To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last discussed with the Government of Israel, and with what result, (a) the ability of the crossing-points into Gaza to deal with the imports and exports of that territory, and (b) the shortage of shekels in Gaza for use as local currency; and whether they will continue to make representations on those matters.[HL11981]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): Truckloads entering Gaza are still only 45 per cent (based on June 2011 figures) of what went in prior to June 2007. Most of the increase in imports has been consumer goods. In the last month the average number of trucks entering Gaza a day has been less than 300. There have been only around 200 truckloads of exports in the whole of 2011 so far. The UN reports that Gaza needs to import and export 1,000 truckloads per day under normal economic conditions. Exports remain limited to specific authorized agricultural crops. Following the end of the strawberry and flowers season, no exports left Gaza.

We were encouraged by the Israeli Government's decision to facilitate exports out of Gaza made in February 2011. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development have had talks with Israel about the type and level of exports they hope to achieve in 2011 as well as asking them to ease import restrictions. There has been limited progress and it is important that this now translates into real changes on the ground. We are concerned about the fiscal situation, including the availability of local currency.
We continue to work closely with the quartet and EU partners and to call on Israel to ease restrictions on access and enable a return to economic normality. These issues were most recently raised by the UK at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in New York on 18 September, both in the plenary session and in bilateral meetings with the Israeli delegation in the margins of the main event. Our ambassador to Tel Aviv also raises these concerns regularly with Israeli interlocutors.

We are clear that more needs to be done, including on easing restrictions on exports, construction material imports and the movement of people.

**As asked by Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last discussed with the Government of Israel, and with what result, the provision of clean water supplies in Gaza and the alleged diversion of some supplies to adjacent parts of Israel; and whether they will continue to make representations on this matter. [HL11982]

**Baroness Northover:** As I have made clear, the humanitarian situation in Gaza is unacceptable and unsustainable. DfID and FCO ministers, ambassadors and officials regularly make representations on this issue to the Government of Israel, including at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in New York on Sunday 18 September. The meeting welcomed the increase in building material for infrastructure development allowed into Gaza, but called for increased efforts to improve the humanitarian situation and implement long-term solutions to issues over water. We will therefore continue to make representations to the Israeli Government. We are also supporting the Access Co-ordination Unit to work with Israel and other partners to facilitate the transfer of goods and people in and out of Gaza.

**As asked by Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last discussed with the Government of Israel, and with what result, the ban on imports of radiotherapy drugs for cancer patients in Gaza; and whether they will continue to make representations on this matter. [HL11983]

3 Oct 2011 : Column WA166

**Lord Howell of Guildford:** We are aware that from a list of 460 essential drugs, Gaza's health ministry medical store is currently missing 170 items, including drugs used to strengthen the bones of cancer patients and other types of cancer-related drugs.

According to an UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs report that was published in August 2011, as of the end of August, approximately one third of the items in the essential drug list and 27 percent of the medical disposable items were at zero level at the Central Drug Store in the Gaza Strip. These shortages directly affect the delivery of health services at facilities run by the Ministry of Health, which provide 40 per cent of primary health care and 80 per cent of hospital care services.

We continue to work closely with the quartet and EU partners, and to call on Israel to ease restrictions on access including access to humanitarian and medical supplies. This was most recently raised by the UK at the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in New York on 18 September both in the plenary session and in bilateral meetings with the Israeli delegation in the margins of the main event. Our ambassador to Tel Aviv also raises these concerns regularly with Israeli authorities.

**As asked by Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last discussed with the Government of Israel, and with what result, the number of children of school age in Gaza without school places; and whether they will continue to make representations on this matter. [HL11984]

**Lord Howell of Guildford:** We have regularly raised the issue of schooling in Gaza and the need to allow materials in for donor-funded education projects including the building of 100 new UN Relief and Works Agency schools.

We are clear that the situation in Gaza is both a tragedy and unsustainable. Whilst there is no humanitarian crisis in Gaza, there is an enduring need for humanitarian aid. We have also been clear that actions by both Israel and Hamas have contributed to this status quo. Working closely with the quartet and EU partners, we will continue to call on Israel to ease restrictions on access and enable a return to economic normality.

We are clear that more needs to be done, including on easing restrictions on exports, construction material imports and the movement of people.

**As asked by Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last discussed with the Government of Israel, and with what result, the progress on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's building programme, and supply of materials for approved works in Gaza; and whether they will continue to make representations on this matter.[HL11985]

**Baroness Northover:** As I have made clear, the humanitarian situation in Gaza is unacceptable and unsustainable. DfID and FCO ministers, ambassadors

3 Oct 2011 : Column WA167
and officials regularly make representations on this issue to the Government of Israel, including at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in New York on Sunday 18 September.

Changes to the access regime announced in June 2010, and the package of measures agreed with the quartet representative in February 2011 were positive steps. However, we are clear that more needs to be done, particularly to ease restrictions on construction material imports, to ensure this translates into real change on the ground. We will therefore continue to make representations to the Israeli Government. We are also supporting the Access Co-ordination Unit to work with Israel and other partners to facilitate the transfer of goods and people in and out of Gaza.

**Asked by Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government when they last discussed with the Government of Israel, and with what result, restrictions on off-shore fishing in Gaza; and whether they will continue to make representations on this matter.[HL11986]

**Lord Howell of Guildford:** The UK frequently raises with the Israeli authorities the issue of easing restrictions on Gaza. But we have not made specific representations concerning fishing limits off the coast of Gaza. There has been no fundamental change in the crossings regime and economic stagnation and de-development in Gaza remain the norm (although Israel’s decision to move from a list of 120 permitted goods to a list of specific prohibited items was a positive step). We are clear that more needs to be done, including on easing restrictions on exports, construction material imports and the movement of people.

**Gilts**

**Question**

**Asked by Lord Myners**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government, in the light of historically low real and nominal rates of interest, whether they will instruct the Debt Management Office (DMO) to increase the rate of issuance of long dated gilts; and when Ministers last met the Board and Chief Executive of the DMO.[HL11857]

**The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon):** The Debt Management Office’s financing remit for the current financial year was set out in the Debt and Reserves Management Report 2011-12. The planned issuance of long-dated conventional gilts is £37.4 billion (22.3 per cent of total issuance). In addition, planned issuance for index-linked gilts is £38.0 billion (22.7 per cent of total issuance), the greater part of which will be bonds with in excess of 15 years to maturity. A statement on the financing remit will be made alongside the autumn statement on 29 November 2011.

Treasury Ministers maintain a regular dialogue with senior officials from the Debt Management Office.

**3 Oct 2011 : Column WA168**

**Global Competitiveness**

**Question**

**Asked by Lord Ashcroft**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what steps they will take in response to the Global Competitiveness Report for 2011-12 issued by the World Economic Forum, which indicates that the United Kingdom has fallen in ranking from 5th in 1997 to 94th out of 142 countries in 2011.[HL11914]

**The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon):** The Global Competitiveness Report for 2011-12 issued by the World Economic Forum lists the UK as the 10th most competitive country, its highest ranking since 2007. The report lists the UK as 94th least competitive in terms of the extent and effect of taxation.

