

**WINTER MEETING OF WILTON PARK ACADEMIC COUNCIL (WPAC)
TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2004 – FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH
OFFICE**

Present:

Wilton Park Academic Council:

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| Dr Farhan Nizami (Chair) | Director, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies |
| Sir Rodric Braithwaite | Chairman, Russian Programme, Centre For European Reform |
| Dr David Bryer | Chair of Oxfam International and Trustee of Save The Children |
| Professor Victor Bulmer-Thomas | Director, Chatham House |
| Lord Corbett of Castle Vale | Labour Party parliamentary representative |
| Sir Patrick Cormack | Conservative Party parliamentary representative |
| Mr Keith Dobson | Secretary-General, Anglo-German Foundation for the Study of Industrial Society |
| Mr Nik Gowing | Journalist and broadcaster |
| Mr Janusz Heath | Former Managing Director, Allianz Specialised Investments |
| Sir Michael Quinlan | Former Director, The Ditchley Foundation |
| Lord Skidelsky | Professor of Political Economy, Warwick University |
| Dame Veronica Sutherland | President, Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge |
| Lord Young of Norwood Green | Trade Union Liaison Officer, Ethical Trading Initiative |

FCO:

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| Tim Livesey | Assistant Director of Information and Head of Public Diplomacy Policy Department |
| Peter Hill | Directorate of Strategy and Information |

Wilton Park:

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| Colin Jennings | Chief Executive |
| Richard Latter | Director |
| Nick Hopkinson | Deputy Director |
| Robin Hart | Associate Director |
| Chris Langdon | Associate Director |
| Roger Williamson | Associate Director |
| Isobelle Jaques | Associate Director |
| Adela Gooch | Associate Director |
| Jane Rawbone | PA/Chief Executive (note-taker) |

ACTION POINTS

- a) Wilton Park: Secretariat to publish the minutes of the June meeting on Wilton Park's website (para 1).
- b) Wilton Park: Chief Executive to continue to liaise with Ms Jacobi and Mr Janusz Heath on attracting more involvement from business (para 3).
- c) Wilton Park: Chief Executive to consider a promotional event in Parliament and commission an article on WP for the House of Commons' magazine (para 6)
- d) Wilton Park: Chief Executive to present a revised version of the branding paper at the next meeting (para 7).

Apologies

Apologies were received from Dr Heather Grabbe, Sir David Green, Mr David Heath, Ms Mary Jo Jacobi, and Professor Anand Menon.

Item 1: Minutes of the last meeting

- 1. A revised version of the minutes had been circulated on 1 November. No-one had any further revision and they were approved by the Council.

Item 2: Matters Arising

- 2. The Chair welcomed Tim Livesey to his first meeting of the Council and Peter Hill from the FCO.

3. The Chair confirmed that all 4 action points had been completed. Mr Jennings said that he, Mr J Heath and Ms Jacobi had met in August to discuss fund-raising from the private sector. It had been decided that personal approaches to people in the business community was the best way forward in the UK - however Mr Heath so far had had no success with his contacts. It might help to generate business interest to lobby their professional organisations (eg lawyers). The commercial world's main interest was links to political contacts in a variety of countries. Wilton Park (WP) should research the international interests of major British companies and approach them on relevant conferences. WP should also consider a fundraising drive in the US. The plan was to have a campaign there over the next 18 months. Mr Jennings confirmed that Sir David Manning (Ambassador in Washington) had agreed to host an event for WP and Mr Jennings would consult Ms Jacobi for suggestions on this. WP had commissioned a report on Fundraising in the US, which identified quite a few Foundations as possible donors. Mr Jennings said that to maximise tax benefits for donations from US Foundations, the American Friends of Wilton Park (who have 501 (C) (3) status) had agreed in principle to be the recipients for donations from the US on WP's behalf. As WP was a non-profit organisation it was also eligible for

charitable donations direct. It was suggested that WP should get a list of major British companies by title, activity and geographical area of interest, and that the Chief Executive should write to their Chairman about the conferences that cover those areas of interest.

