

**WINTER MEETING OF WILTON PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL (WPAC)
THURSDAY 7 DECEMBER 2006 AT THE FCO**

Present:

WILTON PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Dr Farhan Nizami (Chair)	Director, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies
Ms Rachel Briggs	Head of Identity Programme, Demos
Prof Victor Bulmer-Thomas	Director of Chatham House
Dr Ray Cunningham	Director, Anglo-German Foundation for the Study of Industrial Society
Mr Nik Gowing	Journalist and Broadcaster
Mr Janusz Heath	Director, Capital Dynamics
Ms Mary Jo Jacobi	Civil Service Commissioner, Former Vice-President, Group External Affairs, Shell International
Rt Hon Joyce Quin	Former Minister of State at Home Office, FCO and MAFF
Sir Michael Quinlan	Former Director, The Ditchley Foundation
Mr Rupert H W Robson	Former investment banker
Prof Shamit Saggar	Professor for Political Science, University of Sussex
Sir Stephen Wall	Hill & Knowlton
Professor Myles Wickstead	Visiting Professor (International Relations), Open University

FCO

Alexander Evans	Policy Team, Directorate of Strategy and Information
Stephen Lysaght	Public Diplomacy Group

WILTON PARK

Nick Hopkinson	Acting Chief Executive
Chris Langdon	Programme Director
Roger Williamson	Programme Director
Adela Gooch	Programme Director
Julia Purcell	Programme Director
Mark Smith	Programme Director
Jane Rawbone	PA/Chief Executive (note-taker)

ACTION POINTS

(a) Wilton Park: Secretariat to publish the minutes of the June 2006 meeting on Wilton Park's website (para 1).

(b) Wilton Park: New Chief Executive to look at holding a promotional event in Parliament (para 2).

(c) Council members to suggest prominent speakers for future planned WP conferences (para 4)

(d) Wilton Park date of next meeting to be confirmed (para 8).

Apologies

Apologies were received from Sir Rodric Braithwaite, Dr David Bryer, Sir Patrick Cormack, Mr David Heath, Sir David Green, Mr Reijo Kempainen, Mr Michael Leigh, Professor Anand Menon, Professor Philippe Sands, Lord Skidelsky, and Andrew Vickerman

Item 1: Minutes of the last meeting

1. The minutes of the last meeting were approved by the Council.

Item 2: Matters arising

2. The Chair welcomed Alexander Evans and Stephen Lysaght to their first meeting of the Council. He also thanked Professor Victor Bulmer-Thomas for his past contribution and participation on the Council as it was his final meeting. He said the Council wished him well in his work in Miami. Wilton Park's (WP) new Chief Executive, Donald Lamont, would take office on 18 January. The Chair confirmed that action points (a) and (c) had been completed. Action point (b) [to pursue a promotional event in Parliament] had been deferred again to await Mr Lamont's arrival. The Chair thanked Mr Hopkinson and all the WP staff for their work over the past 6 months in what had been a difficult period.

Item 3: Acting Chief Executive's Report

3. Mr Hopkinson said 2006 had been the 60th anniversary of WP and among many successful events the November International Association meeting was particularly noteworthy. WP had exceeded its quality and financial targets for the first 8 months of the FY, in spite of staff shortages. His Report included WP's proposed conferences for the first quarter of 2008 and he welcomed suggestions from Council Members on those proposed and other topics to be covered for the remainder of 2008. WP was planning conferences more in advance in order to dovetail with the government FY. There would still be room for events planned at shorter notice. It was hoped the lease renewal of Wiston House would soon be concluded [*the week after the meeting the lease renewal process was concluded*]. To achieve action point (c) from the June meeting, WP's statistics had included pie charts and year by year comparisons to give greater clarity of trends. There had been a 20% rise in American participation, and 80% in Chinese participation. Nationality participation trends did fluctuate significantly when a conference was held overseas as participation from the host country was always higher than normal.