The Government are taking action to repair the damage done by the previous Government and improve the competitiveness of the UK tax system. At the June Budget 2010, the Government set out their aim to create the most competitive corporate tax system in the G20 and has since set out more detailed proposals in its Corporate Tax Road Map (which is accessible online at: http://www.hm treasury.gov.uk/corporate_taxreform.htm). This includes four annual one per cent reductions in the main rate of corporate tax which, together with the further one per cent reduction announced in Budget 2011, will see the rate reach 23 per cent by 2014. Critical changes to the scope of corporation tax in order to enhance competitiveness will include the introduction of a patent box, to incentivise the creation of intellectual property in the UK and a new controlled foreign company regime, to make the UK a more attractive base for multinational groups.

The Government recognise that tax competitiveness is not just about rates and incidence of tax and have also committed to restoring the UK tax system’s reputation for stability, simplicity and predictability. The Government have made a number of improvements to the way in which they make tax policy, with consultation on policy design and scrutiny of draft legislative proposals as the cornerstones. Further
Government Departments: Surveys

**Question**

*As told by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Wilcox on 14 September (WA 67), whether they have the names of the people with whom Mori conducted interviews; and, if they do, whether they will place in the Library of the House their names and the names of the FTSE 500 boards on which they serve.[HL11955]

**Baroness Garden of Frognal:** The department does not hold this information. The research was carried out by Ipsos MORI on the basis that participants were to remain anonymous.

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3 Oct 2011: Column WA169

Government: Ministerial Meetings

**Questions**

*As told by Lord Ashcroft*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government who were the businessmen who accompanied the Prime Minister on his recent visit to Moscow; and which companies they represented.[HL11837]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** My right honourable friend the Prime Minister led a delegation of 24 business leaders to Moscow on 12 September.

The names of the delegates and the companies and organisations they represented were published on UKTI’s website as part of a press release to coincide with the visit. The delegates, in alphabetical order of company, were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Delegate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aecom</td>
<td>Steve Morriss</td>
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<td>Allen &amp; Overy</td>
<td>David Morley</td>
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<td>BP</td>
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<td>British Airways</td>
<td>Sir Martin Broughton</td>
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<td>CBI</td>
<td>John Cridland</td>
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<td>Celtic Pharma Holdings</td>
<td>John Mayo</td>
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<td>Ernst &amp; Young</td>
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<td>Lee Ranson</td>
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<td>GT Group</td>
<td>Geoff Turnbull</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intercontinental Hotels Group</td>
<td>Angela Bray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investis</td>
<td>Helen James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kingfisher Group</td>
<td>Ian Cheshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>London Stock Exchange</td>
<td>Xavier Rolet</td>
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<td>LOCOG</td>
<td>Lord Coe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pentland Brands Plc</td>
<td>Andy Rubin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plastic Logic</td>
<td>Indro Mukerjee</td>
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<td>Populous</td>
<td>John Barrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rolls Royce</td>
<td>Sir Simon Robertson</td>
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<td>Royal Dutch Shell</td>
<td>Peter Voser</td>
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Russo British Chamber of Commerce
Tensar
Tyrrells Crisps

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<th>Russo British Chamber of Commerce</th>
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<td>Tensar</td>
<td>John Kiely</td>
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<td>Tyrrells Crisps</td>
<td>David Milner</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether Ministers have met representatives of Vitol or Trafigura in connection with oil trading with Libya this year.[HL11856]

Lord Howell of Guildford: Full lists of ministerial meetings with external organisations are published quarterly on government departmental websites.

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions took place between the Prime Minister and Russian leaders during his visit to Moscow about the disorder and reported human rights abuses in Chechnya and the North Caucasus and their implications for global security; and what was the outcome of those discussions.[HL11925]

3 Oct 2011 : Column WA170

Lord Howell of Guildford: My right honourable friend the Prime Minister discussed issues relating to the rule of law and counter-terrorism with both President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin. Various human rights issues were also covered with President Medvedev. The Prime Minister met Russian human rights activists at the Sakharov Centre, with whom he discussed the human rights situation in the North Caucasus, including conflict in the region.

We will continue to engage with Russia on these issues—at ministerial level, through our embassy in Moscow, and through international institutions.

Government: Ministerial Posts

Question

Asked by Lord Norton of Louth

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to bring forward proposals to reduce the number of Ministers; and, if so, when.[HL11774]

Baroness Garden of Frognal: The Government will continue to keep the number of Ministers under review.

Gross Domestic Product

Question

Asked by Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) spent on defence in each year between 2001 and 2011; and, excluding predicted calls on the contingency reserve for operational purposes, what are their indicative forecasts of the percentage of GDP to be allocated to defence spending in each year between 2012 and 2015. [HL11794]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon): We calculate the percentage of GDP that we spend on defence every year using detailed rules drawn up by NATO. These ensure that the figures quoted are comparable between NATO nations, and that there is a common basis for assessing which nations are meeting the NATO 2 per cent of GDP target. Calculation on any other basis would not allow for meaningful or rational comparison.

This table shows defence spend as a percentage of GDP calculated on this basis for the past 10 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UK Defence spend proportion of GDP</th>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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3 Oct 2011: Column WA171

The NATO definition includes several additional categories of spend, such as military pensions and costs of operations, that are not part of the UK core defence budget set in the government-wide spending reviews.

It is therefore impossible to give any meaningful and comparable forecast of GDP to be spent on defence in future years, as it depends on a range of factors beyond the MoD departmental budget, such as changes to pension costs, the costs of any operations we may be involved in the future, and changes to GDP.

**Gulf War Illnesses**

*Question*

*Asked by Lord Morris of Manchester*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what current research they are funding into Gulf War illness; and when they expect that research to be concluded. [HL11578]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever): The Ministry of Defence has funded the Cardiff University rehabilitation study on 1990-91 Gulf veterans and I refer the noble Lord to the answer I gave on 20 June 2011 (Official Report, cols. WA 243-244).

The timing of publication is a matter for Cardiff University, but we expect this to be later this year.

**Gurkhas**

*Question*

*Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what year or years was or were selected for the comparison of Gurkha Pension Scheme pensions with Armed Forces Pension Scheme pensions in the calculation of service credit for Gurkha service before 1997. [HL11845]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever): The year selected for the comparison of benefits through the Gurkha Pension Scheme and the Armed Forces Pension Schemes was financial year 2007-08.

**Health: Obesity**

*Question*

*Asked by Lord Marlesford*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what role they believe that schools can play in helping obese children lose weight.[HL11820]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Hill of Oareford): Through physical education (PE) schools can teach young people to be physically active and to understand the contribution that physical activity can have to their weight management.

Through personal, social health and economic education (PSHE) programmes, schools can teach pupils about personal health and well being. This includes:
learning about health and well being; the need for a balanced diet; and how sensible food choices help lead to a healthier life-style.

Schools can also ensure that the food they provide for pupils during the school day meets the statutory nutritional standards for school food. Many schools go much further than this to support healthy food choices in schools.

