

## **UK Statement on its Continued Efforts to Combat Anti-Semitism**

This year has seen further progress made by the UK government in accordance with its commitment to combat anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom.

The UK has taken this commitment seriously. Following the report of the All-Party Inquiry into Anti-Semitism, the government established an Inter-Departmental Working Group on Anti-Semitism, consisting of representatives from the relevant departments of state, the All Party Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism and representatives from the Jewish community.

The Government's response, based on the findings of the working group, was published in May 2008. This report described the many steps taken, by the government over the preceding 12 months and commitments made for the future. This included:

- a pledge to universalise the good practice of some police forces in recording anti-Semitic incidents;
- grant funding to support academic research by the London-based European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism into the field of anti-Semitic discourse;
- money ring-fenced for promoting the UK model of Parliamentary Inquiry internationally;
- further resources devoted to Holocaust education in schools
- and a pledge to look into the effectiveness of existing policies related to the funding of security at Jewish schools.

- continued support of the work of the higher education sector in addressing racism and discrimination

- funding the Schools Linking Network which promotes cohesion by, for example, twinning Jewish and Muslim schools

Following the release of the government's report, a parliamentary debate took place in the main chamber of the House of Commons. This afforded the Minister responsible for this portfolio the opportunity to hear the reactions to the government's work, from the many parliamentarians from all parties that took part in the debate.

At the same time the Crown Prosecution Service published a review of its handling of criminal cases involving anti-Semitism, and it is now establishing better training for public prosecutors as well as improved victim support measures for those who have suffered from anti Jewish crimes, with the assistance of the Community Security Trust.

By April 2009 all UK police forces will be able to collect data on hate crime, which can be disaggregated by major faith groups. We will therefore be able to measure more accurately the increase in anti-Semitic crime, in line with our international commitments.

Mr Chairman,

We congratulate ODIHR on maintaining the focus we agreed at Berlin and Cordoba, and in particular on the states which have hosted high level conferences on anti-Semitism. We welcome on the distribution of the school books on anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and racism prepared by the Anne Frank Foundation and Yad Vashem.

We should however point out that too many states are still failing to provide data on racist and anti-Semitic violence despite having made the commitment to do so at Berlin and Brussels.

Finally, Mr Chairman

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office will co-host the inaugural conference of the Interparliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism in February 2009. This is being planned in coordination with Professor Gert Weisskirchen, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman in Office on Anti-Semitism. We hope that parliamentarians from across the OSCE region can attend.