

February 2009 – Shevat 5769

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THE BOARD OF DEPUTIES  
OF BRITISH JEWS  
Established 1760

Board of Deputies of British Jews  
**Bulletin Board**  
*This is your community . . .*

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## Board Holds High Level Meetings on Gaza

In the wake of the conflict in Gaza, the Board of Deputies held meetings with high level ministers to ensure that the community's desire to see a sustainable peace in the region was made clear. Delegations were sent to meet with the Foreign Secretary, David Miliband (pictured) and Bill Rammell, Minister responsible for the Middle East, to discuss the conflict itself. The meeting covered a range of topics including the involvement of the United Nations and the charities delivering humanitarian aid to Gaza. Important meetings were also held with Hazel Blears and Sadiq Khan at the Department for Communities and Local Government to discuss the impact of the conflict on interfaith relationships and the dramatic increase in antisemitic incidents. Following these meetings, Ms. Blears wrote a letter to the community acknowledging the problem and offering as much support as possible to address the issue of antisemitism. The letter appears in full on the Board's website.



## Board Delegation attends the World Jewish Congress Plenary in Jerusalem

A Board of Deputies delegation, led by Vice President and Chairman of the International Division, Flo Kaufmann (pictured), attended the WJC Plenary meeting which discussed issues ranging from the Vatican's decision to readmit Bishop Richard Williamson to the Catholic Church, to the Durban Review Conference. The assembly was addressed by Israeli President, Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Olmert, Foreign Minister Livni, and Defence Minister Barak. The British delegation of 30 representatives included 15 deputies and 12 students. Past President of the Board, Lord Janner, was appointed Honorary Vice President of the WJC and Flo Kaufmann was elected as a WJC Vice President.

# Jewish Way of Life Exhibition Revamped

The Jewish Way of Life Exhibition (JWOLE), which tours the UK educating audiences, both young and old, about Judaism and its most fundamental topics, has been expanded as part of an ongoing project to improve and extend the current exhibition. The newest element deals specifically with Jewish Values including concern for the environment, avoiding gossip and giving charity. It will be added to the existing sections which cover Jewish Festivals and key life-cycle events. The next two stops for JWOLE will be Middlesex New Synagogue in Harrow and then an Islamic Community Centre in Bradford.



## Other issues we've been dealing with this month...

- **Reacting to Operation Cast Lead** – Information about the conflict was distributed via Deputies, synagogues and communal organisations to inform communities through regular updates and briefings on the conflict in Gaza. This culminated in a personal update given by His Excellency Ron Prosor, Ambassador for Israel, to Deputies and other communal representatives at the January Board Meeting.
- **Pikuach Inspections** – Inspections of the provision of Jewish studies at two Jewish schools showed that both performed exceptionally and reports will soon be published.
- **Response to Venezuela Attack** – Following the appalling attack on a synagogue in Caracas where Torah Scrolls were desecrated and walls were covered in graffiti, the Board immediately made contact with the Jewish community, issued a press release to condemn the attack and wrote to the Venezuelan Ambassador as well as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to show our support for the Venezuelan community and ask for appropriate action to be taken.
- **Durban Review Conference** – The campaign to ensure that the upcoming anti-racism Review Conference does not demonise Jews and the State of Israel continued with a series of international and domestic meetings with partner organisations and government. As the conference in April approaches, negotiations in the coming weeks will be vital in our efforts to address the antisemitic discourse that characterized the previous conference in 2001.
- **Holocaust Era Archives and Looted Property** – Consultation with Government has continued in relation to the future of the extensive archives at Bad Arolsen in Germany and on the issue of legislation concerning the restitution of stolen artwork from museums and galleries.



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