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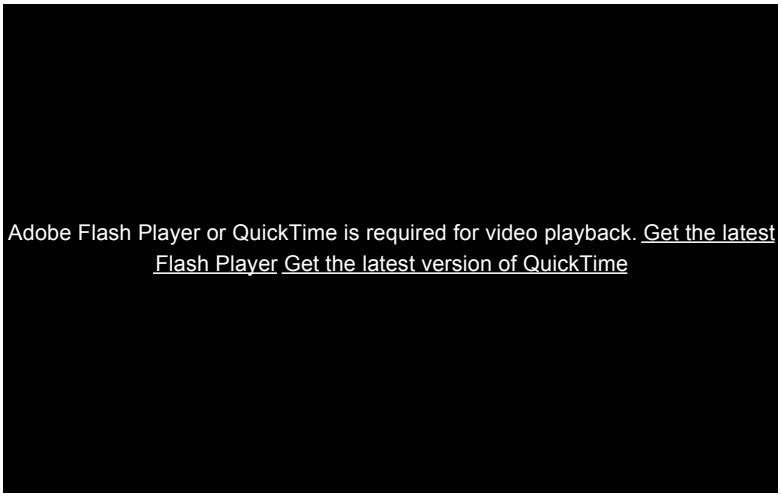
Georgian Ambassador Visits CREES

Posted on Thursday 29th November 2012

Highlighting the deep interest in the politics, society and history of the Caucasus at the University of Birmingham and the strong links between the Centre for Russian and East European Studies (CREES) and the diplomatic community, CREES hosted Georgia's Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Ireland Giorgi Badridze on Wednesday 21 November 2012.

During his visit Ambassador met with Professor Michael Sheppard, Provost and Vice Principal and Professor Cillian Ryan, Jean Monnet Chair in European Economics, Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences. The meeting was also attended by Ms Irine Dakhundaridze, Counsellor at the Georgian Embassy in London, **Dr Tim Haughton (/staff/profiles/government-society/haughton-tim.aspx)**, Director of CREES, **Dr Galina Yemelianova (/staff/profiles/government-society/yemelianova-galina.aspx)** from CREES and **Nino Kemoklidze (/schools/government-society/research/doctoral-researchers/profiles/kemoklidze-nino.aspx)**, PhD Researcher in CREES. Professor Cillian Ryan and Dr Tim Haughton also hosted lunch in honour of the Ambassador. After lunch the Ambassador was given a tour of the **Barber Institute of Fine Arts (http://barber.org.uk/)** by its Acting Director and Head of Collections and Learning Mr Robert Wenley. During the tour the Ambassador was shown the special collection of ancient Georgian coins held at the Barber Institute.

The Ambassador was visiting the University of Birmingham to take part in the CREES 50th Anniversary Seminar Series 'Why do Caucasian Studies Matter?'. The Seminar was organized by the University of Birmingham Research Group on the Caucasus and Central Asia and CREES in conjunction with the Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS), School of Government and Society, College of Social Sciences. It marked the launch of the Europe-Asia Studies' **Special Issue on the 'Many Faces of the Caucasus' (vol. 64, issue 9) (http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ceas20/64/9)** guest-edited by Dr Galina Yemelianova (CREES), **Dr Cerwyn Moore (/staff/profiles/government-society/moore-cerwyn.aspx)** (POLSIS), Nino Kemoklidze (CREES) and former CREES member of staff Professor Jeremy Smith of the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland who all presented at the seminar.



The Ambassador acknowledged the rare and valuable language-based area studies expertise on the Caucasus which exists at CRESS. In light of the landmark Parliamentary elections in Georgia in October 2012 he once again emphasised the growing political and security relevance of the Caucasus for Europe and the wider world and the importance of studying this region. The Ambassador expressed his willingness to facilitate the establishment of network, research, and teaching links between CREES and the Universities in Georgia. In particular, he welcomed the idea of offering Georgian language classes as part of a new MA programme in Russian and Eurasian Studies at CREES.

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