



**Wilton Park**  
Harnessing the power of dialogue

## Programme

### **Putting the power in soft power?**

Wednesday 12 – Friday 14 October 2011 | WP1117

#### **Synopsis**

With an emphasis on ways in which practitioners can further the deployment of soft power theory, the fifth Wilton Park roundtable meeting in the public diplomacy series will consider how to meet the 'Conversion Challenge' of turning soft power assets into practical activity.

The conference will bring together perspectives from across the spectrum of public diplomacy practitioners and policy makers, communications specialists from the corporate sector, think-tanks, academics, non-governmental organisations and other experts interested in public diplomacy. Through frank and off the record discussion under the Wilton Park protocol, participants will share ambitions, challenges and opportunities and look for collective solutions to solving foreign policy problems through the rebalancing of soft power.

#### **Context**

Recent events in the Middle East have focused attention on the potency of civil society, the impact of citizen led media in affecting change and the way in which the global community responded.

#### **For discussion**

How can governments deploy soft power assets to best effect? Where does soft power end and hard power begin and how to resource accordingly? How far is soft power a component of a wider communications strategy? How to measure the effectiveness of initiatives? The shift in power from West to East: what is the impact on traditional public diplomacy? How best to engage audiences in an increasingly networked world? How to carry out effective public diplomacy in an age of austerity? Who are the most effective soft power partners and how should governments work with them? What can be learned from the increasing role and influence of non-state actors on the international stage? How far can international and regional institutions act as multipliers for national public diplomacy efforts and how would this work? How to reconcile the different aspirations of national and multi-national/non-state actors?

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#### **In association with**

Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

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## **Wednesday 12 October**

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**1300-1430**

Participants arrive and buffet lunch available

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**1500**

### **Welcome and introduction**

**Julia Purcell**

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

1515-1630

## 1. How powerful is soft power?

Is the world at a soft power moment? What is it and how is it manifested? Addressing the gap in global thinking: do governments understand soft power and how it can be applied to foreign policy? Is soft power an innate resource or can it be manufactured? The 'Conversion Challenge' from theory to practical application: how to do to best effect? What can be learned from the Arab Spring? How does soft power sit within a wider strategic communication strategy? What to use and when in the public diplomacy spectrum of soft power/hard power/smart power?

**Andrew Whyte**

Director, Communications, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

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1630-1715

Photograph and tea

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1715-1845

## 2. How to deploy soft power assets?

How to build effective partnerships to achieve foreign policy goals? What can governments learn from other actors and how can they work together to maximise impact? Sharing a common vision and values- is this always possible and how to agree common principles for action across diverse alliances? How far do states trust their soft power partners and what are the costs and risks? How robust is soft power and is it too fuzzy to measure?

**Nick Cull**

Professor of Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

**Ido Aharoni**

Ambassador; Consul General of Israel, New York

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1930

Reception followed by dinner

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## Thursday 13 October

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0800-0900

Breakfast

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0915-1045

## 3. A force for the good?

What is the soft power face of security? How to ensure balance on the soft power/hard spectrum? What about the relative use of resources and how to identify effectiveness? What are the risks and unintended consequences of the use of military as a soft power tool? How does this link to the development agenda and who leads? In what ways does the use of military in a soft power role impact on the perception of a country? Is soft power sometimes the art of doing nothing?

**Session Chair:**

**Stefanie Babst**

Deputy Assistant Secretary General, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO, Brussels

**Delphine Borione**

Director of Cultural Policy and French Language, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Paris

**The power of 'owning peace'**

**Mona Elisabeth Brøther**

Deputy Director General, Department for Protocol, Public Diplomacy and Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo

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1045-1115

Coffee in the Green Room

1115-1245

#### 4. Building a trusted brand: the soft power of economic prosperity and stability?

How far do corporates gain from links to country identity? In what ways can states build on the goodwill of trusted brands to advance their interests? And vice versa? What are the benefits and the risks on both sides? In an increasingly globalised world how far can corporate interests match those of nation states? Who leads? What can corporates teach governments about reputation and vulnerability of high profile brands? Do business leaders see themselves as soft power actors? How far can companies be country ambassadors? How to capitalise on perceptions of prosperity/economic stability with images of cultural heritage and longevity?

**Session Chair:**

**Faheem Ahamed**

Chief Operating Officer, BPG Public Advocacy, Dubai

**Claude Revel**

Founder and Director, IrisAction; French Foreign Trade Adviser; Associate Professor and Scientific Director, SKEMA Business School, Paris

**Kate Smith**

Head, UK Government Relations, Shell International, London

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1300-1500

Lunch

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1400

Optional tour of the Wiston House Gardens led by:

**Robert Mitchell, Kew Dip.**

Head Gardener, Wiston House, Steyning

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1500-1630

#### 5. The role of supra-national networks and non-state actors

How to build successful coalitions around issues? Is there a risk that a multiplicity of actors will dilute a message and how to respond to this? What are the most effective ways of communicating complex messages in an increasingly networked world? How to engage effectively with citizen to citizen dialogue?

**Anthony Gooch**

Director, Public Affairs and Communications Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris

**Kirsty Hughes**

Senior Associate Fellow, Centre for International Studies, University of Oxford, Oxford

**Elizabeth Linder**

Politics and Government Specialist, Europe, Middle East and Africa, Facebook Inc., London

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1630-1700

Coffee in the Green Room

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1700-1830

#### 6. Soft power in action: sharing expertise

**Session Chair:**

**Tristan Emmanuel Landry**

Counsellor; Head, Public Diplomacy, Embassy of Canada to Afghanistan, Kabul

**Engaging iconic images**

**Navdeep Suri**

Joint Secretary, Head of Public Diplomacy, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

**Making the most of the soft power moment: the UK Olympic opportunity**

**Andrew Pike**

Deputy Head, Engagement; Head, External Engagement, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

**1900** Reception followed by Conference Dinner  
**Hosted by:**  
**Iain Ferguson**  
Chairman, Wilton Park, Steyning

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## Friday 14 October

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**0800-0900** Breakfast

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**0915-1045** **7. The Conversion Challenge**

Practical action: case studies in break out groups. Four parallel groups to design soft power strategies. These should consider:

- what assets will be deployed and how
- different methodologies for a variety of audiences
- building alliances –who and how
- how success will be measured

**Facilitator: Indra Adnan**

Director, Soft Power Network, London

**Facilitator: Jonathan McClory**

Senior Researcher, Institute for Government, London

**Facilitator: Philip Seib**

Director, USC Centre on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

**Facilitator: Ivar Nijhuis**

Director Communications Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, The Hague

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**1045-1115** Coffee in the Green Room

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**1115-1200** **8. The Pitch**

Presentations from break out groups

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**1200-1245** **9. Smart power: the way forward?**

Panel discussion

**Chaired by:**

**Andrew Pike**

Deputy Head, Engagement; Head, External Engagement, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

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**1300-1400** Lunch

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**1400** Participants depart