Schools also have a role to play in supporting the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The programme aims to take height and weight measurements of every pupil in reception and year 6 in all primary schools in England. Schools take part on a voluntary basis and almost all schools do so, helping to ensure that around 90 per cent of pupils in the target population participate.

**Health: Reciprocal Agreements**

**Question**

Asked by **Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Freud on 11 August (WA 414), whether they will seek data from other European Union member states on the number of their state pensioners who have payments made to an address in the United Kingdom; and whether these data could be used in assessing the level of United Kingdom claims to other European Union countries for healthcare and social security costs. [HL11791]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud): We have no plans to seek such information from other member states as such data would not in themselves form an effective and accurate basis on which to claim healthcare costs. This is because under the provisions of the European Union (EU) Regulation 883/2004:

If someone resident in the UK is in receipt of a UK state pension and also a pension from one or more other member states, the UK is liable for the cost of that pensioner's state healthcare. Where a UK resident is in receipt of a state pension from two or more member states but not from the UK, the member state where that person has the longest record of contributions is liable for their state healthcare costs.

The Government are considering plans to seek information from other member states about citizens for whose healthcare costs those states are responsible. In practical terms those citizens should have been issued with a form S1 by the responsible member states and we are seeking to establish a robust mechanism for registering the forms in the UK, so that we will then be able to ask the relevant member states to reimburse healthcare costs.

**Higher Education: Tuition Fees**

**Question**

Asked by **Baroness Scott of Needham Market**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the funding of tuition fees for, and repayment of loans by, students taking second degrees varies from that which applies to other students.[HL11840]

3 Oct 2011 : Column WA173

**Baroness Garden of Frognal:** The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) does not usually provide a funding contribution towards university tuition fees for students that are studying a second degree, although some exemptions apply to students studying subjects rated as exceptional, which currently covers subjects such as: medicine, social work, nursing, and veterinary science. A comprehensive list of such exemptions can be obtained from HEFCE. HEFCE also makes a funding contribution to tuition fees for students that are studying a foundation degree, or are in receipt of disabled students allowance.

Students that already hold an honours degree do not usually qualify for a tuition fee loan. An exception is made for those students that start to study one of the graduate entry accelerated medical and dental programmes in the 2012-13 academic year. Tuition fee loans are also exceptionally made available to students studying a full time course of initial teacher training (ITT) of not more than two years (or a part time course the duration of which does not exceed four years) who have not already gained qualified teacher status (QTS).

Tuition fee loan repayment arrangements for these students will be the same as those that apply to all other students.

**House of Lords: Allowances**

**Questions**
To ask the Chairman of Committees whether measures are in place to ensure that where any payments of financial support, expenses or travel costs which have been made to any Member of the House of Lords have been ruled as improper, no further expenses are paid to any such member until the full amount owed by that member has been repaid and that any future daily attendance allowances or travel costs which would normally become due are used as a source of repayment of such debt.

[HL11816]

The Chairman of Committees (Lord Brabazon of Tara): Such situations are managed by the House Committee and the Clerk of the Parliaments on a case by case basis. Routine minor adjustments relating to expenditure on the House of Lords travel credit card are deducted from a Member's next claim.

House of Lords: September Sittings

Questions

As asked by Lord Hoyle

To ask the Chairman of Committees what has been the total additional cost to the House of sitting from Monday 5 September to Thursday 15 September. [HL11894]

To ask the Chairman of Committees what additional costs, in terms of remuneration of staff and Members, arise out of the sittings of the House of Lords in September.[HL11895]

3 Oct 2011 : Column WA174

To ask the Chairman of Committees what estimates have been made of the costs of the disruption of project work by contractors following upon the sittings of the House of Lords in September. [HL11896]

To ask the Chairman of Committees what discussions have taken place with contractors engaged in building work on the Parliamentary Estate as to the effect of the sittings of the House in September. [HL11898]

The Chairman of Committees (Lord Brabazon of Tara): The following additional direct costs have been identified, compared with costs which would have arisen if the House had not sat during that period, and ignoring the possibility that the same number of sitting days would have taken place at some other time.

Remuneration of staff

| Catering & Retail Services | £53,000, offset by gross profit from outlets open for House business of £44,000 |
| Hansard                    | £10,000                        |

There may also be an impact on night duty allowance paid to some staff; but this is calculated on an annual basis, so cannot be identified yet nor attributed to particular sitting days.

Other

| Printing & publishing     | £100,000          |
| Police                    | £15,000           |
| Late night transport      | £8,000            |
| Electronic publishing     | £4,000            |
| Paper and toner cartridges| £4,000            |
| Catering & Retail Services| £2,000            |
| Library materials         | £2,000            |

Estates and Works

There was sufficient notice of the September sitting to be able to take this into account when planning the works programme. Early discussions were held between the Parliamentary Estates Directorate (PED) and contractors, which enabled work to be planned around the recess dates, thus minimising the additional costs incurred. However, by breaking up the Summer Recess, September sittings do have an adverse impact on the scheduling of projects and PED is now considering the impact of an accumulating backlog of works.

Financial support for members
The cost of financial support for members for September 2011 will be published in due course.

*Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours*

To ask the Chairman of Committees what representations have been received from Members of the House of Lords on the sittings of the House in September. [HL11897]

**The Chairman of Committees:** Neither I nor the Administration have received any formal representations from Members of the House. However, the Administration and Works Committee, which I chair, is considering this matter and will be discussing the impact of September sittings on construction and maintenance works at its next meeting.

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### Human Rights Trust Fund

**Question**

*Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have contributed to the Human Rights Trust Fund. [HL11848]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** The UK has not contributed to the Human Rights Trust Fund. We are considering carefully whether we might do so during our chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

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### Independent Commission on Banking

**Questions**

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Independent Commission on Banking has now been wound up. [HL11902]

**The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon):** Under its terms of reference, the Independent Commission on Banking (ICB) was asked to produce a final report by the end of September 2011.

As set out in their letters of appointment, individual commissioners' appointments formally came to an end following publication of the commission's final report on 12 September. Some commissioners are likely, however, to undertake a number of ICB-related engagements over the next few months.

A number of the commission's secretariat are continuing to undertake related work for a further period before the office is shut down on 30 September.

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the final report of the Independent Commission on Banking, whether they intend to introduce ring-fencing between United Kingdom insurance companies and related reinsurers within the same ownership group. [HL11903]

**Lord Sassoon:** The Independent Commission on Banking published its final report on 12 September 2011. Its remit was to consider structural and non-structural reforms to the UK banking sector to promote stability and competition.

The Government accept, in principle, the commission's suggestions for: a ring-fence around better capitalised high street banks; bail-in instead of bail-out; and measures to increase competition in retail banking. The Government are considering the commission's report and will issue a response by the end of the year.

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**3 Oct 2011 : Column WA176**

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the final report of the Independent Commission on Banking, whether they will sell their shares in Northern Rock to private equity or other purchasers on a valuation basis that represents a significant discount to tangible book value. [HL11967]

**Lord Sassoon:** In order to achieve the best value for the taxpayer, the Government are not providing a running commentary on the sales
process and cannot comment on specific bids.