Item 3: Chief Executive's Report

4. The Chief Executive said that the period since the June meeting had been very positive for WP with high ratings. There had been more conferences organised in the period than previously. WP had also been re-awarded "Investors in People" status. The Chair asked whether WP were likely to break even financially at the end of the current FY. The Chief Executive said that there would probably be a relatively small deficit (less than the last FY). However the January to March period was always the strongest financially and every effort would be made to reduce the deficit then. He explained that in the next calendar year conference pricing would be based on the conference itself and not on its length (ie there would be less difference between the price for 2 day and 3 ½ day conferences). There were no further comments from Council Members on the Report.

Item 4: Wilton Park's Conference Strategy

5. The Chair asked the Chief Executive to introduce his paper on "The Wilton Park Brand" which had been circulated to Council Members. The Chief Executive said that WP involved interaction between people. The brand was not its location (Wiston House (WH)), although WH certainly had major benefits, including being affordable compared to other locations. WP's brand was therefore its style of conducting dialogue, the mix of people engaged in dialogue and the nature of the dialogue. Conferences were residential allowing time for informal interaction outside the conference room. In terms of overseas conferences (40 in the 15 years since they began), it was the "style" of WP that was exported. WP's brand was quite well known in the market within which it operated, but could be stronger. He did not think there was a lack of awareness of WP's work except within the business community. He envisaged further evolution rather than revolution in WP's activity. The vast majority of conferences would take place at WH but there would be a few more overseas - next year there were 9 planned overseas (7 this year). Overseas conferences were only undertaken if there was sufficient demand and there was a funding base.

6. The Chair asked Council Members for comments on the paper. These included the following:

- Some members of the Council agreed that WP was mainly about people, and that the emphasis should be on the range of participation from a wide range of countries. In contrast to other similar institutions in the UK, WP managed to attract more participants from the US, for example.
- However, WH should not be under-estimated as part of WP's brand. Its isolated location meant participants stayed together in the evenings.

WH was an important draw, especially for foreign participants as it was seen as an historic venue. Ditchley Park, for example, would wish to emphasise its location as part of its brand. Many people, given the choice, would prefer to attend a WP conference at WH rather than elsewhere.

- Within the House of Commons WP was not generally well-known (although a fair number of Ministers and MPs did attend conferences). It was suggested that the Chief Executive should write to MPs. WP could also prepare an article on WP for the House of Commons House magazine which had a high readership. WP should consider doing a promotional event at the House of Commons – there was usually a 3 month waiting list for government sponsored exhibitions.
- Overseas conferences costs put a burden on administrative resources. As discussed at the Summer meeting, there was concern that there was some danger of the brand of WP being diluted when a conference was held overseas. It was suggested that the Chief Executive's paper should be described "analysis in progress" rather than the finished product. A brand was about looking forward over the coming years and taking account of rapid change (both commercially and intellectually). If WP did not look at least 5 years ahead then its budgeting would suffer.
- It was suggested that the collective views of customers should be sought. A brand needed to appeal to the core market. It was not evident that the brand was currently clear to business customers.
- It was agreed that the branding paper was the key for taking discussion forward. WH was necessary as a location. From the questionnaires, well over 50% thought it was excellent for content, but nearly 90% thought its administration was excellent.
- WP should consider where it stood in comparison to analogous organisations – it had a higher profile than others. How had it achieved this? Clearly it did have a brand but there was no convincing evidence to verify it and WP could therefore be making incorrect assumptions.
- The empirical evidence was that people appreciated WH as a setting and ambience. WH did play a part in the style of a conference. But WP did manage to transport its style and approach overseas. WP was only as good as what was currently being said about it by people. On its value, WP should not be complacent and should play to its strengths. More needed to be done to promote WP especially in the business segment of the market.
- It was the interaction at a conference that was important. It was extremely difficult to define the style of an organisation in a way which meant anything to those who had not been there. There was a risk that participants from the country hosting an overseas conference would not speak as freely as they would do at WH. One member said that his organisation's experience was that overseas conferences were a different product and harder to sell than those in the UK – it was very hard to get an environment of trust and confidence in a hotel.
- Branding was about projection and projecting strengths. WP needed to be very clear on what its selling point was and whether it was really its style. It was obvious that some members thought its location was a

