



DR CHARLES TANNOCK, YOUR CONSERVATIVE LONDON REGION MEP

Reporting Back

'No' to a third Heathrow runway

I continue to oppose the building of a third runway at Heathrow Airport, arguing instead for the options of 'Boris Island' or 'Heathwick'. London boroughs such as Putney, Wandsworth, Richmond and Hillingdon would be strongly affected by the building of a third runway in terms of air and noise pollution.

Possibly named after Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, a four runway airport, built on a platform straddling the land and sea off the Isle of Grain on the Hoo Peninsula, could instead be built. It would be capable of handling 150 million passengers per year and would be connected to London by high speed rail.

Alternatively and possibly cheaper, a second runway at Gatwick and a link with Heathrow via a high-speed rail line would create a virtual hub known as 'Heathwick'. In the European Parliament I have spoken in favour of regional airports and air services in the EU and welcome the suggestion that those regional airports running under capacity could be used to relieve the congestion in main hub airports.

In 2005, EU air quality standards for particulate matter came into full effect, meaning that legal claims can now be made. An initial proposal in the Localism Bill requiring local authorities to pay EU fines on air quality, which could have cost local councils around £1bn, was dropped. Now every fine will be scrutinised and voted on in Parliament in order to decide who should pay. Environmental policy is an area where EU legislation can bring value added. Flights are predicted to account for as much as 25% of UK carbon emissions over the coming decades. Worsening air pollution is believed to be the cause of many respiratory diseases and is likely to impact adversely on Londoners' health and life expectancy.

2012: a remarkable year for London

2012 has been a remarkable year for Londoners. We celebrated the Queen's 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee and witnessed a remarkable victory for Boris Johnson as Mayor of London. Now we can also be proud that we hosted a very successful summer Olympics and Paralympics, with a fantastic showcasing of the best of Britain at the opening and

closing ceremonies. We had a brilliant result for Olympic team GB with 65 medals and 3rd place, the best result since 1908. We also achieved a great haul in the Paralympics. A special tribute must also go to the army and volunteers who



Attending the Paralympic Games at the Excel Centre, where I saw Team GB compete in the table tennis among other sports

made the event possible, and the increasing private sector participation leveraged to meet the huge costs involved. London will now benefit from a lasting legacy. I was privileged to be given a conducted tour of the site before the Games.

Promoting animal rights issues

Gandhi is reported to have said "the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way in which its animals are treated", a sentiment I support. I voted in favour of the Paulsen Report as a supporter of animal welfare across the EU. It is vital the EU should have a cohesive and science-based strategy in defending and advancing animal welfare. I agree with the report's conclusion that lack of compliance and unharmonised standards across Member States distorts farming competition and also puts animal welfare at risk. I also support the maximum journey time of eight hours and 500km for the transport of live animals before slaughter, with some derogations for remote territories. I recently signed a petition in the Parliament to improve the welfare of dairy cows and on a similar issue signed the EP Written Declaration on improved farming conditions for pigs. I have also voted in favour of a proposal to unburden organic farmers from excessive EU red tape.

Opposing excess EU measures

British Conservatives have consistently called for the EU to do less, but do it better. I therefore voted against the Commission's unrealistically inflated budgetary proposals. The draft budget for 2013 astonishingly called for a 6.8% increase on the figure of €100bn per year, a figure that looks absurd against the current climate of EU-wide austerity. A spending freeze or, better still, a reduction is instead required. Closing the Strasbourg Parliament would also make a saving to the budget. I also voted against a report calling for a Financial Transactions Tax which might work if applied globally but otherwise is an example of economic illiteracy and anti-economic growth, with the City of London particularly hard-hit. I also oppose the expanding multi-lingual system for the EU as too expensive and inefficient. Irish was added and is barely used and there are now calls for Catalan. Three working languages would suffice: English, French and German.

Foreign affairs activities

Along with my ongoing role as Rapporteur of the Parliament for Montenegro, which is now opening negotiations for EU accession and making good progress, I have also been allocated the Report on the Horn of Africa. This is a geopolitically strategic region of eight countries including economically-growing countries such as Ethiopia and failed states like Somalia which harbour jihadi terrorist groups and pirates the scourge of western shipping lanes. I was proud as part of my research to visit the Northwood Royal Navy-led command centre of the EU anti-piracy maritime operation, Naval Force Somalia Operation Atalanta, which now has a recent new mandate to attack pirate bases on-shore. My report also focuses on Sudan and its problems with the newly independent oil-rich South Sudan. More about my global work in foreign affairs and human rights can be found on my website.



It has been a busy time for local by-elections in London and I have campaigned with Council candidates in Town Ward in Hammersmith & Fulham, Grove Ward in Kingston, Larkwood Ward in Waltham Forest and Brunswick Park Ward in Barnet. Pictured here in Brompton ward in Kensington & Chelsea with my colleague Syed Kamall MEP.

Rally behind Greek Cypriot presidency

The Cyprus presidency of the EU began in July. As Foreign Affairs spokesman I wish them as a small and proud Commonwealth nation every success in this challenge which they take on for the first time. I met their Foreign Minister and she expressed concerns of possible large refugee flows coming their way from Syria which I am following closely. I hope UN-sponsored reunification talks will end the 38 years of Turkish military occupation and restore a united Cyprus, as a bizonal bicomunal



With Theresa Villiers MP, Northern Ireland Secretary, Mike Freer MP and Eleni Mavrou, Interior Minister of the Republic of Cyprus.

federated state. I addressed the rally for a free and united Cyprus, from Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square.

Opposing female genital mutilation

As Human Rights Spokesman, I spoke in favour of a resolution condemning female genital mutilation (FGM). There are an estimated 140 million women and girls living worldwide with the terrible consequences of FGM, at least half of them in Europe. It is a barbaric practice and not a requirement of any religion. I back calls from the UN General Assembly to ban the practice across all its members and for EU member states to criminalise the practice at national level.

Petition against Argentina loans

I have raised concerns over the unacceptable behaviour of the Argentinian Government which is escalating its dispute of UK sovereignty over the Falklands by advocating a boycott on British goods. I therefore supported a petition by the Tax Payers' Alliance which calls on the British Government to use its votes at the World Bank to oppose any further loans to Argentina.

The e-petition can be signed at www.StopFundingArgentina.org

My speeches in the European Parliament are on YouTube at <http://goo.gl/J2xak> You can also find me on Facebook

www.charlestannock.com

charles@charlestannock.com

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in the European Parliament

Published by: Dr Charles Tannock MEP, London Region Conservatives, 1A Chelsea Manor Street, London SW3 5RP.
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