



Belgo-British Conference 2012
Conference Programme

A BELGO-

TWO COUNTRIES, HOW MANY EUROPEES?

BRITISH DIALOGUE

Brussels, 8-9 November 2012

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BRITISH DIALOGUE

13th Belgo-British Conference

Foreword

We are delighted to welcome you to the Belgo-British Conference 2012, which marks our 13th annual bilateral conference.

The Belgo-British Conference is a high-level event established and supported by the British and Belgian governments to discuss issues where the two countries have shared interests, if not always common policies and approaches. It aims to explore differences, compare methods and look for common ground for progress bilaterally and, in partnership, within the European Union.

Traditionally, this event brings together around 100 politicians, business people, academics, journalists, and other opinion-formers to debate themes of common and crucial importance to Belgium, Britain and Europe. In recent years themes have included "Player or Spectator, Europe in tomorrow's world", "Natural resources: challenges and opportunities" and "Employment and Growth-comparing UK and Belgian policies". One important product of these Conferences has been a particularly active network which enriches bilateral political and cultural relations between the two countries.

This annual meeting is also a long-standing and valuable partnership between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EGMONT the Royal Institute for International Relations and the British Council.

The success of this Conference is due to the hard work and dedication of many people and we would like to take the opportunity to express our thanks: firstly, to our two distinguished patrons, HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium and HRH The Prince of Wales; whose continued support and confidence in the value and future of this enterprise is of the greatest importance to us all. Secondly, may we express our profound gratitude to our two Chairs, Honorary Ambassador Lode Willems and Sir Stephen Wall, for their support and guidance during the preparation of this year's Conference. We would also like to thank the other members of the conference board: Robin Berkeley, Alexandra Cogels, Marina Cruysmans, Mia Doornaert, Piet Eeckhout, Jonathan Fenby, Piers Fotiadis, Katrina Johnson, David Kernohan, Dirk Loncke, André Oosterlinck, Véronique Petit, Catherine Stewart and Véronique Vlieghe.

The organisation of this Conference would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors and we would like to express our sincere thanks to them all: BNP Paribas Fortis, BP Europe, Eurostar, GSK, HayGroup and UCB. We would also like to thank the chairs and the panellists of each session for their time and their valuable contributions.



Johan Verbeke
Ambassador
Belgium Embassy,
London



Jonathan Brenton
Ambassador
British Embassy,
Brussels



Marc Trenteseau
Director General
EGMONT – Royal
Institute for International
Relations, Brussels



Andrew Murray
Director
British Council,
Brussels

Two Countries, How Many Europe? A Belgo-British Dialogue

Last year, our conference was devoted to the challenges of growth and employment in a harsh economic climate. This year, we considered choosing a similar immediate issue, but the two of us thought, and our colleagues on the Board agreed, that the policies of both British and Belgian Governments would be, indeed were already being, critically influenced by the decisions being taken on the future of the European Union project as a whole.

So, this is one of those existential moments when it is right to try and assess and forecast, but to do so in a way which still focuses on the policy choices which Britain and Belgium both face, albeit with very different perspectives.

President Mitterrand used to say to Margaret Thatcher, with regard to the European project, that whether the stonemasons working at their trade believed they were building a wall or a cathedral, their task was the same. But the analogy only works so far. The nature of your vision for the future affects the degree of your commitment. But even commitment is not enough.

The euro zone has embarked on a path whose implications are far reaching for all its member countries in terms of fiscal, budgetary, pensions and wages policy. Will Governments have the will to see through their commitments when the going gets even tougher than it is now? Will an increasingly federal project command popular support in what will remain essentially national electoral constituencies?

As far as Britain is concerned, can she increasingly not participate and still stay influential? Can she be outside the big debate and not be out altogether? Or does Britain's economic size and her key role in European foreign and security policy make her an essential partner?

We shall try to look in our conference from both the top and the base of Mitterrand's wall at the options open to our two countries. We do not pretend in the Belgo-British Conference to be grand architects. But sometimes it is the stonemason's signature on a hidden cornerstone that can unlock a vision.

Plenary session 1

Implications of the Eurozone crisis for the EU as a whole

What are the policy implications of greater political and economic integration between the Eurozone countries? Will the “new” Eurozone lead to a two-speed Europe, a multi-speed Europe or to two distinct Europes: a hard core in ever closer union and a periphery? What steps can be taken to ensure the continued coherence, in both policies and governance, of the EU as a whole? How to we achieve growth alongside fiscal discipline? What are the chances of success of the Europe 2020 growth strategy?

