

# Mishcon de Reya Solicitors

Our Ref: AJ/BL

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Mr. Sam Allen  
President  
NATFHE Head Office  
27 Britannia Street  
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23 May 2005

**BY FAX 020 7278 3177 / 020 7713 6052**

Dear Mr Allen

## **Ronnie Fraser**

We act for Mr Ronnie Fraser, a NATFHE member since 2001, a London Region Representative for Barnet College since 2002, and a London Region delegate to this year's Conference, to be held on 28-30 May.

### *Background*

On Saturday, 14 May 2005 London Region met to discuss motions for debate at Conference, and to decide whether to send any emergency motions. Mr. Fraser understands that an emergency motion was approved calling upon NATFHE members to boycott one or more Israeli academic institutions. He does not have more precise details.

Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath. Mr Fraser is an Orthodox Jew, and was therefore unable to attend the meeting.

Last Monday, our client telephoned your office to ask for a copy of the emergency motion. He was told that it had not arrived. We understand that you now have a copy, though you have not yet disclosed it to Mr. Fraser.

### *Mr Fraser's first request*

We are now writing on our client's behalf to ask for a copy of this emergency motion and any other motions you may have received relating to the boycott of Israeli academic institutions. Please send these to us by return.

### *Mr Fraser's second request*

The conference is scheduled for three days, Saturday to Monday. Our client will not be able to attend on the first day. In the event that the Steering Committee allows the

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emergency motion to be debated, Mr Fraser would wish to contribute. He requests that the debate is held on either Sunday or Monday, rather than on Saturday, which would have the effect of excluding him and such other Orthodox Jewish delegates as there may be at the conference. Please confirm this will be done.

### *Reasons for Mr Fraser's requests*

As you may be aware, in 2002 our client questioned the NATFHE rule requiring that meetings be held on Saturdays. In response, NATFHE agreed to change its rules to allow meetings to be held on other days.

Notwithstanding this, however, they continue to be held on Saturdays, and no arrangements have been put in place to allow Orthodox Jews to participate by some other means – say, by advance notification of the business to be discussed, voting by proxy, and so on.

The decision by London Region to hold its most recent meeting on a Saturday is especially deplorable. It was not required to do so by the rules, and indeed it persisted in the decision to hold the meeting on this day, over our clients strongly expressed written objections, notwithstanding that an emergency motion certain to be regarded with dismay by most Jewish members was to be considered on that occasion.

The effect was to disenfranchise Mr. Fraser. He is now exposed to a further act of disenfranchisement if the requests that he makes in this letter are not met.

### *The Boycott Resolutions*

In any event, our client reserves the right to argue that any boycott motion passed will be ultra vires NATFHE and discriminatory against Jewish members of NATFHE.

Yours faithfully



**Mishcon de Reya**

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