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the final report of the Independent Commission on Banking was leaked to the BBC; and, if so, whether they intend to investigate the leak.[HL11969]

**Lord Sassoon:** The Government are not aware of any leak of the final report of the Independent Commission on Banking to the BBC or any other news organisation.

**International Day of Democracy**

**Question**

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask the Chairman of Committees what activities were undertaken in the House of Lords to celebrate the International Day of Democracy 2011. [HL11954]

**The Chairman of Committees (Lord Brabazon of Tara):** The British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) produced a briefing document to mark the day, which was sent to all IPU Members and was also advertised on the parliamentary intranet. On 14 September Viscount Montgomery of Alamein also asked an oral question to Her Majesty's Government on the matter.

**Iran**

**Question**

*Asked by Lord Judd*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote through internal and multilevel channels continued negotiations with the Government of Iran on the future nature of their nuclear programme; and what are the latest developments in such negotiations.[HL11862]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** The UK wants a diplomatic solution to address the serious concerns we have about Iran's nuclear programme. We prioritise this issue in all our bilateral discussions with Iran. My right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary raised it with Iranian Foreign Minister Salehi in the margins of the UN General Assembly on 21 September. We also actively seek resolution of the issue through the E3+3 negotiating group, chaired by EU High Representative Baroness Ashton. E3+3 officials met on 21 September in New York and reaffirmed their commitment to the dual-track strategy of pressure and engagement. They offered to meet Iran at an early opportunity, if Iran is prepared to discuss international concerns about its nuclear programme without the unacceptable preconditions it brought to the last talks in Istanbul in January.

**Israel and Palestine: West Bank**

**Question**

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they propose to take, in the absence of direct negotiations, to help bring to an end the occupation by Israel of the West Bank and its blockade of Gaza.[HL11865]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** The UK retains a clear position—that the best way to resolve this long-standing conflict is through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, with the aim of giving the Palestinian people the state that they need and deserve and the Israeli people long-term security and peace.

Our focus remains on continuing to push hard for a return to negotiations on the basis agreed by my right honourable friend the Prime Minister and President Obama. That is borders based on 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps; security for Israel; and the right for Palestinians to govern themselves in a sovereign and contiguous state. We are working hard with our international partners for a return to negotiations on this basis.

Failure to return to negotiations now puts at risk the long-term prospects for a two-state solution. Neither Israel nor the Palestinians can afford to let the opportunity for peace slip further from their grasp.

Along with our European Union partners, we are working to build consensus on a way forward that recognises the progress the Palestinians have made on their state-building efforts, that meets Israel's legitimate security concerns, and that avoids confrontation in the UN. We continue to stress that whatever action is taken, including in New York, it is important that this increases the prospects for a return to
Libya

Questions

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date they recognised the Libyan Government of Colonel Gaddafi; and against what criteria this decision was taken.[HL11665]

Lord Howell of Guildford: The Government recognised the Government of the Revolutionary Command Council led by Colonel Qadhafi in Libya on 6 September 1969 in response to its request for recognition of 3 September 1969. In making this decision, the Government of the time took note of the Revolutionary Command Council's stated wish for friendly relations with the UK and their declared intention to respect their international obligations. For their part, the Government also wished to continue friendly relations with Libya. This was in accordance with the practice of the time of recognising governments as well as states.

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date they recognised the Rebel Government of Libya; and against what criteria this decision was taken. [HL11666]

Lord Howell of Guildford: On 27 July, the Government announced that they recognised and would deal with the National Transitional Council as the sole legitimate governing authority in Libya. That decision reflected the council increasing legitimacy, competence, success in reaching out to Libyans country-wide, and the level of their popular support.

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will continue to pursue the Government of Libya for compensation for the IRA murders in Northern Ireland carried out with the use of arms and supplies from Libya.[HL11667]

Lord Howell of Guildford: As my right honourable friend the Prime Minister said on 5 September, we are clear that this will be an important bilateral issue between the United Kingdom and the new Libyan authorities.

To ask Her Majesty's Government what role they have played in any renegotiation of the share of Libyan oil provided to the United Kingdom and other countries; and whether they will publish data on the proportion provided to each country at present and under the previous regime.[HL11893]

Lord Howell of Guildford: The National Transitional Council (NTC) has not sought to renegotiate any oil contracts. Indeed, we have called for the new Government of Libya to honour existing contracts and we support the NTC's public statements to this effect. The split of Libyan crude exports, both currently and when the Qadhafi Regime was in power, is a matter for the Libyan Government.

Mahmoud Abu Rideh

Question

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Freud on 16 March (WA 61), what was the duty of confidentiality involved

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in the decision not to release details of the social security benefits paid to the late Mahmoud Abu Rideh, and to whom; and what constitutes lawful authority for release of social security information on deceased terrorists under section 123 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992.[HL11789]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud): My department assures all of its customers that it will protect their information and ensure that it is not disclosed inappropriately. This duty of confidence survives a customer's death if there may be a personal representative who could enforce it.

For the purposes of Section 123 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992, a disclosure is made with lawful authority if:
it is made by a civil servant in the course of official duty; it is made by a contractor who is providing services to the DWP in accordance with instructions given by the DWP; it is required by law or a court order; or it is made with the consent of the customer.

### Middle East Peace Process

#### Question

**Asked by Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what steps they will take within the quartet on the Middle East to produce a framework for Middle Eastern peace, with a timetable for implementation. [HL11867]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** The UK maintains a clear position—a return to credible negotiations is the best way to achieve a comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a Palestinian state. We are discussing all options that best support this objective with our international partners, including in the EU and quartet. Quartet representative Tony Blair and EU High Representative Baroness Ashton have recently been in the region to explore a way forward and will continue discussions in New York in the coming days.

### Ministry of Defence: Police

#### Question

**Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what steps they will take to ensure that the proposed cuts to the Ministry of Defence police budget will not impact on the level of community policing in defence establishments and in large military housing estates. [HL11841]

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever):** Following the comprehensive spending review, consideration has been given to a range of options that will determine the future Ministry of Defence (MoD) requirement for civil policing services and to focus these valuable resources on those areas where civil policing powers can best mitigate our crime and security risks. This includes the community policing service that is provided by the MoD police at some military establishments. These options are currently the subject of formal consultation with the relevant staff associations and trades unions, and as such it would be inappropriate to comment further at this stage.

### Muttahida Qaumi Movement

#### Question

**Asked by Lord Ahmed**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what response they have given to the letter of support by the Leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement, Mr Altaf Hussain, of 23 September 2001. [HL11887]

**Baroness Garden of Frognal:** It is not for this Government to account for the actions of the previous Administration.

### National Savings and Investments

#### Question

**Asked by Lord Myners**

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether they plan to ensure retail investors are able to purchase inflation-protected savings products from National Savings and Investments. [HL11899]

**The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon):** National Savings & Investments removed Savings Certificates, both fixed and index-linked, from sale at close of business on 6 September 2011. Existing Savings Certificate customers are able to continue their investment into a new term and this option will continue to be available.
NATO

Question

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether NATO has offered support, directly or indirectly, to the Pakistan Taliban or others engaged in conflict against the Pakistani armed forces; and whether NATO has at any time escorted the Pakistan Taliban or those associated with them (whether by air or otherwise) into areas of conflict against Pakistani troops. [HL11932]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever): NATO has not engaged in any of these activities and has no mandate to do so.