4. The Chair asked for any comments on the Report. It was noted that:
- Business participation had risen. WP had been more pro-active in encouraging business participation by holding conferences on CSR related issues, business and human rights etc. Following previous discussion with Council Members (on branding), WP had shortened the length of conferences for business participants to 48 hours maximum and one conference had been for 24 hours. The one-day conference had attracted a more senior level of business participants. Weekend conferences were convened in accordance with sponsor preferences. Financially, short events did not do so well. WP had to balance impact and financial return carefully.
 - It would be useful for WP and the Council if statistics were related to key priorities. It would be a good outcome from the Council meetings if WP were to identify three priorities and tracked them over a 12 month period.
 - US participation came primarily from the security area and to a lesser extent from business and think-tanks. WP had been liaising with DTRA (Defense Threat Reduction Agency) in Washington, which had sponsored the recent conference on the Future of Nuclear Deterrence in The North Atlantic Alliance. They were interested in sponsoring two, possibly three, more conferences in 2007. SAIC (Sciences Applications International Corporation), again based in Washington, had also sponsored the Nuclear Deterrence conference, and had expressed interest in supporting one or two WP conferences each year.
 - The OGD stakeholder initiative had been on hold, but it would likely be a main priority for Mr Lamont. However, programme directors continued to conclude sponsorships with OGDs. For example, Mr Hopkinson had concluded a multi-year governance series package with DFid and Ms Purcell secured Home Office support for the recent Migration and Muslim Youth events.
 - A further debate on WP's brand and profile of WP was needed (to include discussion on high profile speakers, shorter events, an annual lecture etc). The Chair agreed that this should be on the agenda for the next meeting. The Branding Sub-Committee would meet once or twice beforehand so their views could be fed into the process in advance. Other Council Members would be welcome to attend these meetings.
 - Mr Hopkinson said WP had looked at ways of improving its image (the 2007 Calendar was one example). The "re-branding" of WP also related to its work with OGDs (see above). Mr Lamont would be discussing these issues and how to raise WP's profile with Lord Triesman in January. Mr Lysaght said the FCO had no plans for cuts at WP and the Minister's aim was to look at how WP contributed to the FCO's international priorities.
 - It was suggested that Council Members be asked to nominate ideas for prominent speakers once conferences were scheduled, eg the Princess Royal could be invited to the Protection of Children in Conflict Situations conference. Mr Hopkinson welcomed such suggestions.

Item 4: Forward look from the FCO

5. The Chair invited Mr Evans, Strategic Policy Adviser, Directorate of Strategy and Information, to give an overview of key issues on the FCO's agenda for the coming months. These included:

Foreign Policy issues

- A period of global change continues. China and India are continuing to rise. Lots on the agenda. The FCO is focussing once again on a set of familiar issues: Iraq, Afghanistan, the UK's approach towards, and handling of, Iran, and renewed tensions in the UK-Russia relationship.
- EU enlargement, especially in relation to Turkey's accession.
- The Darfur crisis, not least because of its humanitarian impact.
- Terrorism: still a challenge, and one in which the FCO had a key role to play overseas, both in countering radicalisation and tackling terrorist threats.
- Climate security (one of the key foreign policy objectives of the Foreign Secretary). The Stern Report had enjoyed an extraordinary international media profile – there was now intense effort to persuade international partners to sign up to more action on climate change. The Foreign Secretary had appointed a Special Envoy on Climate Change, John Ashton, and he too has been heavily involved in working with other countries.
- In 2007 there would be a change of UK Prime Minister and a new UN Secretary-General. There would also be a big changeover of British Heads of Mission in major posts (including to the US, UN, India and France).

FCO's agenda

- The new three year Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) round was being negotiated. The CSR would be much harder than the previous round with all Government Departments being asked by the Treasury to look for greater efficiency savings.
- There is also an ongoing re-negotiation of the Public Service Agreements, which defined each Government Department's planned aims and objectives and performance for the next round.
- A No 10 Policy Review is underway, including a strand on international policy, with Ministerial meetings in January/February.
- The FCO White Paper, *Active Diplomacy for a Changing World*, was now being implemented. The EU network was being reviewed (although Europe would not be neglected). There was a continuing move of resources towards Asia, especially China and India.

