Home Affairs

Home Office

Home Secretary renews control orders legislation

The draft order to renew control orders legislation was laid before parliament today by the Home Secretary. ...[who] said, ‘It is important that we strike the right balance between safeguarding society from the risk of terrorism and the preservation of the rights of the individual. I believe that the control order provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 strikes that balance, which is why I am asking parliament to renew the act. ... Lord Carlile’s report analyses the operation of the control order system in 2008 and concludes that he ‘would have reached the same decision as the Secretary of State in each case in which a control order has been made in 2008’. ... The control order system as operated currently is a justifiable and proportional safety valve for the proper protection of civil society, but prosecution and conviction by a jury of criminal offences is a far more wholesome and satisfactory way of dealing with suspected terrorists.’

To read the full press release see

Middle East: Armed Conflict

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will refer the conflict in Gaza to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for investigation. [247791]

Bill Rammell: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary told the House on 19 January 2008, Official Report, column 501:
“allegations must be closely and speedily investigated. Obviously, the three key parties to that investigation are the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Government of Israel, and we are in touch with all of them.”

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions (a) he, (b) Ministers and (c) officials in his Department have had with (i) Arab states and (ii) the government of Israel on the rights of Jewish refugees from Arab lands; what response was received from each; and if he will make a statement. [247990]

Bill Rammell: We have had no such discussions.

Mr. Dai Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will instruct the United Kingdom ambassador to the United Nations to make representations against the reported use by Israel of depleted uranium shells and projectiles in the invasion of Gaza. [248769]

Bill Rammell: It is not clear whether Israeli forces have used depleted uranium munitions. We have made clear to the Israeli Government that they should do everything in their power to avoid innocent casualties.

Mr. Dai Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli government on the reported use of depleted uranium shells and projectiles in the invasion of Gaza. [248771]

Bill Rammell: It is not clear whether Israeli forces have used depleted uranium munitions. We made clear to the Israeli Government that they should do everything in their power to avoid innocent casualties.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with (a) his Israeli counterpart and (b) officials of the International Criminal Court on investigation of Israel's Gaza military operation. [249089]

Bill Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has been in frequent contact with Foreign Minister Livni and Defence Minister Barak. He has had no contact with officials from the International Criminal Court.

As the Foreign Secretary told the House on 19 January 2008, Official Report, column 501:
“allegations must be closely and speedily investigated. Obviously, the three key parties to that investigation are the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Government of Israel, and we are in touch with all of them.”

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the alleged hijacking of aid convoys by Hamas in Gaza; and if he will make a statement. [250220]

Bill Rammell: We are aware of reports that Hamas has been taking control of aid sent to Gaza from Arab countries. We have repeatedly called publicly and privately for full and safe access for humanitarian agencies so that help can reach those in need. We urge all parties to respect their obligations, and to ensure the safe and unimpeded passage of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent reports he has received on the number of (a) women and (b) children who were (i) killed, (ii) seriously injured and (iii) slightly injured in Gaza as a result of being struck by rockets aimed at Israel in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [250228]

Bill Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold this information.
Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what account he (a) has taken and (b) plans to take of Article 13 of the Hamas charter in assessing Hamas's suitability as a partner for peace in the Middle East; what recent representations he has received on the matter; and if he will make a statement. [250229]

Bill Rammell: We have consistently made clear that to be a credible partner in peace Hamas need to accept the Quartet Principles of recognition of Israel, acceptance of previous agreement with Israel and rejection of violence.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the role of Iran in relation to the (a) funding, (b) training and (c) arming of (i) Hezbollah, (ii) Hamas and (iii) al-Qaeda; and if he will make a statement. [250230]

Bill Rammell: We have serious concerns about Iranian support for Hezbollah. Iran provides Hezbollah with significant financial resources, military equipment and training. Many of the most lethal and sophisticated weapons that Hezbollah used during the Israel/Lebanon conflict were of Iranian manufacture or procured from Iran. Such support is unacceptable and only serves to undermine regional security. Arms supplies to Hezbollah are contrary to the arms embargo established by UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701.

We also have long-standing concerns about the support that Iran provides in the form of funding, arms and training to Palestinian Rejectionist Groups including Hamas, which are undermining peace in the middle east through violence. We hope that Iran will give political and diplomatic support to the Palestinian Authority in its attempts to build institutions and improve security.

