

Hoon: Europe Must Deliver Results

Posted on Thursday 19th April 2007

Minister for Europe Geoff Hoon will give a keynote speech on the need for Europe to deliver results for its citizens at the European Research Institute, University of Birmingham, on Thursday 19 April at 6.15pm.

He will open the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Conference 'The Future of Europe: Identity, History, Culture' by saying:

"The challenge of how to change Europeans' lives for the better is not new. It is the same question asked by the founders of the European Union fifty years ago. The UK has consistently argued that this should be the starting point of all discussions on the Future of Europe. And we should establish where the added value of the European Union lies.

"Europe has started to deliver in many areas now that really matter to people that were set out during the UK Presidency in 2005. On innovation, for example, we have made progress towards a truly knowledge-based economy which can compete with the new economies of the East.

"Last month's Spring European Council set an ambitious target of a 25% reduction in greenhouse gases. A real step towards a new economy which will be competitive but sustainable. Europe acting as a global leader.

"We know that citizens value this approach. In the Financial Times Harris poll published last month, 71% of UK citizens believe that the EU should do more on the environment, 69% think the same on energy and over 60% would like to see greater EU engagement on security and fighting crime.

"I strongly believe that in many areas it is more efficient to work in a partnership of 27 member states than acting alone. The underlying philosophy behind the creation of the European Union was that we can achieve more by our common endeavour than we do alone."

Ends

Notes for Editors:

1. Geoff Hoon will make his speech on Thursday 19 April at 18:15 at the University of Birmingham's European Research Institute on Pritchatts Road. The full speech will be available at www.fco.gov.uk
2. The Government's approach to future of Europe discussions was set out in a Written Ministerial Statement of 5 December 2006 by Minister for Europe Geoff Hoon. The 6 principles in future of Europe discussions are: pursuing British interests, a modern and effective EU, consensus among 27 Member States, emphasis on subsidiarity, making best use of existing Treaties, and openness to global change.
3. The ERI is the hub for over fifty academic staff engaged in the teaching and research in the fields of European politics, economics, history, law, culture and society. Its expertise is pan-European, including EU institutions, old and new member states, Russia, the Balkans and the Wider Mediterranean. All of the constituent parts of the ERI received 5, 5* or 6* grades in the last Research Assessment Exercise. The Institute also advises and acts as a resource centre for government, business and the wider community.

For further information

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