Chair

Honorary Ambassador Lode Willems

Belgian Chairman of the Conference

Panellists

Baron Frans van Daele

Honorary Ambassador, former Head of the President of the Council's Cabinet Herman Van Rompuy

Mr John Stevens

Chairman of the British Committee of the European People's Party

Plenary session 2

Implications for European External Policies

What are the implications of the EU's internal problems for its external influence? Will stronger monetary, fiscal and economic discipline in the Eurozone lead to a more united and influential EU in the IFIS? Can the EU's enlargement commitments be sustained? Does protectionism in the EU endanger the prospects for world trade? Is it possible to devise a European defence policy which is more than the sum of bilateral co-operations e.g. between France and the UK?

Chair

Ambassador Jonathan Brenton

British Ambassador to Belgium

Panellists

Prof. Dr. Sven Biscop

Director “Europe in the World Programme”, EGMONT, the Royal Institute for International Relations

Prof. Dr. Richard Whitman

Professor of Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent, and an Associate Fellow at Chatham House

Plenary Session 3

The EU and its Citizens

Are we witnessing a significant disaffection of the EU's citizens from the EU's institutions and even its objectives? Is there a trend towards populism in national politics? If so, can it be remedied in an EU of "ins" (the Eurozone) and "outs"? Is there a realistic prospect of Europe-wide democracy? Would it address the underlying problem?

Chair

Ms Jacki Davis

Managing Director, Meade Davis
Communications, and journalist, commentator
and senior adviser to the European Policy
Centre

Panellists

Mr Mats Persson

Director, Open Europe, independent think-tank

Mrs Christine Roger

Director Media and Communication,
Council of the European Union

Breakout group 1

Implications of the Eurocrisis for bilateral relations and cooperation

Chair

Mr Marc Trenteseau

Director General, EGMONT, the Royal Institute for International Relations

Rapporteur

Professor Iain Begg

Professor at European Institute, London School of Economics

Breakout group 2

Implications for European External Policies

Chair

Ambassador

Johan Verbeke
Belgian Ambassador to the United Kingdom

Rapporteur

Mr Tomáš Valášek

President, Central European Policy Institute (CEPI)

Breakout group 3

The EU and its Citizens: Belgian and UK views, attitudes and policies

Chair

Mr Anton La Guardia

European Union Correspondent, The Economist

Rapporteur

Baroness Mia Doornaert

Foreign affairs columnist of the newspaper De Standaard, and former independent advisor at the cabinet of Prime Minister Leterme

Breakout groups exploring the above themes from a Belgian and British perspective and their implications for Belgian-UK bilateral relations and cooperation in and outside the EU.

Thursday 8th November

14.04

Eurostar departure
from London
St Pancras

*Delegates travelling
on this train should
check-in no later
than 30 minutes
before departure*

17.05

Eurostar from
London arrives at
Brussels Midi/Zuid
Station

*Transfer by coach to
The Hotel Brussels
(bag drop), a 5-10
minute walk to the
venue*

18.00

Registration **Egmont Palace**,
8 bis, place du Petit Sablon/Kleine Zavel

18.30 – 19.30 *(in the Marble room)*

Official reception

at the Egmont Palace hosted by Mr Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Belgium

18.45

Welcome

by the Chairmen of the Belgo-British Conference, Honorary Ambassador Lode Willems and Sir Stephen Wall
&

Ministerial speeches

by Mr Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Belgium, and Rt. Hon David Lidington, MP, British Minister of State for Europe

19.30 – 21.30 *(in the Mirror room)*

Official dinner

at the Egmont Palace hosted by Mr Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Belgium

21.30 – 22.00

End of the day

Friday 9th November

08.30 – 08.45 *(ground floor “foyer”)*

Welcome coffee

08.50 – 09.00 *(in the Arenberg room)*

Welcome by the Chairmen of Belgo-British Conference

09.00 – 10.30

Plenary session 1

Implications of the Eurozone crisis for the EU as a whole

Panel discussion then opens up to participants (debate)

10.30 – 11.00 *(in the Tapestry room)*

Tea and coffee break

11.00 – 12.00 *(in the Arenberg room)*

Plenary session 2

Implications for European External Policies

Panel discussion then opens up to participants (debate)

12.00 – 13.00 *(in the Arenberg room)*

Plenary session 3

The EU and its Citizens

Panel discussion then opens up to participants (debate)

13.00 – 14.00 *(in the Mirror room)*

Buffet lunch

14.00 – 15.30 *(in the Blue, Orange and Tangerine rooms)*

Breakout sessions

15.30 – 16.00 *(in the Tapestry room)*

Tea and coffee break

16.00 – 17.30 *(in the Arenberg room)*

Final session

chaired by Sir Stephen Wall, British Chairman of the Conference

Report-back from the breakout groups rapporteurs and final debate

Closing session

chaired by Sir Stephen Wall, British Chairman of the Conference

17.30

End of the Belgo-British Conference

17.30

A coach will be wait for delegates in front of the Egmont Palace (8 bis place du Petit Sablon/ Kleine Zavel)

