

January 2009 – Tevet 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 . . .** January 2009 - Tevet 5769

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## **Five days of Action for Israel**



At a meeting on 6 January, at the offices of the Board of Deputies, a large cross section of communal organisations met to plan the communal show of solidarity with Israel and an appreciation of the intolerable situation faced by a significant proportion of Israel's population in the face of years of relentless rocket attacks from Gaza.

The five days of letter writing and other activity will culminate in a huge rally in Trafalgar Square, together with a parallel event in Manchester's Albert Square, which will give communities from across the country the chance to show their solidarity with the State of Israel and a desire for peace for all people in the region.

A highlight of the campaign will be a text service, set up to enable all those that want to contribute to peace in a meaningful way, to donate money to hospitals both in Israel and in Gaza.

## **Board Holds Series of Meetings with Ambassadors on Durban**



A Delegation from the Board, led by Flo Kaufmann, Chairman of the International Division, conducted a series of meetings with European Ambassadors to discuss their respective approaches to the Durban Review Conference which will be held in Geneva in April of this year.

The delegation visited the Embassies of, Denmark, Romania, Poland and France and has scheduled further meetings with representatives of the Irish, Hungarian, Estonian, and Spanish, and Latvian. The Austrian Ambassador Dr. Gabriele Matzner-Holzer (pictured), welcomed the fruitful discussion with the delegation from the Board and looked forward to further exchanges and cooperation regarding the Durban Review Process.

The Meetings were part of the Board's intensive campaign, as representatives of the Jewish Human Rights Coalition UK, to ensure that the Durban Review Conference achieves its stated goals of globalising the fight against racism and prejudice.



## High Level Meetings on Faith Schools

The Board of Deputies met with Sarah McCarthy Fry MP, (pictured) the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

A delegation from the Board including Chief Executive, Jon Benjamin, Hannah Ashleigh, Sandra Teacher and Susan Moss, had a private meeting with the minister to update her on education matters concerning the community. Issues discussed included the recent update of admissions policies, the importance and value of faith schools in light of ongoing criticism and concerns over the dropping of the Hebrew A-level. Susan Moss spoke about the impressive work being undertaken by the 'Shared Values School Linking Project' and the Minister asked to visit a linking day in the near future, which is currently being arranged.

On the same day, representatives from the Board were joined by colleagues involved in Jewish education to meet with the Church of England Education Service staff team at their base at Church House in Westminster. We discussed our respective areas of work, shared expertise and good practice and spoke of the many important areas where we can and do work together.

## Other issues we've been working on this month...

- **The effect of the Gaza conflict the Jewish community** – Many people will already be aware of the threats made by Hamas on Zionist and Jewish targets around the world. The Board continues to work closely with the CST to ensure that our community is given the best possible protection where necessary. The President, Henry Grunwald QC, and Chief Executive, Jon Benjamin, have both broadcast on television and radio about the situation of British Jews in light of recent events.
- **Heritage** – There is an ongoing significant re-organization of the way in which the maintenance of Jewish cemeteries is managed in order to secure their long term future.
- **European Jewish Congress Delegation** – A Board delegation traveled to Brussels for the EJC General Assembly where Flo Kaufman, Vice President of the Board was re-elected as the Chairman of the EJC Council.
- **Chanukah Candle Lighting** – Board representatives attended the annual Chanukah candle lighting services held by the Foreign Secretary and the Mayor of London.



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