We understand that Iran continues to hold some al-Qaeda (AQ) members in custody, but that members of AQ and affiliated groups have used, and possibly continue to use, Iran as a base, transit route and refuge. We have urged Iran to act against this and to co-operate fully with the rest of the international community against terrorism, as required by UNSCR 1373.

The UK would like to see Iran making a positive contribution to creating a secure, stable and prosperous middle east. But its current behaviour is a cause for serious concern for us and others. Iran needs to work with the international community and its regional neighbours to restore confidence in its intentions.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he plans to report the Israeli Government to the UN War Crimes Tribunal; and if he will make a statement. [250416]

Bill Rammell: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary told the House on 19 January 2008, Official Report, column 501:

“allegations must be closely and speedily investigated. Obviously, the three key parties to that investigation are the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Government of Israel, and we are in touch with all of them.”

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many (a) meetings, (b) telephone calls and (c) e-mails has he had with the Israeli ambassador since 27 December 2008. [250417]

Bill Rammell: I have met ambassador Prossor on several occasions during this period. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has been in direct regular communication with Foreign Minister Livni and Defence Minister Barak.

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090202/text/90202w0009.htm#09020229000050
EU: Israel Association Agreement

Baroness Tonge: To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had in the European Union regarding the review of the conditionality clauses in the European Union-Israel Association Agreement. [HL916]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown): EU-Israel relations are an important part of our engagement with Israel which has at its core the goal of achieving lasting peace in the Middle East. We use the EU-Israel dialogue under the Association Agreement to further this goal.

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90202w0001.htm#09020211000374

Israel and Palestine: Gaza

Lord Dykes: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will bring to the attention of the Government of Israel comments made by leading members of the Jewish community in the United Kingdom about the military action in Gaza. [HL777]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown): In our discussions with the Israeli Government and others, we will continue to make clear the Government's position. In line with UN Security Council Resolution 1860, we are pressing to ensure the ceasefire in Gaza is durable.

Lord Dykes: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will work with the United Nations to establish a multinational inquiry into alleged war crimes committed in Gaza. [HL842]

Lord Malloch-Brown: As my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary said on 19 January 2009, Official Report, Col. 501: “allegations must be closely and speedily investigated. Obviously, the three key parties to that investigation are the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the government of Israel, and we are in touch with all of them”.

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will propose the prosecution before the International Criminal Court of Israelis who may have committed war crimes in Lebanon in 2006 and subsequently in Gaza and the West Bank. [HL774]

Lord Malloch-Brown: As my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary said on 19 January 2009, Official Report, Col. 501: “allegations must be closely and speedily investigated. Obviously, the three key parties to that investigation are the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the government of Israel, and we are in touch with all of them”.

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90202w0002.htm#09020211000379

UK Parliament: Early Day Motions

Andrew Pelling (648) Remarks of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert – That this House, whilst understanding the anger at further rocket attacks into Israel, notes with regret remarks of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert at an Israeli weekly cabinet meeting, vowing that Israel would act according to new rules and warning that Israel's response would be harsh and disproportionate; and believes that this reflects a disparaging lack of concern for the United Kingdom as a friend of Israel wanting to secure a reduction in tensions in the Middle East and internationally.

http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=37698&SESSION=899
Relevant Legislation  ** New or updated

**Coroners and Justice Bill**
http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/coronersandjustice.html
amendment paper
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmbills/009/amend/pbc0090202m.9-14.html

**Policing and Crime Bill**
http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/policingandcrime.html
amendment paper
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmbills/007/amend/pbc0070202m.41-47.html

European Parliament

Proposed Regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing

Consultations  ** New or updated

**closes this week!**
Equality and Human Rights Commission: Strategic plan, Equality Scheme and Grants Programme (closes 7 February 2009)
Consultation guides
online consultation  http://equalityhumanrights.dialoguebydesign.net/

Policing and Crime Bill (UK Parliament)  (closes 11 February 2009)
http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/joint_committee_on_human_rights/jchrpn10_280109.cfm

Identity Cards Act secondary legislation  (closes 13 February 2009)

End of Life Choices (Scotland) Bill  (closes 9 March 2009)

Regulations to implement the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Act 2008  (closes 30 March 2009)

All Wales Community Cohesion Strategy  (closes 6 April 2009)
Consultation on new Regulations and code for Meat Chicken Welfare (England only) (20 April 2009)

Consultation on the proposal for a Council regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing (20 April 2009)
http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/slaughter/

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