

November 2008 – Cheshvan 5769

T +44 (0)20 7543 5400 • F +44 (0)20 7543 0010 • E info@bod.org.uk • W www.bod.org.uk
6 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2LP

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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Jewish Schools: Board works with Government, Educators on concerns over Schools Admissions

Following concerns expressed earlier in the year over the admissions procedures adopted by Jewish schools, the Chief Schools Adjudicator, Sir Philip Hunter, commended the community's response in his annual report. "I have been immensely grateful for the help I have received from local authority officers, diocesan directors of education and the Board of Deputies," he said. "They have had to take on the task of informing schools of changes they should make to arrangements and they have done that with tolerance and tact."

Commenting on the Board's role in working with Government and Jewish schools, Jon Benjamin, Chief Executive of the Board said, "The contribution of Jewish schools is recognised within Government, but there well organised groups lobbying against the idea of state funded faith schools. It is essential that we do all we can to ensure compliance with the Admissions Code, so that our schools are above and beyond criticism. At the same time we have worked with the Department for Children, Schools & Families so that the code itself provides a much better framework for our schools to preserve their ethos."

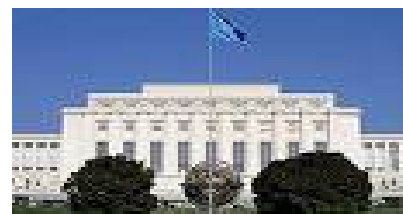
The Board also played a key role in coordinating a multi faith response to the Chief Adjudicator's report, co-signed by representatives of over 6000 Christian, Muslim, Sikh and Hindu schools.



Lithuanians drop Prosecution Move to protect Cemetery

A Delegation from the Board of Deputies, led by Flo Kaufmann, Vice President of the Board of Deputies and Chairman of the International Division, received welcome news from the Lithuanian ambassador, His Excellency Vygaudas Usakas regarding the investigation by the Lithuanian Prosecutor's Office of the alleged wartime activities of a well known Holocaust survivor. The Board had been particularly concerned about the investigation into Dr Yitzhak Arad (pictured), a former Director of Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, who had been accused of involvement in war crimes reportedly carried out by Soviet backed partisans. The Ambassador also informed the delegation that the ancient Snipiskes Jewish Cemetery in Vilnius would receive the status and protection of a historic landmark. The Board's Chief Executive, Jon Benjamin, voiced continued concern that construction work was still encroaching on part of the cemetery, risking the integrity of human remains.

Board of Deputies Demands Objectivity at the UN



Palais de Nations, Geneva

Representatives of the British Jewish Community have attended a preparatory committee meeting in Geneva for the **UN anti-racism review** conference and made an unequivocal statement to the opening plenary session, stating that unbalanced references to the Middle East conflict are detrimental to genuinely constructive dialogue on fighting racism. Elizabeth Harris, the Director of Public Affairs at the Board of Deputies and coordinator of the Jewish Human Rights Coalition – UK (JHRC-UK) attended the Preparatory Committee and used the opportunity to have constructive meetings with the British Ambassador, Peter Gooderham and representatives of other European countries.

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

- **Time off for religious holidays** – During the period from Rosh Hashannah to Sukkot, members of the community often have difficulty taking so much annual leave in such a short period of time. We were able to help many of those that approached us and we are in the process of formulating a long term strategy to deal with this issue when it arises again in 2010.
- **Meeting with Hazel Blears** – In a meeting to discuss the impact of new legislation on marriage visas, the Board outlined to the Minister for Communities and Local Government just how damaging the unintended consequences of the proposals would be for the Charedi community.
- **Jewish Women: Looking Backwards ... Looking Forward** - This project, supported by the Board, seeks to understand developments since the 1994 publication of the "Women in the Jewish Community" report. Both women and men, from all sections of the community, are invited to share their views via the link on the Board's website.
- **Britain's Jewish Community Statistics 2007** - The latest report published by the Community Research Unit is available from the Board's website, or by emailing research@bod.org.uk

Environment and Social Issues Group (ESIAG)

Is your shul a Fair Trade Synagogue? - The Jewish Social Action Forum (of which **ESIAG** is a member) has produced a guide to Fair Trade synagogues and so far has signed up 45 synagogues. It is to launch a Jewish community wide Fairtrade campaign. For details, e-mail: Hannah@jcclondon.org.uk.

www.biggreenjewish.org - Have you visited our environment website recently? There are a host of recent features including an article by Rabbi David Soetendorp on Torah teachings on the environment. If you have journalistic experience, we're looking for Deputies who would like to help with the editing of the website. If you'd like to contribute or are interested in joining the working group, please email Neville Sassienie - Sassienie@aol.com



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