

**Geoffrey Duncan**  
**Church and Society Consultant**  
**World Church Consultant**  
**Immigration Co-ordinator – URC**

To Ministers by email - otherwise sent by post

January 2010

Dear Friends

Thank you to Churches and individuals who have sent contributions for the London Churches Refugee Hardship Fund for Destitute Asylum Seekers. Your support is very much appreciated and so necessary in these difficult days for persecuted people.

### **Children in Detention**

- This is a very serious issue as Children are held in detention in the centres, particularly Yarlswood near Bedford, and Tinsley Hall, Gatwick;
- ‘Detention should cease without delay’ as decreed by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health;
- I am involved in the growing campaign, known as Outcry, for the cessation of Children in Detention. It is organised by The Children’s Society, Bail for Immigration Detainees. The Churches Refugee Network (National) and the London Churches Refugee Network support the campaign;
- I am to meet with Baroness Williams of Crosby (Shirley Williams ) to discuss the establishment of a cross party group of peers and MPs to call on government to cease this practice.

### **Immigration**

- Visas refusals – these are increasing. I am able to research refusals;
- Stress and hurt is caused to families in the synod for no good reason;
- Findings are to be presented, for this serious concern, to the UKBA ;
- Entry Clearance Officers are vicious in refusal strategies and overstep their brief;
- This is known by the UKBA but there is reluctance to accept responsibility;
- I need to know about an application in advance to advise on the type of letter(s) to be issued by the people bringing in a relation or visitor;
- I am working on a universal letter with the UKBA and hope this will be agreed early in 2010.

**Immigration Consultation** - please see attachment and consider attendance.

**London Churches Refugee Network** –please see attachment for details of the January meeting.

**The Elderly and Poverty** – please see the attachment and consider people of senior age - people who are finding their new potential ... however, not all people of senior years are wealthy ... please take the opportunity to attend the consultation on Thursday 18 March when the event will be led by Ann Morisy at Churches Together in England from 11.00 to 4pm.

Justice and Peace down 2010

Geoff Duncan