

United Nations Association

Westminster Branch

Campaigning for a strong, credible and effective UN



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Westminster UN Association acts to prevent leading UK Human Rights body losing its coveted Category A status

UNA Westminster, the largest branch of the United Nations Association in the UK, is to contact the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights over its fears that the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) might lose its coveted Category A status as a National Human Rights Institution at the very time that the UK hopes to secure re-election to the UN Human Rights Council.

At its meeting *Is Equality Lite the new Human Rights standard?* held in the House of Lords on 13 November, experts shared deep concern over proposed government legislation on equality and human rights. Leading jurist Professor Sir Bob Hepple QC and Amanda Ariss of the Equality and Diversity Forum pointed to flaws in proposed changes to the Equality Act and threats to the UK Human Rights Act and the damaging impact on human rights bodies, especially the EHRC, due to large scale budget cuts. Their concerns were strongly endorsed by Sanchita Hosali, British Institute of Human Rights and Christopher Stanley, British Irish Rights Watch and by Lord Judd who chaired the meeting.

Lord Dholakia, Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords, reported on negotiations within the Government coalition. John Wadham, Legal Counsel at the Equality and Human Rights Commission, contributed information to the meeting.

“Widespread concern shown by leading equality and human rights stakeholders at the direction of Government policy demands action now to defend our country’s proud human rights record and ensure the Equality & Human Rights Commission retains its Category A status.” said David Wardrop, Chairman of Westminster UNA.

For a report of the meeting and Professor Hepple’s memorandum on Clause 51 (5 Nov) and a transcript of the relevant passages relating to equality and human rights in the House of Lords Enterprise and Regulatory Reform 2nd Reading, go to homepage: *What we do/ Event Reports/2012*

If you would like to offer practical support to the UNA campaign, please contact:
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