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Northern Cyprus

Questions

 Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass

To ask Her Majesty’s Government how many London-based meetings have (a) been requested and (b) taken place during each of the past three years between United Kingdom Government Ministers and the London Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and its people.[HL11828]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not keep a record of such meeting requests. Although the UK does not recognise the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, officials have met the London-based representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community on an ad hoc basis to discuss issues surrounding the Cyprus settlement negotiations in order to maintain a balanced approach to the UK’s support for a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus.

Lord Howell of Guildford: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not keep a record of such meeting requests. Although the UK does not recognise the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, ad hoc meetings with representatives from the Turkish Cypriot community have taken place in order to provide a balanced approach to the UK’s support of the Cyprus settlement negotiations. The last meeting with a UK Minister took place in June when the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr Lidington) visited the island and met Dr Eroglu.

Lord Howell of Guildford: There were no promises made by the United Kingdom and European Union to Turkish Cypriots on condition that they voted in favour of the 2004 Annan Plan; and which, if any, of those promises have not been fulfilled. [HL11842]

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Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what diplomatic arrangements they have with Northern Cyprus. [HL11992]

Lord Howell of Guildford: The Government do not recognise the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and consequently do not
Northern Ireland: Human Rights Commission

Question

As asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether the Cabinet Office was satisfied that none of the staff in the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission expressed an interest in voluntary redundancy; and on what date the full terms of an offer were made to relevant staff. [HL11880]

Lord De Mauley: Employers are required to obtain Cabinet Office approval before launching exit schemes under the terms of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme. The responsibility for the implementation and delivery of any such scheme rests entirely with the employer. The Cabinet Office has no role in determining whether or not staff at any employer expressed interest in a voluntary redundancy scheme. Nor does the Cabinet Office have a role in monitoring the date at which any offer is made.

Pakistan

Question

As asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty’s Government whether they are monitoring any dissident Pakistani political leaders based in London; whether they are aware of any such dissidents inciting and encouraging violence in Karachi or threatening journalists; and what action they will take to prevent such actions. [HL11888]

Baroness Rawlings: It is long-standing government policy to neither confirm nor deny the specific activities conducted by or on behalf of Her Majesty’s Government to protect the UK’s national security.

More broadly the Government are concerned about the situation in Karachi—it is in no-one’s interest that the violence continues. We strongly sympathise with the loss of life and the Government will continue to engage with the authorities in Pakistan on these issues.

Palestine

Question

As asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what discussions they have had with the European Union and other partners in relation to the continuation of the provision of aid to Palestine, alongside trade and investment opportunities as incentives to unity among the various Palestinian groups. [HL11866]

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The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): Resolution of the Middle East peace process is a high priority for the UK Government. The EU and EU member states as a collective are the biggest financial supporters of the Palestinian Authority. In 2010 the EU gave a total of £377.9 million to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) and to Palestinian refugees in the region.

The UK works closely with the EU and a range of other partners, such as the United Nations and the Office of the quartet representative, in the OPTs. We hold regular discussions with all partners through a variety of aid co-ordination fora. We also continue to encourage collective consideration of trade and investment opportunities.

The EU development programme for the OPTs aims to support the Middle East peace process by helping build Palestinian institutions, improving security and promoting economic growth, so that any future state will be stable, prosperous, well run, and an effective partner for peace with Israel. We urge other partners to continue their support.

Passports

Question
To ask Her Majesty's Government how many United Kingdom citizens hold a valid British passport. [HL11929]

**The Minister of State, Home Office (Lord Henley):** The number of British Citizens currently holding a valid passport issued in the United Kingdom is estimated at 48.5 million. An exact figure cannot be given because lost and stolen passports may not be replaced immediately.

**Pensions**

**Question**

**Asked by Lord Myners**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to take any action to respond to the number of pension saving plans being cancelled by those in the private sector on low and moderate earnings. [HL11900]

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud):** The Government want to help individuals by having a stable economy with sustained and balanced growth, which is why we are taking action to tackle the deficit, support business in creating jobs with most competitive tax system in the G20, to make the UK the best place in Europe to start finance and grow a business, to encourage investment and exports as a route to a more balanced economy and to create a more educated workforce that is the most flexible in Europe. The Government’s Growth Review will continue for the rest of this Parliament, providing ongoing focus on what the Government can do to support growth.

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We believe that pension provision is important, and that is why we are introducing workplace pension reform. Automatic enrolment will be introduced from 2012 requiring all employers to enrol eligible workers into workplace pension saving and to make an employer contribution.

The aim of automatic enrolment is to encourage people to start saving, continue saving and save for longer to meet their retirement needs. As a result of automatic enrolment we expect there to be around 5 to 8 million people newly saving or saving more in all forms of workplace pension scheme.

Automatic enrolment is widely recognised as the best way to overcome people's savings inertia-rather than having to make an active decision to save in a workplace pension, an employee has to make an active decision not to save. Even where an individual opts out, the employer is required to re-enrol them every three years, encouraging individuals to rethink about the need to save for their retirement.

A programme of communications and information is being designed to help people understand the need to save to meet their aspirations for retirement, build awareness of the changes and support a behavioural shift amongst working age people so that saving in a pension becomes the norm.

In addition, the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) has been established to provide access to suitable, low cost pension provision for all employers, and will be particularly suited to the needs of those workers on low to moderate incomes.

And for future pensioners the Government are looking at reforming the state pension system which would be simple, easy to understand, efficient to deliver, affordable-providing a firm foundation for workplace saving.

**Presumed Deaths**

**Questions**

**Asked by Lord Boswell of Aynho**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications were made under Section 8 of the Social Security Act 1998, in relation to a person's missing spouse who is presumed to have died, in each of the past three years; and of those how many were successful. [HL11707]

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud):** Information is not collected on the number of applications made under section 8 of the Social Security Act 1998 in relation to a person's missing spouse who is presumed to have died.

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications were made under Section 3 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 to receive bereavement benefit in respect of a person whose death is difficult to establish, in each of the past three years;
and, of those, how many were successful. [HL11708]

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The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud): Information is not collected on the number of applications made under Section 3 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 in relation to a person whose death is difficult to establish.

Prisoners: Sentences

Question

As asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people are currently held in prisons in England and Wales whose sentences are for rest of life.[HL11913]

Lord De Mauley: As of 20 September 2011, there are 42 prisoners held in prisons in England and Wales and a further five detained in hospital under the provisions of the Mental Health Act 1983 who have been sentenced to life imprisonment and given a whole life tariff by the Courts.

Public Expenditure

Question

As asked by Lord Barnett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much public expenditure above agreed departmental budgets has been agreed by HM Treasury and taken from the Treasury reserve in the current financial year. [HL11934]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon): £3,950 million was added to total departmental expenditure limits for 2011-12 from the Treasury reserve in the 2011 main estimate.

