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University of Birmingham launches permanent presence in Brussels

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The University of Birmingham has launched an office in Brussels, becoming the first UK University to have a dedicated presence in the political centre of the European Union.

The office wwas officially launched by HMA Jonathan Brenton the British Ambassador to Belgium at a special event on Wednesday 1st December 2010. Other speakers at the event include Malcolm Harbour MEP and Dr Anneli Pauli, Deputy Director-General of DG Research for the European Commission.

The office has been established to help inform European policy debates and the development of programmes, support alumni in the Benelux region and consolidate European research collaborations. The office will also provide local services to the staff and students of the University when working and studying in Brussels.

Founded in 1900, the University of Birmingham is now one of the world's leading universities for the quality of teaching and research. Birmingham was England's first civic university, where students from all religions and backgrounds were accepted on an equal basis.

Professor Michael Sheppard, Provost and Vice-Principal of the University who will be hosting the launch comments: 'Higher education is a global business with most major research projects bringing together expertise from a range of institutions. At Birmingham increasing numbers of academics are conducting major research with European partners, supported by EU's initiatives such as FP7 fund.

'We hope our new presence in Brussels will enhance opportunities for research and teaching collaborations to find collective solutions to the major challenges facing society, in areas like health, energy and transport.'

Professor Martin Freer from the University's Department of Physics is part of a number of European collaborative projects: 'The development of a Brussels office is vital to Birmingham establishing itself within a European collaborative environment.

'Within the Birmingham Centre for Nuclear Education and Research we have long recognised the importance of developing strong collaborations with key European partners, and the new office will help provide a focus for such initiatives.'

For further information contact Ben Hill, PR Manager, University of Birmingham, Tel 0121 4145134, Mob 07789 921163.

Notes to Editors

Photo caption:
From left to right - Professor Michael Sheppard, Provost and Vice-Principal, University of Birmingham, Mr Malcolm Harbour MEP, Chairman of the European Parliament Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection, Mr. Jonathan Brenton, British Ambassador to Belgium, and Dr Anneli Pauli, Deputy Director General of DG Research, European Commission.

Image by Jérôme Colonnello.

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