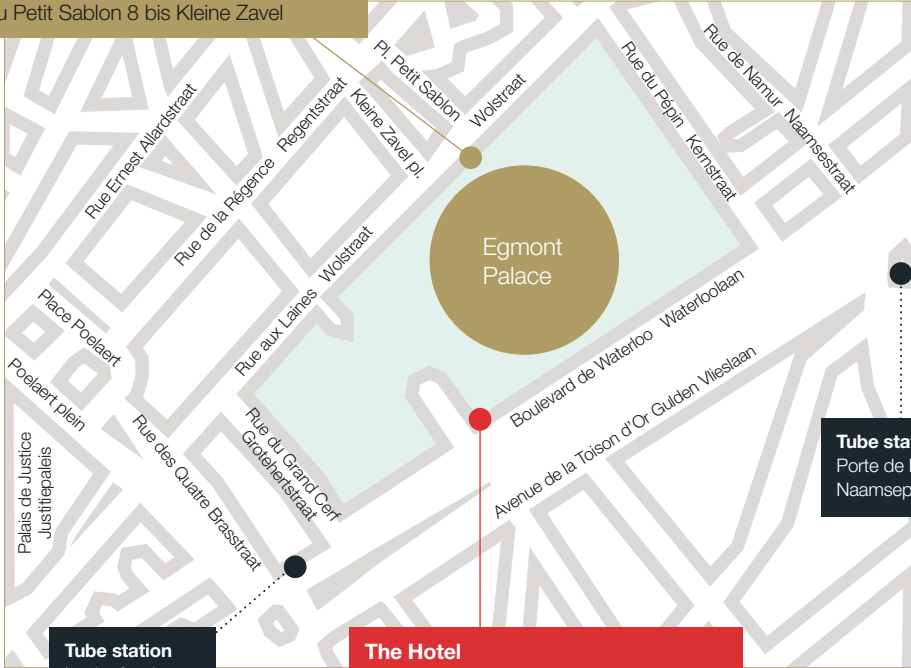
18.56

*Eurostar departure from Brussels Midi/ Zuid Station
Delegates travelling on this train should check-in no later than 30 minutes before departure*

19.57

Eurostar from Brussels arrives at London St Pancras

Entrance Egmont Palace
Place du Petit Sablon 8 bis Kleine Zavel



Tube station
Louise/Louiza

The Hotel
Boulevard de Waterloo 38 Waterloolaan

Tube station
Porte de Namur
Naamsepoort

Contacts

The Belgo-British Conference Project Manager will be available throughout the conference and can be contacted on her mobile:

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Palais d'Egmont

*Nearest tube stations: Louise/Louiza,
Porte de Namur/Naamsepoort*
Boulevard de Waterloo 31 Waterloolaan
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. reception +32 (0)2 501 46 54

The Hotel

Boulevard de Waterloo 38 Waterloolaan
B-1000 Brussels
Tel. +32 (0)2 504 11 11
www.thehotel.be

Sponsors



BNP Paribas Fortis

In May 2009 Fortis Bank joined BNP Paribas Group under the name BNP Paribas Fortis and is now part of one of the six strongest banks in the world according to Standard & Poor's (within its peer group). Under the new ownership, the employees of BNP Paribas and BNP Paribas Fortis have been working hard together towards the creation of a Eurozone financial services leader that serves nearly 20 million clients. With a presence in 85 countries and 205,000 employees, BNP Paribas is a global-scale European leader in financial services. It ranks highly in its three core activities: Retail Banking, Investment Solutions and Corporate & Investment Banking. BNP Paribas has had a presence in the UK for 130 years and has a total workforce of 8,000 in the UK including its subsidiaries.

www.bnpparibasfortis.com



BP Europe

BP is one of the world's leading international oil and gas companies, providing its customers with fuel for transportation, energy for heat and light, retail services and petrochemicals products for everyday items. The BP group operates across six continents, and our products and services are available in more than 80 countries.

Our business segments are Upstream, consisting of three distinct Divisions – Exploration, Developments and Production, Refining and Marketing and Alternative Energy.

www.bp.com



Eurostar

Eurostar is the high-speed train service linking St Pancras International, Ebbsfleet International, Ashford International, Paris, Brussels, Lille, Calais, Disneyland Resort Paris, Avignon and the French Alps. Up to 18 return services run between London and Paris and up to 10 services run between London and Brussels every day.

