

December 2005

Historic Iraq elections

The people of Iraq went to the polls for the third time in 2005 on 15 December to vote in full national elections for a new representative four year term Iraqi Government; based on the constitution that was ratified in the October referendum. These historic elections demonstrated the real progress that is being made in Iraq, with the backing of the international community through the authority of the UN, and are a major step forward after decades of dictatorship. 15 million Iraqis registered their right to vote in the elections, demonstrating the desire Iraqis have to embrace democracy and defy the terrorists. Over 300 political parties registered, compared with 111 for the January elections, reflecting the increased participation of Sunni Arabs. Prime Minister Tony Blair said,

'I'd like to say how pleased I am at the prospect of the first ever proper full democratic elections in Iraq and to say it's extraordinary and uplifting to see so many millions of people exercise their democratic rights. And whatever the huge challenges there are ahead, it shows very clearly that given the choice the Iraqi people want the same as the rest of us, which is a chance to live under a democratic form of government.'

Despite this progress, we recognise that security does remain a concern. We want to handover security lead to the Iraqis as soon as possible and the Iraqi Government want to be able to provide their own security. But the actions of the insurgents and the terrorists are preventing this and, as President Talabani has said, it would be a catastrophe for Iraq if the multinational forces were to abandon Iraq now. The Iraqis, supported by the United Nations, are fighting alongside British and other multinational forces under the authority of UN Security Council Resolution 1637. Our armed forces are in Iraq fulfilling the terms of this UN mandate at the invitation of the Iraqi government and we are working with the Iraqis on the development of democracy; the formation of security forces to protect it and social and economic reconstruction.

While we want to build all three, the terrorists want to destroy all three. But, despite the terrorist activity, progress is steadily being made on all fronts. Iraqi security forces now number 211,000 (exceeding the multinational forces); the training and capacity of forces is improving and 80 per cent of counter terror operations now have an Iraqi lead or involvement.

And away from the headlines, much of Iraq is stable. Reconstruction is well underway and the lives of millions of ordinary Iraqis are being improved. The rehabilitation of over 150 healthcare facilities is now complete and 272 primary health care facilities, 19

training centres, the national drug quality control laboratory, 17 mental health care facilities, and 21 maternal health wards are in the process of ongoing rehabilitation. Over 3,400 schools have been rehabilitated; more than 30,000 teachers and healthcare workers have been trained and there was a fifty per cent growth in the economy in 2004.

To date, \$32 billion has been pledged by the international community for reconstruction, and the UK has committed £544 million for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, of which £453 million has already been disbursed. This has included money in response to emergency appeals, and millions of pounds for reconstruction and support to central government, the justice sector, independent media, civil society and political participation. We have contributed £70 million to the World Bank and UN International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq trust funds. And DFID has recently announced plans to provide over £10 million to support Iraqi civil society and political participation through two major new funds, managed by the British Council.

And mirroring the political progress on a national level, Iraq now has a devolved system of government - almost all towns now have municipal councils and those that have been elected are largely secular - and there is guaranteed protection of minority rights. Iraqi media and civil society are flourishing after years of control. The Iraqi labour movement, persecuted and driven underground by the former regime, has grown enormously in confidence and strength since the fall of Saddam Hussein and there is now one unified union, the Iraqi Workers Federation. Although there remains a huge task to rebuild institutions which have been so damaged by years of repression and under investment, justice systems are being rehabilitated, and lawyers, judges, and prosecutors are being trained in international and humanitarian law.

UK EU Presidency

The UK Presidency of the European Union comes to an end on 31 December. Over the last six months, the UK Presidency has delivered the historic launch of accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia. The richest EU member states, through Britain's leadership, agreed to commit to reaching the UN target of 0.7 per cent of GDP spent on aid by 2015. The UK Presidency has also achieved an historic deal on the reform of the EU sugar sector, securing a sustainable future for the sector and getting a fairer deal for developing countries. The UK has also strengthened the EU position on climate change.

