

## The rise, fall and return of Berlusconi: conference examines former Italian Prime Minister

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A one-day conference discussing the rise, fall and future of the notorious former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi will take place this week (Friday 14 December) at the University of Birmingham.

Co-organised with the University of Salford, the conference is particularly timely given Berlusconi's strong indications that he will run for office in Italy again in 2013 and current Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti's announcement to step down as soon as his 2013 budget is passed, opening the way to national elections as early as next February.

The conference will consider what kind of a leader Berlusconi is; how the success of a leader of this type is to be explained, and the extent to which 'the Berlusconi experience' is indicative of electoral, party and other types of political change taking place elsewhere. Keynote speeches will be given by Stephen Gundle, Professor of Film and Television Studies at University of Warwick and Bill Emmott, former editor of the Economist.

Dr Daniele Albertazzi, Senior Lecturer in European politics at the University of Birmingham, said: "There are few political leaders in Europe who could afford to lose a second general election to the same opponent (as Berlusconi did in 2006, having run against Romano Prodi) and still survive to lead their party into another contest. But, then, there are few contemporary leaders comparable to Silvio Berlusconi. The media tycoon remained at the forefront of Italian politics in 2006, and two years later became Prime Minister again for a fourth time. As he announces his intention to run for office again, therefore, commentators should exercise caution before writing him off as a has-been."

For further information about the conference and programme, visit: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/italian/berlusconi-conference-2012.pdf> (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/italian/berlusconi-conference-2012.pdf>) or contact Daniele Albertazzi at: [d.albertazzi@bham.ac.uk](mailto:d.albertazzi@bham.ac.uk) (<mailto:d.albertazzi@bham.ac.uk>)

### Notes to Editors

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