

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

Briefing: Religious Slaughter

<http://www.parliament.uk/briefingpapers/commons/lib/research/briefings/snsc-01314.pdf>

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Lottery funding for voluntary and community sector protected

... a new policy direction was issued by Tourism and Heritage Minister John Penrose to the Big Lottery Fund today ... [that] requires the Big Lottery Fund to focus its funding in England on projects that support the voluntary and community sector ...

John Penrose said: "Protecting lottery funding for these types of projects is an important way of building and maintaining the kind of voluntary and community action that is an integral part of the Big Society. ...

The direction applies to England only and does not apply to the devolved administrations.

http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/media_releases/7627.aspx

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Video: teaching about anti-Semitism

The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has been working together with Anne Frank House in the Netherlands to produce teaching materials aimed at combating anti-Semitism. The materials are available in a number of languages and have been adapted to meet the specific needs of more than a dozen countries.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpjw9fzm7jA>

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UK Parliamentary Questions

Middle East: Armed Conflict

Guto Bebb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on the acquisition of anti-aircraft missiles by Hamas; what discussions he has had with the Government of Israel on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [28485]

Alistair Burt: The UK regularly discusses the issue of arms smuggling with the Israeli Government. The details of these discussions are confidential. However, the UK continues to call for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1860, including halting the smuggling of weapons to armed groups in Gaza and the need to ease the restrictions on Gaza's crossing points.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101206/text/101206w0002.htm#10120616000007>

Overseas Aid

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the budgeted expenditure of the World Food Programme, UNICEF and other relevant United Nations agencies (other than the United Nations Relief and Works Agency) in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza for the current and previous two years; and what was the United Kingdom contribution to those budgets.[HL4533]

Baroness Verma: Although the UK provides un-earmarked core funding to a range of UN agencies, the Department for International Development (DfID) does not hold information on the UN spend in specific countries or territories.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101206w0001.htm#1012068000305>

Middle East Peace Process

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are responding to the Washington speech of 4 November by Prince Turki al-Faisal of Saudi Arabia on the Middle East peace process; and in particular whether they are discussing it with the Government of the United States at all appropriate levels. [HL4391]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): Our understanding is that these were personal comments in the course of a speech that Prince Turki al Faisal made at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and we will not be responding. They do not alter the Arab League's Peace Initiative, nor the UK's position. We support the current US-led process as the best chance for achieving a two-state solution.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101206w0001.htm#1012068000304>

Israel and Palestine

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Howell of Guildford on 18 November (WA 237), what further action they will take to prevent the continuing eviction and demolitions of Palestinian dwellings in both East Jerusalem and the West Bank.[HL4392]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): The noble Lord will be aware that the UK has a strong record of lobbying hard on issues relating to house demolitions and settlement building and we regularly raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities. Following on from my Written Answer of 18 November, we are further concerned at a recent increase in demolitions and evictions in East Jerusalem and Area C. We will monitor the situation closely and will continue to raise the matter with the Israeli Government.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101206w0001.htm#1012068000303>

Gaza

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government what has happened to the humanitarian supplies for Gaza carried by the Turkish flotilla.[HL4390]

Baroness Verma: The flotilla cargo was transferred by the Israeli authorities to the UN, with the permission of the organisations who owned the cargo. As the organisation responsible for the cargo, the UN will be able to provide further information.

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the value in United States dollars of the reconstruction and development programme for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Gaza for 2010 (a) as submitted to the Government of Israel, (b) as approved by the Government of Israel, and (c) for which necessarily imported materials have by now been delivered.[HL4534]

Baroness Verma: The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) will be able to provide information on the value of projects submitted to Israel and the value of those approved. Reports on the amount of materials that have entered Gaza can be found on the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.mfa.gov.il).

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101206w0001.htm#1012068000296>

United Nations

Top UN humanitarian official in Gaza concerned over closure of youth NGO

The top United Nations humanitarian official in the occupied Palestinian territory expressed concern today over the closure by local authorities of the Gaza-based offices of a non-government organization (NGO) working with young people. ... Describing itself on its website as "one of the leading independent, apolitical and impartial youth organizations in Palestine," Sharek Youth Forum works to promote youth empowerment in the Palestinian territories. ... According to media reports, Sharek Youth Forum's offices in Gaza City and elsewhere in Gaza were forcibly closed at the end of November and police broke up a student demonstration in its support over the weekend. ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36979&Cr=Gaza&Cr1=>

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Relevant Legislation ** New or updated

UK Parliament

Daylight Saving Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/daylightsaving.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>

** 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/ml026-iii.htm>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101206-0001.htm#1012066000788>

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/policereformandsocialresponsibility.html>

Scottish Parliament

Certification of Death Bill

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

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Consultations

** new or updated

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/>

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