The Presidency has also reached agreement on a number of important pieces of legislation, including the REACH regulation on chemicals and the Data Retention Directive, an important measure against terrorism. We have also overseen moves towards better regulation in the EU, with the Commission scrapping 68 proposals and simplifying another 100. The EU budget 160 billion cheaper than the original Commission proposals, provides for a huge transfer of spending from the original 15 to the new member states of eastern Europe, and preserves the British rebate in full on the CAP and all spending in the EU 15.

**Willkommen.
Bienvenue.
Welcome.**

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More UK aid to help fight hunger in Zambia

On 3 October 2005, International Development Minister Gareth Thomas announced that up to 86,000 Zambians facing food shortages will benefit from the additional £1 million of support the government has pledged. The announcement was made whilst the Minister was in Zambia, accompanied by Rosie Winterton, Minister of State for Health Services. The money will be used to support Oxfam in ensuring that the

worst-affected people in Zambia will receive a combination of cash-grants and vouchers, which they can exchange at local markets to buy food and essentials such as water, blankets and fuel, without the need to sell vital assets. The announcement brought the UK's total support to Zambia for its food shortages to £1.5 million; and response to the food shortages facing southern Africa to over £57 million.



The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary address a group of senior MEPs

Key representatives of the European Parliament discuss the UK Presidency

Senior representatives of the European Parliament were invited to London in June to discuss the government's proposed agenda for the UK Presidency of the EU. In light of the European Parliament's powers of co-decision, the meeting was organised by the government to ensure that key MEPs were involved in our presidency priorities from the very beginning.



The Prime Minister and Martin Schultz MEP, Leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament



Photo: Tom Levitt MP

Every child is precious

This picture has dominated the Labour Party's campaign material on International Development, taken by MP Tom Levitt, on a recent his trip to Zambia. It illustrates that children are the same the world over and deserve the same chance of a happy, healthy and fulfilling life. Tom Levitt MP PPS to the Secretary of State for Development, said:

"I travelled to Zambia last year to see for myself the social, economic and educational challenges facing that country. On day three of my visit we left Bauleni primary school in Lusaka impressed by the teaching, curriculum and well attended classes of hard working Zambian children.

A teacher led us across a deserted Friday afternoon market place, pitted with large pools of stagnant, unhealthy water, taking us to see some of the most marginalized poor, disabled children who received home-tuition. David was bright with mild cerebral palsy. He would have attended school if the ground had not been too wet and rough for his wheelchair. Then we met Amelia. At five years old she lived with

her mother, grandmother and sisters in a brick-walled roofless compound. Her father had died of AIDS and her visiting cousin slept all day as she recovered from malaria. Her mother was fetching water from the neighbourhood well which was open three hours a day to paying customers. Amelia lived in her grandmother's arms. She had the worst cerebral palsy I had seen. The size of a doll, she had never spoken, walked or fed herself. Her hands were calloused through constant gripping. She cried when she was not comfortable, demanding 24 hour attention. The authorities had a special chair available, but at 1,300 kwacha it was way above the family's budget. Just £1.30 would give comfort for the rest of her short life. My colleague, an aid worker, promised to pay.

Then we met Sylvia, a delightful child with a lively personality and a ready smile, her head hideously deformed with hydrocephalus. I asked how old she was. I guessed about ten, but her mother did not know. We sat and chatted under a reed parasol, gathering an audience. Out of school, the white man with the camera attracted the children's gaze. Months later, the Labour Party used their image, as a symbol of our noble cause, to continue to work with others, the NGOs, the churches, faith groups and many ordinary people, who are all campaigning to end world poverty"

A historic day for Turkey and the European Union

Extracts from a statement made by Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary, to the House of Commons on 11 October 2005:

Turkey is part of Europe. It was a founder member of the Council of Europe in the 1940s, and was invited by the United Kingdom, France and others to join NATO as early as 1952. The prospect of European Union membership was first offered to Turkey some 42 years ago. That promise was repeated by the Union in ever more concrete terms in 1999 and in 2002. In December last year, and again in June this year, a specific start date of 3 October – during the UK's Presidency of the EU – was set.

