



6 January 2010

CROSS PARTY PARLIAMENTARIANS PUBLISH DECLARATION ON IMMIGRATION – “70 MILLION IS TOO MANY”

**Declaration by Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration signed by 20 leading
Parliamentarians including Baroness Boothroyd and Lord Carey**

**Declaration calls for manifesto commitments to reduce net immigration to the
levels of the early 1990s – less than 40k compared to 163k in 2008**

The Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration today publishes a ground-breaking Declaration on Immigration, calling on the major parties to make manifesto commitments to take action to prevent the UK population reaching 70 million in under 20 years, as is officially projected.

The Declaration has been signed by 20 members of both Houses of Parliament, including former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey, and former Speaker, Baroness Boothroyd.

This Declaration marks an important moment in the debate about immigration. For the first time, a large number of Parliamentarians from both major parties together with distinguished Cross Bench Peers have come together to publicly urge Gordon Brown and David Cameron to place in this year's party election manifestos a firm commitment to do what is necessary to prevent our population reaching 70 million by 2029.

The Co-Chairmen of the Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration, Frank Field MP and Nicholas Soames MP, said:

“Poll after poll shows the public to be deeply concerned about immigration and its impact on our population. Yet, as we enter the General Election campaign, neither party has promised the British people that they will prevent our population hitting 70 million. It is time the parties turned their rhetoric into reality by making manifesto commitments to prevent our population reaching 70 million by 2029.”

Notes to editors:

1. For media enquiries, please contact Patrick White in the office of Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Tel. 020 7219 6636.
2. The Declaration on Immigration and a list of signatories is published below.

3. The Rt Hon Frank Field MP and The Hon Nicholas Soames MP are Co-Chairmen of the Cross Party Group on Balanced Migration. The Group's Vice-Chairmen are Lord (Bill) Jordan CBE (former President of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union) and Daniel Kawczynski MP (Conservative, Shrewsbury & Atcham).
4. For more information, please visit www.balancedmigration.com.

A DECLARATION ON POPULATION 70 MILLION IS TOO MANY

1. We are gravely concerned about the rapid increase in the population of England that is now forecast. We note that the official projections show the population of the UK will increase from 61.4 million in 2008 to exceed 70 million by 2029. Over the next 25 years the population will increase by 10 million, nearly all of the increase being in England. 70% – 7 million – will be due to immigration. We believe that immigration on such a scale will have a significant impact on our public services, our quality of life and on the nature of our society.
2. We welcome the considerable benefits that immigration has brought to British life. However, we note that over the last decade immigration has reached unprecedented levels. Furthermore, we note that a major enquiry by the Economic Affairs Committee of the House of Lords found no evidence that net immigration generates significant economic benefits for the existing UK population. We note also that the latest household projections show that nearly 40% of new households to be formed by 2031 will be the result of immigration – approximately one every five minutes.
3. Accordingly, we call on the major parties to make clear commitments in their General Election manifestos to reduce net immigration to the levels of the early 1990s – that is less than 40,000 a year compared to 163,000 in 2008 – in such a way as to ensure that the population of the UK will not reach 70 million.
4. We recognise that this will not be easy to achieve. Over the last decade or so we have lost control of immigration. It will take several years to put this right. But the first requirement is a clear political decision to put in hand the measures required to restore control over our borders, to break the present almost automatic link between coming to Britain and later gaining citizenship, and thus take a range of further measures to limit the growth in our population.
5. We are convinced that failure to take action would be seriously damaging to the future harmony of our society. Nearly a million votes by our fellow citizens for an extremist party amount to a danger sign which must not be ignored. For too long the major political parties have failed to address these issues and the intense, if largely private, concern that they generate throughout our country. If politicians want to rebuild the public's trust in the political system, they cannot continue to ignore this issue which matters so much to so many people. The time has come for action.

Signatories to the Declaration on Population

1. Rt Hon. Frank Field MP
2. The Hon. Nicholas Soames MP
3. The Lord Jordan CBE
4. Daniel Kawczynski MP
5. Rt Hon. Michael Ancram QC MP
6. Peter Bottomley MP
7. Christopher Chope MP
8. Roger Godsiff MP
9. John Horam MP
10. Robert Key MP
11. Peter Kilfoyle MP
12. Rt Hon. the Lord Anderson of Swansea
13. Rt Hon. the Baroness Boothroyd OM
14. Rt Rev. and Rt Hon. the Lord Carey of Clifton
15. The Baroness Cox
16. Rt Hon. the Earl Ferrers DL
17. The Lord Leach of Fairford
18. Professor the Lord Skidelsky
19. The Lord Vinson LVO DL
20. Hazhir Teimourian