particular strength and that overseas conferences might dilute its brand. However others did not think that this was a vital issue. WP needed to pay its way.

7. The Chair said that this subject should be discussed again at the next meeting in order to give WP time to reflect on this discussion.

Item 5: Forward Look from the FCO

8. Peter Hill, Directorate for Strategy & Innovation at the FCO, said that since his report at the Summer meeting, there had not been a lot of change on the priorities of the FCO. The present context and themes were:

- **Context:** UK's forthcoming Presidencies of the G8 (wef 1 January) and of the EU (wef 1 July). The Transatlantic relationship, especially as President Bush planned to visit Europe early next year. The referendum in the UK, on the Constitutional Treaty. And review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Middle East: Iraq elections on 30 January, the peace process, Palestinian elections, Gaza withdrawal, as well as Iran and the process of implementing the recent agreement. Afghanistan: this will rise up the FCO's agenda, not just on the drug issue but building towards 2006 on security. Russia: also rising back up the FCO's agenda. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are moving back up the agenda. The FCO's structure is also undergoing change both at home and abroad. The FCO held a leadership conference for UK Heads of Mission two years ago to discuss FCO strategic priorities. There would be a follow up meeting in January to take stock of priorities and how they will be delivered.
- **Themes (related to the above):** Conflict prevention: Attaining the MDGs (work on this was being done by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, at the MOD and the FCO). The UK were doing much better than in the past in joining up policy on national and international conflicts. The High Level Panel's Report to Kofi Annan was important in shaping the future approach. The focus of the FCO's thinking would depend on which recommendations the UNSG decided to take forward to the General Assembly. Climate Change: important priority for the G8 (and rising up in the FCO's priorities), especially its impact on foreign policy (and what it means for the security policy). Modernisation: transformation in the Middle East will feature in G8 discussion and between the EU and US. It was one of the Prime Minister's themes with President Bush on his recent visit to the US. Rise of Asia: nothing specific on this but everyone was getting a grip on what the impact of China and India on the international system. Engaging with the Islamic world: an issue where the FCO is actively engaged. A new internal group has been set up to discuss this. There is also more scope for public discussion especially about the way people engage with Islamic communities both at home and abroad. Africa: would be a priority for the G8 Presidency.

The following points arose in discussion of Mr Hill's report:

- When FCO strategy had been drawn up the focus had been on themes, such as counter-terrorism, rather than on geographical areas. But the geographical structure would continue to be important as views from those on the ground were essential in providing an informed view, etc.
- Mr Hill had not mentioned the British Government's review in 12 months' time of its international priorities. Those priorities on the FCO agenda which appeared to have fallen down the list – for example, CFSP and ESDP within the EU, Latin America and Cyprus. Mr Hill said these were not at the top politically at present when compared to the Middle East, for example. However on all these topics there was a lot of work being done not least on Cyprus. Agreement at the December European Council to start negotiations for the accession of Turkey to the EU would be an important development.
- Mr Livesey added that following the 2004 Spending Review it had been decided again to review the role of Public Diplomacy across the Government in supporting its international priorities. As WP supports the FCO's public diplomacy objectives, it is possible that it will come under the scrutiny of Lord Carter who would be conducting this Review. It would certainly cover the British Council and BBC World Service. Lord Carter's report would be presented in June 2005.

