

September 2008 – Elul 5768

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



## Board of Deputies of British Jews

# Bulletin Board



September 2008 – Elul 5768

**This is *your* community . . .**

For unabridged news, please visit [www.bod.org.uk](http://www.bod.org.uk)



## Board of Deputies Hosts Boris Johnson at Annual Dinner

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, thoroughly entertained some four hundred guests at this year's 'President's Dinner' in July. Mr Johnson delighted his audience with stories about

the time he spent washing dishes on a kibbutz and his 'Jewish' lineage. Apart from his usual amusing anecdotes, he also thanked the community for its support and then went on to describe his visions and aspirations for the City of London in the coming years. In particular, he declared his continuing support for faith schools as well as condemning the decision of the Oxford Union to invite David Irving and Nick Griffin to speak in November of last year, calling it, "an odious ... and profoundly juvenile thing to do." The event was attended by representatives from all parts of the community, and the Ambassadors of Israel, Morocco, Poland and Sweden.



## Board Delegation Meets Chancellor of the Exchequer to Discuss Sanctions on Iran

A Board of Deputies delegation, led by President Henry Grunwald QC met the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling to discuss the issue of sanctions against Iran. The Board had requested a meeting with the Chancellor to thank the government for its strong stance in tightening economic sanctions and to ensure that the international community continued to press the Iranian regime on the issue of nuclear weapons. The Chancellor agreed that the Iran poses a potential threat to global stability and that in this matter he shared the views of the Board of Deputies. He emphasised the action the UK government is taking in relation to sanctions and reinforced the Government's commitment to do everything possible to ensure any action is implemented effectively and in full.

# High Level Talks with the Ukrainian Ambassador

Vice President of the Board and Chairman of the International Division Flo Kaufman, lead a delegation that met with the Ukrainian Ambassador, His Excellency, Dr Ihor Kharchenko. The purpose of the meeting was multifaceted; the agenda included appropriate strategies for fighting European antisemitism and the need to prevent unbalanced criticism of Israel at the upcoming review of the 'World Conference Against Racism' in Geneva in April, 2009. Defence Director, Mike Whine, thanked the Ukrainian Government for ensuring the end of offensive teachings at a Ukrainian University and for the appointment of Deputy Foreign Minister Olexander Gorin, as Special Envoy on Antisemitism. Flo Kaufmann said, "It was rewarding to meet the Ukrainian Ambassador and discuss issues that affect the UK and the Ukraine, as well as Europe and the wider region. I was particularly impressed with the depth of his knowledge of the history of Ukrainian Jewry and his commitment to monitoring antisemitism."

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

- **Review of legislation on death certification** – We have contributed to the drafting of new legislation on death certification to ensure that our community can avoid potential difficulties when we request 'fast-track' documentation to ensure immediate burial.
- **Defence of our faith Schools** – Reacting to the recent launch of the anti-faith school group 'Accord,' we have coordinated the community's united response in condemning the group and ensuring that they do not misrepresent our community.
- **Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem visits the Board** – In a significant interfaith meeting, Bishop Suheil Dawani of Jerusalem visited the offices of the Board this month. Bishop Dawani was born in Nablus in 1951 and his visit serves to demonstrate our community's close relationship with the Anglican Church.
- **Submission on 'weekend voting' proposals** – We have prepared and submitted a document outlining the difficulties that the community would have if a proposal for weekend polling, aimed at boosting voter turnout, was introduced.
- **Contribution to human rights conference** – Elizabeth Harris, Director of Public Affairs and coordinator of the Jewish Human Rights Coalition UK attended a conference to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> year of the human rights declaration in Paris. The conference was particularly valuable for the alliances made with various NGO's that will assist the community in our campaign to ensure that unbalanced criticism of Israel does not dominate the upcoming international anti-racism conference in Geneva in April 2009.



education • defence • shechita • government consultations • co-existence  
international affairs • regions • employment • advocacy heritage • interfaith  
campaigns • community issues • charity law • antisemitism • representation  
outreach • medical ethics • research • family law • Israel • disability rights  
media • schools • advocacy • diaspora • campus • marriages • brit milah

*...working for your community.*