6. The Chair asked Council Members for comments and the following observations arose:

- With a change of US President in 2 years, to what extent was the UK looking at its bilateral relationship with the US and the relationship between Europe and the US? Mr Evans said work was being done on this in two phases: to cover the remainder of the Bush Presidency, and to consider the forward agenda with his successor. The relationship with the US remained vital, as did that with Europe as a collective, and with individual European states.
- And France, given the impending change of leader? The UK would also be looking to work closely with the new French President.
- Following the recent US elections, Congress now appeared more protectionist in international trade negotiations. Was there concern on this at the FCO or would it be more a concern for the European Commission? Mr Evans said the UK wanted effective and open markets, and while trade negotiations remain an EU Commission competency, the UK would still resist any forms of protectionism wherever they might take hold. Peter Mandelson and his team take a very market-friendly approach.
- Is international cooperation - essential for development and greater prosperity – taken seriously? Mr Evans said it was impossible for the UK to work on many issues without cooperating with overseas partners, both through multilateral diplomacy and through bilateral cooperation. Climate change, conflict prevention and counter-terrorism were some examples of the issues which could only be solved collectively.
- And what about Africa - there was a large increase in UK development assistance – but is the FCO engaged? Mr Evans explained that on Africa, the FCO remained strongly engaged, working closely with DfID. Development, governance and security are all key objectives. The FCO is aware of rising Chinese engagement in Africa, particularly in pursuit of energy and natural resources.
- To what extent was the FCO now involved foreign policy as surely nowadays No10 was more closely involved in foreign policy issues? Mr Evans said that suggestions of major differences between No10 and the FCO are simply false – the FCO continues to supply many foreign policy staff in No10, and the FCO leads on selected international policy areas (just as other government departments do in other policy areas). But naturally No10 has legitimate interests and a strong voice.
- What was the UK's policy on replacing Trident (should the UK retain a nuclear deterrent when others could not develop their own deterrent)? Would the UK continue to rely on the US for replacement of its missile delivery system? If so, would that not hinder the UK in pursuing an independent foreign policy role from the US? Mr Evans said a final decision had not yet been taken – as the recent White Paper explained. This had set out the case for a potential reduction in the UK's deployed arsenal. However, the nature of the UK's deterrent did not prevent it from having an independent foreign policy to the US.
- What was the UK's objective now in Iraq and the Middle East as a whole? Mr Evans said the UK's aim remained the same - to build a

stable and democratic Iraq. The situation in Iraq remained difficult and delicate, and the UK was doing all it could to support Iraq's government.

- Given Iraq, was the UK still in the democracy-promotion business? Mr Evans explained that there is still an FCO team dedicated to democracy promotion, and that the Westminster Foundation for Democracy continues its valuable work in this area.

Item 5: Wilton Park Draft Calendar: January-March 2008

Item 6: Possible conference themes: April-December 2008

7. These items taken together – see ANNEX A

Item 7: AOB – Nothing raised

Item 8: Date of the next meeting

8. The summer meeting was Thursday 5 July at Wiston House. Ms Rawbone would confirm the date.

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14 December 2006

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Item 5: Wilton Park Draft Calendar: January-March 2008

Item 6: Possible conference themes: April-December 2008

The following suggestions and additions to planned conferences were made for 2008:

Defence, Security and Conflict Prevention

- International policing/military, forces are being overstretched because of political situation in Africa, Afghanistan, Iraq – how does the international community police the world?
- Nuclear Weapons
- Non-military forms of deterrence. There is an increasing need to find a way of preventing “bad” behaviour. How does the West deal with North Korea and Iran when there are no obvious military solutions for these countries?
- Counter-Terrorism: which strategies are working?