Public Infrastructure: Investment

Question

As asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government what public infrastructure investment yielded an economic return in excess of the Government’s current long-term cost of capital.[HL11813]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon): The Government do not hold this information. Decisions on public investment projects are based on the methodology for economic appraisal set out in the Treasury’s Green Book. This involves assessing the net present value to the UK of a proposal’s costs and benefits.

The 2010 spending review set out the Government’s capital spending plans.

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Republic of Ireland: Financial Support

Question

As asked by Lord Laird
To ask Her Majesty's Government what conditions were attached to the funding that they provided to the Republic of Ireland as support in the recent financial crisis. [HL11826]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon): The terms of the UK bilateral loan to Ireland are as set out in the loan agreement that was deposited in the Libraries of both Houses by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 10 January 2011.

The agreed conditionality includes fiscal consolidation to reduce the general government deficit to below 3 per cent of GDP before 2015, reforms to the banking sector and other structural reforms. The bilateral loan agreement also includes a condition for the Irish to consult with the Treasury before finalising its bank restructuring plan. This consultation has taken place.

Rome: British Embassies

Question

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the Vatican concerning the creation of one embassy in Rome. [HL11994]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): The UK Government have made no representations to the Vatican concerning the creation of one embassy in Rome. The UK maintains separate embassies to the Republic of Italy and to the Holy See, as it is the diplomatic practice of the Holy See not to accept cross-accreditation of ambassadors to these two appointments.

Schools: A-Levels

Questions

Asked by Lord Moonie


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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade A*</th>
<th>Grade A</th>
<th>Unclassified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Grade A* was introduced in 2010

2. Figures from 2000 onwards are for students aged 16-18 at the beginning of the academic year in schools and FE sector colleges in England.

3. Figures for 1966 to 1980 are for all students who took GCE A level examinations in that year and are
based on a sample of pupils from the School Leavers Survey.

4. Includes ungraded, no award (absent/declined) and pending.

5. Coverage: England and Wales

6. Coverage: England


11. Source: GCE/Applied GCE A/AS and Equivalent Examination Results in England. 2009-10 (Revised), DfE. Table 12.

**Schools: Music**

**Question**

*As asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the budgetary provision for this year and the next two years for the Music and Dance Scheme enabling gifted children to attend specialist music boarding schools; and what impact they expect the funding to have on the availability of scholarships.[HL11864]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Hill of Oareford): The Music and Dance Scheme currently provides training for gifted children at eight specialist music and dance schools and through a network of 15 centres for advanced training. The Music and Dance Scheme paid bursaries to over 2,000 students in 2010-11. The total budget for the MDS in 2011-12 is £29.5 million. The Government are committed to the long-term future of the scheme and will announce Music and Dance scheme funding for future years in due course.

**Schools: Nurses**

**Question**

*As asked by Baroness Gould of Potternewton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many school nurses are employed in (a) primary schools, and (b) secondary schools. [HL11868]

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The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Hill of Oareford): School nurses are generally employed by primary care trusts, although some school nurses will be directly employed by state or independent schools.
The latest monthly workforce statistics published by the NHS Information Centre in August show that in May 2011 there were 1,135 FTE school nurses working for the NHS in England and 1,478 head count school nurses.

**Second World War: Pardons**

**Question**

**Asked by Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will make representations to the Government of the Republic of Ireland concerning the pardoning of former members of the Irish army who were court-martialed by that army because of their role in fighting on the Allied side in World War II.[HL11990]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): No representations have been made to the Government of the Republic of Ireland concerning the pardoning of former Irish soldiers who left the Irish Defence Forces to fight on the allied side in World War II. This is a matter for the Irish Government and one which the Irish Minister for Defence recently stated in the Dail that he was "giving active consideration to ...". The British Government are grateful for the contribution made by Irish soldiers during the Second World War. During the State Visit in May, Her Majesty the Queen and President McAleese laid wreaths together at the Irish War Memorial Gardens in memory of the Irish soldiers who died in the World Wars.

**Somalia and Kenya**

**Question**

**Asked by Lord Hunt of Chesterton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they, or any international aid agencies, received a warning about the likelihood of drought and famine in Somalia and Kenya in 2010; and, if so, what steps were taken to prepare in advance for any humanitarian disaster.[HL12005]

Baroness Rawlings: From late 2010 the UK-supported United Nations Food Security Nutrition Analysis Unit forecast a likely deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Somalia due to poor rains, high food prices, insecurity and reducing access for humanitarian agencies. Following poor rains again in early 2011 and a failed harvest in much of South Somalia, the severity of the forecasts intensified to include localised famine conditions. The famine early warning system also warned of the impact of the drought in Kenya.

The UK Government allocated £35 million between October 2010 and February 2011 to support humanitarian efforts reach 1.2 million people in Somalia and 300,000 people in Kenya to mitigate some of the worst effects of the drought. This included an additional £19 million, in light of the warnings we were receiving.

**South Sudan**

**Questions**

**Asked by The Earl of Sandwich**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to support the training and strengthening of civil society in South Sudan as outlined in the South Sudan Development Plan 2011-13; and through which organisations.[HL11962]

Baroness Rawlings: DfID is currently considering provision of support through NGOs that will focus on civil society capacity development to strengthen their ability to advocate for better education and health service provision (both at national and state levels); to act as an advocate for marginalised groups (particularly women); and to act as a monitor of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan's policy of decentralisation. As the programme is currently under preparation it is too early to say which NGOs or civil society fora may implement this project.

The ongoing South Sudan Peace Building Programme, which is funded by DfID and managed by the NGO PACT (Private Agencies Co-operating Together) South Sudan, includes a component for increasing the capacity of communities, including local administration and civil society, to respond to threats to community stability in a timely and effective manner. Direct training has been provided to local non-governmental peace building organisations in grant management, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation.

**Asked by The Earl of Sandwich**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide direct budget support to the government health sector in South Sudan; and how they will ensure that current standards set up largely by non-governmental health organisations will be maintained.[HL11964]
Baroness Rawlings: The UK Government are not planning to provide direct budget support to the health sector in South Sudan. We support health service delivery in South Sudan mostly through the Basic Services Fund (BSF), a pooled multidonor fund for which DfID is the trustee.

The BSF ends shortly and DfID is currently working with the South Sudanese Government and other donors to both design a one-year extension to this project and the subsequent funding mechanism for future donor support to the health sector. This mechanism would continue to support the service delivery, much of which is currently implemented by non-governmental organisations, whilst also building the capacity of the Republic of South Sudan to manage health services.

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As asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will support the expansion of the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs in South Sudan; and what improvements have been made to the operation of the Common Humanitarian Fund. [HL11965]

Baroness Rawlings: Following secession and the establishment of a new country office in Juba, DfID South Sudan is in the process of reviewing and developing its humanitarian portfolio. We are considering supporting the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in South Sudan, but it is too early to confirm such support. The development of a South Sudan common humanitarian fund is at an infant stage. DfID is maintaining a close watch on the process as it goes forward and will offer guidance and support to UNOCHA if this is deemed necessary.

