

Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

Contents

[Israel](#)

[Relevant Legislation](#)

[Consultations](#)

[Israel](#)

Scottish Parliament Motion

S3M-7655 Hugh O'Donnell: Commercial Pressure on Israel—That the Parliament considers that there is a growing number of calls from the Scottish public and from businesses for a boycott of goods on sale in Scotland from Israel, owing to the continued illegal occupation and ongoing land grab in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; is deeply concerned at the successive failure of UK and US governments to persuade Israel to implement a complete settlement freeze, and calls on the Israeli authorities to recognise their obligations under international law to end the occupation and what it sees as the colonisation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank to the detriment of the local population.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Apps2/business/motions/Default.aspx?motionid=20494>

United Nations

Gaza: UN official asks Israel to use restraint in responding to rocket attacks

Condemning mounting rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, a senior United Nations official today acknowledged Israel's right to self-defence but urged it to use maximum restraint and ensure that civilians are not endangered.

"I condemn the firing of indiscriminate mortars and rockets by militant groups in Gaza, which have escalated in recent days," UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Robert Serry said in a statement. "These attacks are in clear violation of international humanitarian law and endanger civilians in Israel.

"Israel has a right to self-defence consistent with international humanitarian law," he added, citing several recent air attacks against militants in Gaza. "I urge Israel to exercise maximum restraint and take every precaution to ensure that its forces do not endanger civilians in Gaza who all too often bear the brunt of escalation of violence. ... The maintenance of calm is essential to create an environment in which further progress can be made in the interests of the people of both Gaza and Israel." ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37143&Cr=palestin&Cr1=>

UN official cites devastating impact of Israeli demolitions on Palestinian children

A senior United Nations official today condemned the demolition of two refugee homes in East Jerusalem, stressing in particular the trauma caused to Palestinian children forced to witness their homes being destroyed. "These condemnable acts have a devastating

impact,” Barbara Shenstone, the West Bank Field Director for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East ... “I call on the Israeli authorities to cease demolitions and evictions in occupied areas which are in contravention of Israel’s obligations under international law, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Israel is a party.”

The nine-member extended Subuh family, whose home in the Ras Al Amud district of East Jerusalem was destroyed on 21 December, has been living at the location of their demolished home in two tents. The Jerusalem Municipality gave the family just one day to destroy their home and threatened to demolish the house in 24 hours unless they complied. The family destroyed the house themselves at a cost of 60,000 new Israeli shekels rather than pay the Municipality to do so, which costs twice as much. ... Ms. Shenstone noted that while children around the world are enjoying the holiday season in their homes, the children from these families have suffered the trauma and indignity of watching their homes being destroyed. After witnessing the demolition of his home, one of the children, aged two, said “all I want to do is die.” ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37152&Cr=Palestin&Cr1=>

[TOP](#)

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>

Localism Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism.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/su026-vmc.htm>

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>

[TOP](#)

Consultations

** new or updated

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 (closes 18 February 2011)

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_121762

[TOP](#)

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