

# Political Affairs Brief

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

**Scottish Council of Jewish Communities**

**SCoJeC**

## Contents

[Home Affairs](#)

[Consultations](#)

[Israel](#)

## Home Affairs

### Communities and Local Government

#### **Citizenship Survey: April – December 2009, England and Wales: Attitudes towards Violent Extremism (experimental statistics)**

Key statistics from this release include:

- Eighty-five per cent of people said that it was 'always wrong' for people to use violent extremism in Britain to protest against things they think are very unfair or unjust
- Ninety-five per cent of people said that it was 'always wrong' for people in Britain to use violent extremism in the name of religion to protest or achieve a goal
- Ninety-two per cent of people said it was 'always wrong' for political campaigners in Britain to write and distribute leaflets that encouraged violence towards different ethnic groups ...
- Multivariate analysis showed that respondents' age, socio-economic background, income, religion, country of birth and gender were associated with their likelihood to reject the use of violent extremism in Britain. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/citizenshipsurvey2009extremism>

**Report** <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/1702054.pdf>

**Tables** <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/xls/1702077.xls>

**Peer review of survey data**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/1702061.pdf>

#### **2010-11 Citizenship Survey: Questionnaire**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1703735.pdf>

#### **Faiths in Action funding to strengthen local communities**

Faiths in Action has just awarded funding to over 100 organisations to run local inter faith projects, helping to strengthen neighbourhoods across England. ... The Faiths in Action programme ... creates opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between different faith groups within local communities. Communities Minister Andrew Stunell said: "Inter faith activity is an important component of the Big Society we want to build, in which people work together for the common good. If we want to live in a truly integrated society, we

need opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to come together - not just to better understand each other but also to work towards shared goals that benefit the whole community. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/newsstories/communities/1704048>

## Foreign and Commonwealth Office

### **Papal visit will highlight shared international priorities**

... Lord Patten said the visit will be "not only a great British event, but a great European and Commonwealth event." He emphasised its historic nature - this is the first ever official Papal visit to the UK. The Pope is visiting at the invitation of Her Majesty the Queen, unlike in 1982, when the visit by Pope John Paul II was purely pastoral.

Lord Patten also remarked that "we welcome the head of a church which represents about ten per cent of citizens of this country and who represents over a billion people around the world. Secondly we're welcoming somebody whose church works closely around the world in pursuit of social equity and sustainable development." ...

Archbishop Nichols ... noted that whereas the focus of John Paul II's visit was the UK Catholic population, Pope Benedict XVI has been invited to address the whole of UK society. He said the visit would also underline the importance of faith in society at a personal and community level, and that the Catholic community was "looking forward to it immensely." ...

Lord Marland and Minouche Shafik highlighted the shared objectives of the Government and the Holy See in tackling climate change and poverty. Lord Marland said the Holy See is showing great leadership on climate change, highlighting the work the Vatican is doing to become the first carbon neutral state. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22788804>

[TOP](#)

## Israel

## Foreign and Commonwealth Office

### **Direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians**

Foreign Secretary William Hague welcomes talks and calls on leaders to show "perseverance, commitment and courage" in pursuit of peace. Speaking at a joint Press Conference today with the German Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle, William Hague emphasised the "historic importance" of the move to direct talks.

Reiterating that the UK stood ready to "do everything we can to buttress those talks" the Foreign Secretary said "the parties involved will need to show commitment and courage to achieve the lasting peace that both sides deserve and we support them fully in that effort". He went on to add: "We welcome the direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians beginning today. We look to Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas to show the perseverance, commitment and courage needed to achieve a sovereign, viable and contiguous Palestinian state living in peace and security alongside a safe and secure Israel and their other neighbours in the region".

This follows the US President Barack Obama's statement yesterday where he said: "The status quo is unsustainable, for Israelis, for Palestinians, for the region and for the world. It is in the national interests of all those involved, including the US that this conflict be brought to a peaceful conclusion"

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22794379>

### **Foreign Secretary statement on the West Bank shooting**

Foreign Secretary William Hague has made a statement on the killing of four Israeli citizens in Hebron last night. The Foreign Secretary said: "I deplore last night's killing of four Israeli citizens. This cruel and inhuman attack must not be allowed to derail efforts to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region. On behalf of the United Kingdom I send my heartfelt condolences to the families of those killed, and reaffirm our unswerving support for all those striving for peace in the region in the face of such provocations".

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22785495>

## **European Commission**

### **Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the launch of direct talks on the Middle East**

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, made the following statement: "On the occasion of the launch of direct talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, I congratulate Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas for their vision and political courage. I commend the US and the efforts deployed by President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton and Senator Mitchell to bring the parties to the negotiation table. Quartet Envoy Tony Blair and the Arab League have also played an important role in this difficult endeavour. The EU, including as a member of the Quartet, will continue to support the direct negotiations to ensure their success. The negotiations should focus on all final status issues. I look forward to the accomplishment of the negotiations within one year, as stated in the latest Quartet statement. The outcome will be crucial not just for the parties, but for the whole region and beyond. The terrible terrorist act that killed four Israeli citizens near Hebron, which I have strongly condemned, shows that there are forces in the region which are determined to undermine the peace process. We must not allow them to succeed. Supporters of peace must persevere through difficult times. It is very important that all relevant parties avoid provocative actions which could undermine the success of the talks. This attack underlines, above all, the urgency of a two-state solution with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with each other and their neighbours."

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/116267.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/116267.pdf)

## **United Nations**

### **Ban condemns West Bank shooting of four Israelis**

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has condemned the killing of four Israeli citizens ...just days before Israeli and Palestinian leaders are set to begin face-to-face talks in Washington. ... In a [statement](#) issued by his spokesperson, Mr. Ban extended his condolences to the families of the victims and called for the perpetrators of the attack to be promptly brought to justice. "This attack must be recognized for what it is: a cynical and blatant attempt to undermine the direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations starting tomorrow," noted the statement. ...

The attack was also condemned by UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry, who in a statement issued last night urged all sides "not to allow the enemies of peace to affect the negotiations about to be launched, and to progress with determination and courage on behalf of both peoples, towards a final settlement."

**To read the full press release see**

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=35790&Cr=palestin&Cr1=>

[TOP](#)

## Consultations

\*\* new or updated

### **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**

(closing date 30 September 2010)

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/news/consulting\\_public/news\\_consulting\\_0053\\_en.htm](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>

### **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](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/402461_GEO_EqualityAct2010ThePublicSectorEqualityDuty_acc.pdf)

[TOP](#)

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