There is no doubt that Turkey and Europe as a whole will benefit from this decision in equal measure. For Turkey, it represents another significant step on its long journey to becoming a fully European nation. The accession process – which will take at least ten years – will strengthen the wide-ranging reform programme that has been pushed through in recent years and will give renewed impetus to further improvements to the rule of law, respect for human rights and democratic institutions.

For the European Union, the decision means that a close partner will be brought even closer. Turkey has long been key to the security of Europe as a whole.

Turkey's economy is one of the fastest growing in Europe and it is already a major market for European Union exporters. Turkey plays a vital role in the fight against international terrorism, cross-border crime and drug trafficking. By standing by our promise to Turkey, we will make the European Union stronger, safer and more competitive.

The decision made on 3 October was, however, even more significant than that. For more than 1,000 years, the boundaries between Europe and Asia have principally been decided through bloodshed and conflict. By welcoming Turkey, with its large Muslim population, we are embarking on a new era in which it is manifest that the European Union and Europe is not just an exclusive "Christian club", at best cold to its neighbours, at worst actively hostile.

Instead, we are able to show that what binds this modern Europe together is a set of fundamental rights and freedoms combined with a common purpose, regardless of race or religion. That is a powerful message not only to the people of other faiths who live in neighbouring countries, but to the millions who already live within the borders of the European Union.

I do not underestimate the challenges ahead, some of which are for Turkey. Turkey, like all candidate countries, has to align its legislation with that of the European Union—an enormous task that is broken down into 35 separate chapters covering issues from justice and home affairs through to economic policy and the environment.

Some of the challenges are for Turkey's neighbours—Greece and Cyprus—as much as they are for Turkey. Some of the challenges ahead are for Europe as a whole, including continuing in good faith to help Turkey prepare for full membership of the European Union. Equally, the process means setting out clearly to our own peoples why having Turkey as a member of the European Union will bring direct benefit to all of them. We have to show that the greatest threat to our European culture and heritage comes not from opening our doors to a vibrant, secular nation such as Turkey, but from closing in on ourselves and allowing Europe to stagnate in the face of global competition.

Rt. Hon. Jack Straw MP

The Labour Party, through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, worked with sister parties and organisations from France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden to organise a seminar in Brussels entitled "The Turkish road to EU Membership – Challenges and Pitfalls". The Labour Party was represented by Eric Joyce MP, country liaison MP for Turkey.

South Asia earthquake

The South Asia earthquake registered 7.6 on the richter scale, killed over 70,000 and affected over 3.5 million people. A donor reconstruction conference was held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 19 November. At this, Gareth Thomas MP, International Development Minister, pledged a further £70 million towards reconstruction following the South Asia earthquake. This is in addition to the £33 million already pledged, bringing the total UK contribution to over £100 million.

Trade Justice

2005 has been a big year for international development. In June, Gordon Brown's deal with world finance ministers cancelled large chunks of the debt that has crippled the poorest countries. At Gleneagles Tony Blair helped deliver an agreement pledging \$50 billion extra in aid.

The third crucial building block is fairer trade. Labour's manifesto pledged the Government to secure it and December's World Trade Organisation talks offer a chance to bring it closer. Below is the statement on Trade Justice and the Hong Kong Trade talks given by Alan Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 1 November:

"The WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong represents an important opportunity to make significant progress in the Doha Development Agenda (DDA), which in turn could make a significant contribution to reducing global poverty. The UK Government is committed to achieving a successful, pro-development outcome to the Hong Kong Ministerial.

A pro-development outcome would deliver improved participation by developing countries in the world trading system, through substantially increased market access for developing countries and the dismantling of trade-distorting subsidies by industrialised countries. We recognise that trade liberalisation is not a panacea, and trade reforms must be carefully sequenced and part of a wider development and poverty reduction strategy.

We will continue to press hard for meaningful special and differential treatment for developing countries across all elements of the negotiations, including ensuring that any agriculture deal takes into account developing countries' rural development and food security needs.

Moreover, we will continue to work hard to support the poorest and most vulnerable producers, be it through multilateral negotiations in the WTO or regional trade agreements such as the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs).