State Recognition
Question
As asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria are applied in their recognition of a country concerning the land area claimed by that country.[HL11912]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): The normal criteria applied to the recognition of a state were described in the Written Answer by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr Sainsbury (Official Report, House of Commons, 16 November 1989, col. 494). These include the criterion that a state should have, and seem likely to continue to have, a clearly defined territory with a population.

Student Loans Company
Questions
As asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the annual cost to public funds of the Student Loans Company.[HL11833]

Baroness Garden of Frognal: The total amount of grant in aid funding provided to the Student Loans Company (SLC) from public funds, namely from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, can be found in the SLC’s annual reports and accounts. In the past three financial years this was as follows:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Grant in aid funding provided to SLC from the BIS and the devolved Administrations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>£85,168k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>£93,076k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>£90,207k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As asked by Lord Empey
To ask Her Majesty's Government what financial contributions were made to the Student Loans Company by the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Executive in the last three financial years. [HL11834]

Baroness Garden of Frognal: Each of the devolved Administrations is separately responsible for agreeing a budget with the Student Loans Company (SLC) in light of their department’s overall public expenditure priorities and policies.

The following table confirms the financial contributions made to the Student Loans Company (SLC) by the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Executive in the past three financial years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Government Body</th>
<th>Funding Contribution provided to SLC*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>Scottish Government</td>
<td>£4,575k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Welsh Assembly Government</td>
<td>£5,536k</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Ireland Executive</td>
<td>£3,535k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>Scottish Government</td>
<td>£4,119k</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Welsh Assembly Government</td>
<td>£5,957k</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Northern Ireland Executive</td>
<td>£3,868k</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>Scottish Government</td>
<td>£3,600k</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Welsh Assembly Government</td>
<td>£6,158k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northern Ireland Executive</td>
<td>£3,254k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Grant in aid funding for financial years 2008-09 and 2009-10 paid from the devolved Administrations directly to SLC (SLC annual reports and accounts 2008-09 and 2009-10). For 2010-11, BIS funded SLC directly as lead sponsor department in order to comply with Treasury Consolidated Budgeting Guidance, and the figures in the table above represent funding from the devolved Administrations to reimburse BIS for SLC expenditure incurred on their behalf.

Baroness Garden of Frognal: There are no financial implications for the Student Loans Company in terms of funding for the student fees themselves. Ownership of the budgets for student fees in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland remains with the Scottish Government, Welsh Assembly Government and Northern Ireland Executive respectively, and any financial implications arising from their decisions on student fees will be a matter for each Administration to confirm.

There may be financial implications for the Student Loans Company’s administration costs, in terms of the feasibility and implementation of policy changes related to decisions on student fees. However, higher education (HE) and HE student funding is a devolved matter and each of the devolved Administrations is separately responsible for agreeing an appropriate budget with the Student Loans Company (SLC) in the light of their department’s overall public expenditure priorities and policies.

Sudan

Questions

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile in Sudan. [HL11941]

Baroness Northover: We continue to urge both the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (North) to allow full and unfettered access for humanitarian relief to Southern Kordofan State and Blue Nile State. Minister for Africa, Henry Bellingham made this clear in his statement of 24 August, where he called for immediate humanitarian access to Southern Kordofan. During his visit to Sudan 18-20 July he also reminded the Government of Sudan of their obligation to protect civilians and to allow humanitarian access to those in need.

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what action they are taking to help facilitate credible mediation efforts between the National Congress Party and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement northern sector. [HL11943]
The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): As the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, my honourable friend the Member for North West Norfolk (Mr Bellingham) set out in his statements of 2 September and 24 August, and during his visit to Sudan in July, we continue to make clear to the Government of Sudan and to the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (North) that long-term peace in Sudan can be found only through negotiation and dialogue. We fully support the efforts of Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in his work to bring the two parties together and to establish a process of negotiation.

Haile Menkerios, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and the African Union High Level Implementation Panel can also play a positive role in encouraging negotiation between the parties: we stand ready to support them.

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Taxation: Income Tax

Questions

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what were, for the most recent years for which figures are available, the number of United Kingdom taxpayers whose personal taxable incomes exceeded (a) £30,000, (b) £50,000, (c) £75,000, (d) £100,000, (e) £150,000, (f) £250,000, (g) £500,000, (h) £750,000, (i) £1 million, (j) £2 million, (k) £3 million, (l) £4 million, (m) £5 million, and (n) £10 million.[HL11758]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Sassoon): Estimated numbers of income tax payers with total income exceeding these thresholds in 2011-12 are shown in the table below.

The estimates provided are based on the 2007-08 Survey of Personal Incomes and projected to 2011-12, using economic assumptions consistent with the Office of Budget Responsibility’s March 2011 economic and fiscal outlook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total income exceeding:</th>
<th>Taxpayers (Thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£30,000</td>
<td>8,950</td>
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<tr>
<td>£50,000</td>
<td>3,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>£75,000</td>
<td>1,270</td>
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<tr>
<td>£100,000</td>
<td>712</td>
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<td>£150,000</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£250,000</td>
<td>133</td>
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<tr>
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<td>£750,000</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>£1 million</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>£2 million</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>£4 million</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5 million</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10 million</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asked by Lord Ashcroft

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what are the estimated tax receipts by year of a top rate of income tax of (a) 40p, (b) 45p, and (c) 50p, for the next five years.[HL11796]

Lord Sassoon: At Budget 2011, the following estimates were made:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total income receipts</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40 per cent</td>
<td>164.5</td>
<td>177.0</td>
<td>189.2</td>
<td>201.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 per cent</td>
<td>165.2</td>
<td>178.8</td>
<td>190.9</td>
<td>203.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/id201112/ldhansrd/text/111003w0003.htm#1110039001048
1. Gross of tax credits. Income tax includes Pay As You Earn (PAYE) and self-assessment receipts, and also includes tax on savings income and other minor income tax components.

2. Table shows additional rate of tax on total income excluding dividends income; additional rates of tax on dividends income are 42.5, 37.5 and 32.5 per cent respectively.

3. See Budget 2011 Table C.3.

4. Potential second order effects of a change in the additional rate on the wider economy and tax revenues are not included in these figures.

At Budget 2011, the Chancellor stated that Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs will assess the revenue raised by the 50p rate, once self-assessment data for 2010-11 are available.

The table above shows revenues with different top rates starting in 2012-13. Because of the timing of self-assessment returns, revenues from income tax rate changes are not fully realised in the first year.

The figures provided cannot be used to infer anticipated yield from the additional (50 per cent) rate introduced in 2010-11.

Expected revenues from the additional rate were set out in the March 2010 Budget document (table A11, page 140) available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407010852/http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/budget2010_complete.pdf

**Treatment of Detainees**

**Question**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it was their intention in setting up the detainee inquiry that it would be conducted in accordance with the United Kingdom's international obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights. [HL11784]

**The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord McNally):** The Government have made clear that they stand firmly against torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. Torture is not condoned and other Governments are not asked to carry it out on the UK's behalf. The detainee inquiry has been established to consider allegations of UK involvement in the mistreatment or rendition of detainees held overseas by other countries. The Government are confident that the inquiry will conduct a thorough and independent examination into these issues, as it has been asked to do by the Prime Minister. The inquiry will not establish legal liability, nor will it order financial...
settlement. It was not set up to comply with, or respond to, any perceived international legal obligations.

