

# THE FEDERAL TRUST

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**enlightening the debate on good governance**

## PRESS INFORMATION

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### **EUROPE'S PLACE IN THE WORLD - AND BRITAIN'S PLACE IN EUROPE**

**The Federal Trust is today (16 December 2010) holding a conference on Europe's place in the world and Britain's place in Europe, at Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB from 2 to 5pm. The event is being held in collaboration with the Global Policy Institute of London Metropolitan University and is co-funded by the London Representation of the European Commission.**

The European External Action Service (EEAS), under the leadership of Baroness Ashton, the European High Representative for Foreign Affairs, is appointing some 7,000 diplomats in 132 embassies around the globe. The European Union aims as a result of the Lisbon Treaty to play a major part on the world stage. But, apart from providing the High Representative herself, how active a part is Britain prepared to play in this new layer of diplomacy? How far Britain, semi-detached by virtue of being neither in the Eurozone nor a party to the Schengen Agreement will cope with these new circumstances will be the main theme of the conference.

Opening the conference will be **Dr Antonio Missiroli**, from the European Commission where he is head of the European Dialogue Section at the Bureau of European Policy Advisers. He says "Many things have changed in Europe (and worldwide) since the Lisbon Treaty was first negotiated and then ratified - the policy agenda, in particular, has dramatically shifted towards bread-and-butter issues - and we are all aware now that Europe's international role is more likely to be shaped by its future economic performance than by its diplomacy. Still, it is worthwhile analysing and exploring how the EEAS may shape and affect the way external action at large will be conducted by the EU. Challenges are manifold - in practical, functional and substantial terms - but one thing is certain: in a few years' time, EU foreign policy will no longer be what it used to."

**Lord Hannay of Chiswick**, a member of the House of Lords EU Select Committee, will argue that the Europe of 27 member states has a weight in the world's affairs which means that its actions are significant whether negatively or positively. Issues like the world trade negotiations, climate change, and relations with many countries in the vicinity of the

European Union, to its east in the Balkans and in the Mediterranean, depend crucially on the decisions made by the European Union. The Lisbon Treaty provides a strengthened framework for reaching those decisions. Britain is a key player in the European Union common foreign and security policy and needs to make good use of that position in shaping the EU's response to all these challenges.

Director of the Global Policy Institute and Professor of Government at London Metropolitan University, **Professor Stephen Haseler**, author of *Sidekick: Bulldog to Lapdog - British Global Strategy from Churchill to Blair* (published by Forum Press 2007) points out for his part: "Britain has been overextended militarily and financially ever since the Second World War - overextended military commitments and overextended banks have led us to the delusion that 'we can punch above our weight'. We must now, following the global financial collapse in Wall Street and the City of London, and given the reduced American interest in Europe, reset our foreign policy priorities towards a more modest role. Britain's medium sized European country must take full part in the European Union and its future."

Other speakers will be **Professor Richard Whitman**, Professor of Politics and Head of the Department of European Studies and Modern Languages at the University of Bath, and Director of the Federal Trust **Brendan Donnelly**.

**ENDS**

### Notes

The Federal Trust was founded in 1947 by Sir William Beveridge to examine the interactions between regional, national, European and global levels of government. It has always had a strong interest in the European Union and Britain's place in it.

This conference is the third of a series to examine the effect of the new British government on Britain's role in Europe.

Further conferences are to be held on

**20th January 2011**, Citizenship and the Lisbon Treaty - can the British ever be European citizens?

**20th May 2011**, Britain in Europe - launch of the report based on findings from the conferences.

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