world leaders who gathered to the ceremonies, which took place on 27 January 2010 in Poland.

To answer to this plea, international historical research into the Holocaust and its impact as a European phenomenon must be continued. For this reason twenty institutions have decided to join forces. Together they will transform the dispersed data available for Holocaust research around Europe and elsewhere into a cohesive corpus of resources. By integrating key collections EHRI will enable historiographical progress and collaborative research in this important area of Europe's and the world's history. The project will also stimulate and facilitate research into relatively unknown aspects of the Holocaust. This entails special attention for Eastern Europe: the Nazi persecution was a European-wide phenomenon and the vast majority of Holocaust victims lived in Eastern Europe.

Special attention will be paid to education and outreach by ensuring the online availability and maximum open access to Holocaust material for the larger public. ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.eutrio.be/launch-european-holocaust-archives-ehri>

[TOP](#)

Israel

UK Parliamentary Questions

Israel: Borders

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the use of electronic terminals at checkpoints into Israel from the west bank; and if he will make a statement. [21937]

Alistair Burt: We are concerned at a number of Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, including restrictions on movement and access for all Palestinians.

While we welcome Israel's easing of some restrictions on movement and access in the west bank we remain concerned about the increase in temporary checkpoints and increasing restrictions on movement of Palestinians between east Jerusalem and the rest of the west bank.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101118/text/101118w0001.htm#10111865000060>

Israel: Overseas Trade

Mr Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the state of British-Israeli trade relations; and what assessment he has made of their contribution to the UK economy. [24573]

Mr Prisk: Israel is an important trading partner for the UK. Exports of goods to Israel in 2009 were worth over £1 billion and exports of services, a further £500 million.

Bilateral trade in 2009 was worth £3.07 billion, surpassing the £3 billion target set in 2008. UK exports continue to increase in 2010-up 24% on the same period in 2009 (January to August).

Inward investment from Israel remains strong. Israeli firms are significant investors in the UK. Over 300 Israeli companies now have a physical presence in the UK, providing thousands of jobs. Over 50 Israeli companies are listed on the AIM and main London stock exchange.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101118/text/101118w0001.htm#10111865000061>

Israel and Palestine

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many cases of eviction or house demolition affecting Palestinians in East Jerusalem have been reported to them in 2010; and how they propose to prevent further measures to alter the balance of population in East Jerusalem.[HL3711]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): According to the UN humanitarian report, to date in 2010 (9 November), 315 Palestinian-owned structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem and Area C (including 17 structures demolished by their owners following demolition orders). Four hundred and two people have been displaced and about 1,296 people have been otherwise affected.

East Jerusalem is regarded as occupied territory under international law. We do not recognise Israel's annexation of east Jerusalem. House demolitions or the eviction of Palestinians from their homes in east Jerusalem are deeply unhelpful. We view any attempts to change the facts on the ground as a serious provocation likely to raise tensions, as well as being harmful to the peace process and, of course, in contravention of international law.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101118w0001.htm#10111866000476>

Gaza

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will support the foreign minister of Germany in his call for the ending of the blockade of Gaza and, in particular, for a resumption of exports.[HL3797]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): My right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the situation in Gaza with Prime Minister Netanyahu during his recent visit. He welcomed the steps Israel has taken to improve access but underlined the need for further measures to secure change on the ground, including speeding up of imports for UN-led reconstruction, particularly schools. Like Germany, the UK also wants to see steps to resume exports and rebuild the Gazan economy. We will continue to call for this, working with our EU and other partners.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101118w0001.htm#10111866000467>

European Economic and Social Committee

Visit of EESC delegation to Israel and the Palestinian Territories to boost cooperation between civil society organisations

... a delegation of the European Economic and Social Committee ... will visit Israel and the Palestinian Territories on 28 November to 1 December. The aim of the visit is to support the activities of the Israeli and Palestinian Economic and Social Councils as well as boost cooperation between the Councils.

To read the full press release see

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/communique-presse-eesc-117-2010-en-2.doc>

[TOP](#)

Foreign Affairs

UK Parliamentary Question

Middle East: Politics and Government

Mr Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects of the recent visit of the Iranian President to Lebanon on the political situation in Lebanon; and if he will make a statement. [24882]

Alistair Burt: The political situation in Lebanon remains tense. The visit of President Ahmednihad has not changed that. We expect all countries to respect the sovereignty of Lebanon and to work for its stability. I regret very much the inflammatory statements made by President Ahmednihad during his visit to Lebanon. Such remarks do not contribute to the stability of Lebanon or the region.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101118/text/101118w0001.htm#10111865000062>

[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/fixdtermparliaments.html>

Identity Documents Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/identitydocuments.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/ld201011/ldbills/026/amend/am026-b.htm>

Scottish Parliament

Certification of Death Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/58-CertDeath/index.htm>

End of Life Assistance Bill

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

[TOP](#)

Other Relevant Information

Quilliam

The Other Face of Al-Qaeda

<http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/images/stories/pdfs/the-other-face-of-al-qaeda.pdf>

Skin-deep democracy: How race, religion and ethnicity continue to affect Westminster politics

<http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/images/stories/pdfs/skin-deep-democracy.pdf>

[TOP](#)

Consultations

** new or updated

** closes in 5 days

Equality Duty: Detailed Proposals - Consultation on Public Sector Equality Duty Draft Regulations and Order (Scotland) (closes 26 November 2010)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/324431/0104438.pdf>

The Future of the Citizenship Survey (closing date 30 November 2010)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1756366.pdf>

Charity Commission: Proposed withdrawal of paper forms for Annual Returns, Registration applications, and forthcoming Charitable Incorporated Organisations (closes 2 December 2010)

[http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/About us/About the Commission/ols consultation intro.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/About%20us/About%20the%20Commission/ols%20consultation_intro.aspx)

Equality Act 2010 - Performance of the Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales (closes 17 December 2010)

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/equality/equalityact2010/?lang=en>

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Draft Code of Practice on Further and Higher Education (closes 31 December 2010)

http://live.ehrc.precedenthost.co.uk/cgi-bin/generate.pl?page_id= sx0666i4b&save=screen

Charity Commission for England and Wales: Views on Future Strategy (closes 14 January 2011)

http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/RSS/News/pr_strategic_review.aspx

Improvements to Criminal Justice Statistics (closing date 18 February 2011)
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/statistics-cp171110.htm>

**** National statistics, published by the Department of Health about the experience of black and minority ethnic patients**
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_121762

Prevent Review (closing date not stated)
<http://preventreview.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

[TOP](#)

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