Since the introduction of the first service 18 years ago, Eurostar has carried more than 120 million travellers. To book tickets or for more travel information, please visit eurostar.com or call +44 8432 186 186.

www.eurostar.com



Glaxo

The group GSK has a challenging and inspiring mission: to improve the quality of human life by enabling people to do more, feel better and live longer. This mission gives us the purpose to develop innovative medicines, vaccines and products that help millions of people around the world.

GSK Vaccines, a division of the GlaxoSmithKline Group, is one of the main global players in the research, development and production of prophylactic and therapeutic vaccines. We employ more than 12,200 people.

GSK's global vaccine headquarter is in Belgium with 7800 employees. Our research and development activities and our 14 manufacturing sites are spread throughout the entire world.

Our portfolio comprises 30 marketed vaccines and more than 20 candidate vaccines in development. Last year, we distributed 1.1 billion doses of our vaccines in 173 countries. This represents approximately 3 million doses a day.

Over 80 % of these doses went to developing countries, where they are supplied at preferential prices.

www.gsk.com



Hay Group

Hay Group is a global management consulting firm that works with leaders to transform strategy into reality. We develop talent, organize people to be more effective and motivate them to perform at their best. Our focus is on making change happen and helping people and organizations realize their potential.

We have over 2600 employees working in 84 offices in 48 countries. Our insight is supported by robust data from over 125 countries. Our clients are from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, across every major industry, and represent diverse business challenges. For over 60 years, we have been renowned for the quality of our research and the intellectual rigor of our work. We transform research into actionable insights. We give our clients breakthrough perspectives on their organization, and we do it in the most efficient way to achieve the desired results.

www.haygroup.com/be



UCB

UCB, Brussels, Belgium is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of innovative medicines and solutions to transform the lives of people living with severe diseases of the immune system or of the central nervous system.

With more than 8 500 people in about 40 countries, the company generated revenue of € 3.2 billion in 2010. UCB is listed on Euronext Brussels (symbol: UCB).

www.ucb.com

Partners



Belgian Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

Strong bilateral relations between the United Kingdom and Belgium are a definite asset both for our government and society. The Belgian Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Affairs thus fully supports the Belgo-British Conference and is proud to contribute to its success. The yearly conferences fit in a long-term agenda aimed at addressing the concerns shared by our citizens and developing informal networks in all walks of life. The Belgo-British Conference has proven its value in connecting people across the Channel.

www.diplobel.fgov.be



British Council

Connecting the UK to the world and the world to the UK, the British Council is the UK's international cultural relations body. We build trust and understanding for the UK to create a safer and more prosperous world. In terms of our reach and impact, we are the world's leading cultural relations organisation. Cultural relations is a component of international relations which focuses on developing people-to-people links and complements government-to-people and government-to-government contact. With our 7,000 staff working in 191 offices in 110 countries and territories, we use English, Arts, and Education and Society – the best of the UK's great cultural assets – to bring people together and to attract partners to working with the UK. We are a registered charity in England, Scotland and Wales. We operate under Royal Charter and our patron is Her Majesty The Queen.

www.britishcouncil.be



EGMONT Royal Institute for International Relations

The Royal Institute for International Relations is an independent think-tank based in Brussels. Drawing on the expertise of its own research fellows, as well as that of external specialists, it provides analysis and suggests international policy options that are meant to be as operational as possible. Conferences, colloquia and seminars nurture the work of the research fellows and give participants the opportunity to exchange views with other specialists and with a well-informed public made up of representatives of the political, economic and academic spheres, the media and civil society. Closer collaboration with other research centres, both in Belgium and in the rest of Europe and beyond, has resulted in a growing number of joint conferences and in more structured cooperation on research and publications. It has proved to be mutually beneficial and enriching.

www.egmontinstitute.be



Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

The Belgo-British Conference symbolises the close relationship between the United Kingdom and Belgium. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), through the British Embassy in Brussels, has supported the event since its inception in 2000. Belgium and the UK have historically close ties. We share a common vision on numerous policy priorities. As neighbours, we work together on security, trade and investment, and foreign policy priorities. The annual Conference is an opportunity to strengthen our relations, further our understanding of each other's priorities, and identify future areas of co-operation. The 2012 Conference will be a chance to share and discuss our respective views on and responses to a range of EU issues currently challenging Member States, including the UK and Belgium. Participants of the Conference may be surprised to learn that Belgium and the UK share more in common on the EU agenda, particularly on economic growth and foreign policy, than first meets the eye.

ukinbelgium.fco.gov.uk/en/



Conference '12

Designed by lbp studio

