

The Right Hon. Jackie Smith PC MP  
Home Secretary

The Right Hon. Ed Balls PC MP  
Secretary of State for Children Schools and Families

24<sup>th</sup> October 2008

My ref: F28-24Oct08-JS & EB

Dear Home Secretary and Secretary of State

Months after the Children's Rights Commissioner called for its banning, the Mosquito Anti-Teen Device remains available for sale and use against children and young people purely on grounds of their age.

The Report of the United Committee monitoring the UK's compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recently published has also condemned its use, and called for action.

That such a blatantly unjust and discriminatory device is being tolerated, and even used and endorsed by Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, is outrageous and unacceptable. Its manufacturers market it as anti-teen, a moments cursory thought about its nature will tell a reasonable person that it will affect also much younger children whose hearing will in most cases more acute still.

Additionally, its unopposed use gives the impression to young people that it is all right for adults to undertake forms of discriminatory action against them which will not even be condemned by the appropriate Government Ministers. This device makes possible a form of electronic vigilante-ism. Its manufacturers boast Police Support, quote Ministers giving Statements in the Commons, publish a Legal Opinion on the human rights implications etc, all to attempt to convince reasonable people that to use it is merely unpleasant to the young person.

I ask you to take a moment to visit our Web Site at [www.fairplayforchildren.org/index.php?page=News&section=News\\_Index](http://www.fairplayforchildren.org/index.php?page=News&section=News_Index), and to read our Response to that document.

I put it to both of you that no Government would leave alone a situation for one moment where, for example, some device was used to drive away elderly people. Article 14 of the ECHR only cites examples of groups and conditions re: discrimination, it covers every person in this country, and is enshrined in the HRA.

I am quite aware that there are media and other elements who will mock and oppose what is being said here. On that score, Fair Play for Children has no concern and we hope that you equally will consider the fundamental rights issue involved, and the message further inaction will give to children and young people, and to those like us who are working to safeguard and promote their rights.

We are dismayed that nothing has been done or said yet by the Government to express to people even mild distaste for such a device which is available in law for anyone to use – how soon before someone installs one in their garden to stop children playing in their own gardens or outside their homes?

Fair Play for Children calls on the Government to take a principled stand in favour of basic decency and common rights.

Yours sincerely

Jan Cosgrove (Mr)

**National Secretary**

On behalf of the Management Council of the Association