European Union

- The constitutional treaty will be revisited.
- UK’s relationship with France within the broader EU context.

Global and Domestic Governance

- Political dissent among societies which are becoming more diverse. The West tends to turn away from dissent – there is a need to compare views on how different societies deal with this.
- Migration issues: how do North America and Europe tackle these? Both areas are under huge pressure; there is a need to compare trends.
- The role and relationship of public attitudes towards foreign policy. Do governments take note of public views or do they disregard them when setting policies causing dissent?

International Economic and Social Policies

- Insurance – there will be a greater degree of predictability around what is insured, especially property, as more natural disasters occur. This will be a huge problem for governments and premiums will increase leaving people under-insured or with no insurance.
- Olympics 2012: foreign policy and public diplomacy angles for the UK. What can the UK learn from the 2008 Beijing Olympics?

- US economy: underlying weaknesses in the US economy and what this means for trade now and post-Bush.
- Role of the mega-foundations (Gates, Soros etc) and the influence they wield on domestic policies.
- Culture and development – sport especially brings people together.
- The return of geography and the end of the age of mobility.
- Political dissent: weakening of governance as a result of the broad diffusion of IT. What is the impact of mobile telephones in eg African villages? How do mobile telephone companies get cheap telephones into areas where people cannot afford them?

Justice and Home Affairs

- Civil liberties: tension between civil liberties and stricter national security and anti-terrorism legislation.
- Democracy: the role of second chambers in government (there will be a House of Lords reform in 2008).
- The rise of different forms of conflict. The UN has been reporting on dialogue between civilisations. The World Bank has its own view and the Commonwealth Secretary-General has launched a separate commission on this problem.
- Issues of international law, human rights and how the United Nations is dealing with security and personal mobility.

Key Countries and Regions

- Western world underestimates the immense shift of economic and political power towards China and India.
- China and India should be taken separately; there are many differences between the two: each has different constraints because of their different economic and political systems.
- Political Islam – much work to be done on helping people understand it and how strands differ around the world.
- North/South and Eastern Europe.
- Legacy of colonialism (2007 will be Ghana's 50th anniversary of independence). Role of the Commonwealth.
- Africa – growing presence of Chinese investment and workers.
- Growing influence of China and India and their impact on other parts of the developing world (such as Africa). Growing Chinese influence in Africa is regarded positively for development and should not just be seen as a threat to Western interests. [Suggestion that this take place in Africa rather than WP.]
- Latin-America: in the recent elections the left and centre-left have done well throughout the region. How is the region coping with poverty? What works and what does not?
- Transatlantic relationships: Relationship between European capitals and the US.
- More traditional ways of looking at the world: areas of importance in 2008 will be Iraq, Iran and nuclear proliferation (will this issue have

been solved or will there be a new nuclear power by 2008 in the Gulf?) Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt and the Middle East in general. What will be the situation in the region (between the Rivers Indus and Jordan) in two years' time?

Sustainable Development and the Environment

- To what extent can and will technology support sustainable development for energy, food and water?
- Green taxes – should they be imposed, and if so, how?
- Water and its impact globally (in times of drought).
- Russia is using energy to increase its political influence and leverage.
- Commodities.
- South America – what is the impact on these economies of commodity (such as oil) extraction?
- Energy Security: European Commission are doing a report on this. Can EU countries achieve a common energy policy?
- Sustainable development and environmental issues: attention is too tentative, should be more forward looking and should include redefining growth. Many countries are less able to tackle these issues alone.
- Disaster preparedness: needs to be pro-active before the next big natural disaster. Sea level rises and climate change have an impact.
- “Greying” of the population: What are developed and developing world (eg China) policies?
- Environmental practices of different governments.
- Dimensions of the Stern report: the future of the Green Parties in Europe is in question. Will they become redundant? The UK needs to be more explicit about how it deals with the impact of climate change.

14 December 2006