Tunisia

Question

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they, or international institutions of which they are a member, are holding frozen Tunisian funds; if so, whether they are taking action to release them in order to aid the Tunisian economy.[HL11926]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): A n EU-wide asset freeze was imposed against 48 Tunisian individuals on 4 February. The Treasury subsequently introduced criminal penalties for breaches of the asset freeze and notified the financial sector of the measures. The Treasury also added the list of Tunisia targets to its consolidated list of financial sanctions which is checked by the sector against client and customer databases.

A small amount of assets have been frozen within the UK. We cannot disclose further details at this stage but are working with the Tunisian Government to ensure they understand the legal processes involved in releasing and repatriating these assets. Assets have been frozen in other jurisdictions across Europe.

Uganda

Question

Asked by Lord Ashcroft

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Verma on 19 July (WA 290), when the decision on United Kingdom budget support to Uganda for financial year 2011-12 will be taken.[HL11765]

Baroness Northover: We have last week confirmed to the Government of Uganda that the UK will provide a maximum of £77.5 million budget support to Uganda over the period 2011-2014/15. Our budget support will decline over the four-year period and will represent 14 per cent of our aid to Uganda by 2014/15 down from a peak of over 50 per cent under the last Government. It will comprise both general support to the budget worth a maximum of £50 million and sector support to health worth up to £27.5 million. Through UK budget support, we will strengthen budgetary processes and public investments, improve value for money in public service delivery; increase tax collection; and ensure better transparency and accountability for the management of oil revenues. These steps will ultimately pave the way for Uganda’s independence from development assistance. In addition, our health sector support will increase the number of attended births by over 100,000, immunise almost 125,000 children and ensure over 700,000 children to get rapid access to malaria treatment. We will link a proportion of both general and health sector payments to performance in these areas.

We see the next four years as a critical window of opportunity in which the UK can continue to play an important part in helping the Government of Uganda strengthen public institutions and financial management systems so that Uganda’s oil revenues can be managed effectively, efficiently and equitably.

During his recent visit to Uganda, the Secretary of State for International Development received assurances from the President, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance that the Government of Uganda share the UK’s interest in optimising the benefits of oil for all Ugandans.

To safeguard British taxpayers’ money, general budget support to Uganda will be paid in quarterly instalments.

UK Trade

Question

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of United Kingdom trade is with (a) countries in the eurozone, and (b) other countries in the European Union.[HL11940]

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint): Forty-four per cent of UK trade in goods and services is with countries in the eurozone (EMU members), and a further 6 per cent is with the rest of the EU (2009).

This is taken from the UK Balance of Payments (Pink Book) published by the Office for National Statistics. Data for 2010 will be published on 1 November 2011. More recent data (Quarter 2 2011), for trade in goods only, show that 45 per cent of trade in goods is with eurozone (EMU members), and a further 7 per cent with the rest of the EU.
Zimbabwe

Questions

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what pressure they are putting on the Government of Zimbabwe to end human rights abuses in the diamond sector and to hold perpetrators to account.[HL11944]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford): We are deeply concerned by the continuation of human rights violations in Zimbabwe, including in the Marange region, which

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includes the use of intimidation, violence and arbitrary arrests, as well as repressive legislation and limited media freedom.

We have made our views known to the Government of Zimbabwe and urge all parties, including the security forces and the prosecuting authorities, to act in an impartial manner and respect the rule of law. We continue to call, both bilaterally and within the EU member states, for an end to all such abuses and the restoration of internationally accepted human rights standards in Zimbabwe.

Following the allegations made in the BBC "Panorama" programme, we have urged the Kimberley Process, through the EU, to investigate the allegations. The Kimberley Process chair has written to the BBC asking it to pass its evidence for consideration, and to the Government of Zimbabwe requesting clarification of the allegations.

We also call on the Zimbabwean authorities to transparently investigate this footage. Until all Marange mines meet Kimberley Process standards, the UK will continue to argue for a robust international response to Zimbabwe's failure to comply.

There are limitations to the Kimberley Process's ability to deliver on issues such as human rights and there is a need to reform the Kimberley Process to make it a more effective mechanism. We are working with European Union partners to explore ways to strengthen and enhance the Kimberley Process to ensure it remains effective, accountable and relevant. In particular, we support reform of the Kimberley Process that would enable it to take human rights abuses by states more explicitly into consideration.

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, as a member of the European Union backing sanctions against Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC), they are issuing warnings to importers not to buy diamonds from Canadile Miners or Mbada Diamonds, which are 50 per cent owned by ZMDC.[HL11945]

Lord Howell of Guildford: It is for all businesses to assess whether their proposed business activities are compliant with existing restrictive measures and seek appropriate independent legal advice. The restrictive measures imposed on Zimbabwe prohibit the making available of funds or economic resources to directly or indirectly listed entities. Marange Resources (formerly Canadile Miners) and Mbada Diamonds are not themselves designated entities. However, if making resources available to them conferred a significant financial benefit on a designated entity such as ZMDC, as would often be the case with joint ventures, this would be a breach of the measures.

There are also restrictions under the Kimberley Process (KP) on diamonds exports from the Marange region in which the mining operations of Marange Resources (formerly Canadile Mines) and Mbada Diamonds are located. Given the continuing absence of a KP agreement allowing Zimbabwe to export Marange diamonds, the EU Chair of the Working Group on Monitoring (WGM) has issued a statement to all KP participants which makes clear that until consensus is reached, KP participants should not trade in Marange diamonds. We have informed the UK diamond industry of this statement by the WGM chair.

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what pressure they are putting on the Government of Zimbabwe to end human rights abuses in

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resources available to them conferred a significant financial benefit on a designated entity such as ZMDC, as would often be the case with joint ventures, this would be a breach of the measures.

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Lord Howell of Guildford: The Kimberley Process was originally designed to combat the trade in conflict diamonds, defined as rough diamonds being sold by rebel groups to fund conflict. In this respect, the Kimberley Process has had considerable success; conflict diamonds now represent less than 1 per cent of the global trade in rough diamonds, compared to 15 per cent in the 1990s. However, given the narrow definition of conflict diamonds, which does not include the actions of states, and the fact that the Kimberley Process operates by consensus, there are limitations to the Kimberley Process's ability to deliver on issues such as human rights and transparency.

We accept therefore that there is a need to reform the Kimberley Process to make it a more effective mechanism. We are working with European Union partners to explore ways to strengthen and enhance the Kimberley Process to ensure it remains effective, accountable and relevant. In particular, we support reform of the Kimberley Process that would enable it to take human rights abuses by states more explicitly into consideration.

In addition to Kimberley Process reform, we are also exploring alternative and complementary schemes to work alongside and strengthen
the Kimberley Process, including industry-led regulatory initiatives to provide a higher level of assurance across the diamond supply chain, taking into account issues such as human rights.