

**12 May 2009**

### **Supporting the Rights of the Gurkhas**

Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West has tabled a motion supporting the Gurkha campaign. If there is sufficient support from the Members of the Scottish Parliament across the political parties, then the motion is eligible for a Members' Debate in the chamber.

Jim commented "Like many of my constituents, I feel strongly that these forces have served the UK loyally as part of the British Army for over 150 years and that they should be given the option to stay in the UK if they wish when they retire from their military service. Following the Commons defeat last month, the Government must recognise the years of dedicated service given to this country by the Gurkhas, treat them all equally and give them right of residency in the country for which they fought so bravely."

**Ends**

### **Notes to Editor**

**S3M-04032 Jim Tolson (Dunfermline West) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): Rights of Former Gurkha Soldiers** — That the Parliament welcomes the victory for the rights of Gurkha soldiers achieved in the Commons defeat on 29 April 2009 when MPs voted by 267 to 246 for a Liberal Democrat motion offering all Gurkhas equal right of residence in Britain; believes that this is a historic victory for the Gurkhas who have served the United Kingdom so bravely; notes the widespread opposition to the UK Government's proposed guidelines, which are considered to permit only a small minority of Gurkhas and their families to settle while preventing the vast majority to do so; believes that the UK Government's decision fails to recognise the long history of dedicated service by Gurkha soldiers; welcomes the support for justice for the Gurkha soldiers by former Gurkha officer, Major Bill MacKay of Dunfermline; commends the 70 years of continuous service given by Sergeant Sunar Gurung, who served with Major MacKay, and Sergeant Gurung's six sons who all served with the Gurkha regiment, and believes that such service should be recognised.