Item 6: Possible Conference Themes for 2006

9. [See Annex A]

Item 7: AOB

10. Dame Veronica Sutherland and Mr Keith Dobson were both stepping down from the Academic Council. The Chair thanked them for all their contribution to the Council over the past 5 years and wished them well. Mr Jennings said the FCO had agreed that recruitment of new Members should be undertaken to replace those who had left over the last 2-3 years. It was hoped that the new Members would be appointed before the Summer meeting.

Item 8: Date of the Next Meeting

11. After consulting members, the date of the next meeting will be Thursday 30 June at Wiston House.

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11 May 2005

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Item 6: Possible Conference Themes for 2006

The following suggestions for conference themes were made by Council Members:

- The outcome of Annan's High Level Panel Report
- The link between Security, Development and Reconstruction
- What went wrong in Darfur? Implications for humanitarian intervention.
- ESDP: taking stock
- Stocktake on Iraq: second elections should have taken place by 2006
- Iran
- Regional Security in the Middle East
- Western-Islam links
- Review of NPT
- Relationship between Religion and the State and Politics (most members agreed on the importance of this theme). It was thought that more than one conference was needed on this subject. Europe should be covered too and not just the Middle East. Pressure will be towards a state becoming increasingly secular and societies becoming increasingly religious.
- Foreign policy dimension of immigration policy in the Netherlands and France, and implications for Muslim communities and Europe
- Western young leaders and Muslim young leaders
- Saudi Arabia
- Egypt
- Law and public policy (eg in Ukraine, Russia and parts of the Islamic world)
- Future of the CIS: are there conflicting forces at work? Implications for Europe and the EU
- Russia, including changes in the CIS, and the role of the church
- China (should be included more in WP's conference programme)
- Growth of China and Russia: this is causing a huge strain on global resources
- Suggestion that the conference planned on "China's economic growth and its global impact" should also cover that of India too. What were the consequences of these huge developing economies?
- Belarus and its relations with Europe
- The EU in 2006 and the UK's relationship
- Turkey
- The Balkans: EU policy and latest trends
- India and Pakistan: has rapprochement worked?

- India: Marked obstacles in its growth because of competition from China. How can India achieve its global potential?
- Emerging Powers: international architecture (India and China)
- HIV/AIDs. India will soon overtake southern Africa with the highest number of victims
- Japan and other “forgotten countries”, including Zimbabwe
- Development of smaller states within a country (eg Wales and Scotland) and their external links
- Responsible Capitalism or Business Ethics: What is right and what is wrong?
- Global economy: primary commodities
- What works best for transferring income from the North to the South?
- Movement of people: What sort of states do we want, what mix in population, refugee issue? Implications of multiculturalism
- Connections between security, equality and poverty: How do they come together?
- The MDGs: which areas have not worked? What actually does work in Africa? Has intervention in Sierra Leone worked? What are the prospects for the Democratic Republic of Congo, etc?
- Radical rethinking on the way in which development is carried out: what should DfID and the World Bank etc do?
- Environment: trade-offs, what does that mean for the aspirations of G20 countries and what does it mean for us in our lifestyles?
- Health: patents for drug companies will be running out in the next few years. Antibiotics – do they still work? Western diseases are now the diseases of India and China, what does that mean for them?
- Health care globally: Can it be delivered effectively?
- Pandemics (SARS, Avian flu etc)
- Water Resources
- Energy Security: nuclear power
- Global Regulation: does that aid us or is it negative?
- Transatlantic Relations: Values: to what extent are values changing in the US and EU? To what extent are they easier or not easier?
- Human Rights: Are we going forwards or backwards?
- Global governance: G8, G20, World Bank?
- New Diplomacy: the market state and the role of governments and foreign ministries
- The Impact of Authoritarian States on stability and opposition - eg in Nepal
- Barcelona Process – 10 years after: Look at progress or lack of progress
- Is the world in reality multipolar?

11 May 2005