Annual Conference 2005



The Prime Minister at the International Reception



Diana Holland, then Chair of the Britain in the World Policy Commission addresses the sister party lunch.



International visitors listen to the Leader's speech.



The Prime Minister of Mozambique addresses conference.



Colleagues at the sister party lunch



Jack Straw talks to diplomatic colleagues

The Labour Party Annual Conference took place in Brighton 25-29 September 2005. The international dimension of party conference this year was very successful with approximately 250 international visitors from sister parties, embassies, high commissions and international organisations from across the world participated. The keynote speech, given by Prime Minister Luisa Diago of Mozambique was well received and thought-provoking. Other international visitors included the Deputy Prime Minister of Israel, Shimon Peres; the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Jiri Paroubek; the Prime Minister of Macedonia, Vlado Buchkovski; the President of Serbia, Boris Tadic; the Foreign Minister of Macedonia – Ilinka Mitreva, and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Palestine – Abdullah Abdullah. The six party events run by the International Unit were well attended and helped give international observers a good idea of how conference works and what Labour is trying to achieve in our third term in government.

Update from the Labour Party and Westminster Foundation for Democracy

The Labour Party annually receives funds from the Westminster Foundation for Democracy to run democracy-building projects in various parts of the world. Projects are designed to help like minded political parties develop their organisation and infrastructure; to assist them in media, campaigning and election activity and to work with them to develop their political positions.

Listed below are some of the highlights of the work carried out between June 2005 and November 2005.

A study Programme was organised alongside Annual Conference in Brighton for our sister parties from **Africa** and the **Balkans**. In **Tanzania**, a workshop was organised in June for sister parties from across Africa on strengthening women's involvement in the political process. This was the third in a series of workshops and focused specifically on the issue of HIV/AIDS. In **Uganda**, an assessment visit was carried where next year the county will

participate in the first multi-party elections since 1980. In **Cyprus**, a workshop was organised in October for sister parties from the Middle East and the Mediterranean aimed at strengthening the involvement of women in building and maintaining the culture of peace. This was in co-operation with the SDLP. In the **Balkans**, the second workshop for the Stability Pact Network was held in Sofia, Bulgaria in October 2005. The Network was established in response to the Stability Pact for South East Europe and is a forum for the socialist and social democratic parties of the region to meet and reach a common view on regional issues. In **Romania**, a political assessment visit was carried out where the current political situation and the country's moves towards European Union membership were discussed. Developments in the **Ukraine** were also assessed following the so-called 'Orange Revolution' last year.



Workshop discussing HIV/Aids in Tanzania

Update from the European Parliamentary Labour Party



The UK's Presidency of the EU

Since the UK took over the Presidency of the EU in July, Labour MEPs have been working hand in hand with the government to shape the European agenda and deliver British priorities. Prime Minister Tony Blair MP addressed the European Parliament's plenary session in Brussels on the 23 June and in Strasbourg on 26 October. The Prime Minister also had meetings with the EPLP to discuss their role in shaping legislation to deliver Labour's goals at a European level.

Labour's key priorities for the EU Presidency - climate change, Africa, security and better regulation have received wide support in Brussels. This six-month period has seen Labour values promoted throughout the EU.

EPLP away day

Just after the summer recess the EPLP held an away day to discuss political objectives for the parliamentary term. The away day was also attended by the Cabinet minister David Miliband and EU Commissioner Margot Wallstrom. There was a general agreement that the priorities should be economic and social reform and security. Cross-cutting these two themes were the issues of better regulation and the positive benefits of EU enlargement.

Labour Party Annual Conference 2005

Over 120 delegates attended the EPLP's briefing meeting at conference this year with the the Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw. The EPLP also held a

meeting with Dave Prentis, General Secretary of Unison.

Newly elected Labour MPs visit the European Parliament

In October the EPLP invited Labour's new MPs to Brussels to visit the European Parliament to see first hand how the EU works.

CAP Reforms

North West MEP Terry Wynn has led the EPLP's campaign for reforms to the Common Agriculture Policy by calling for full disclosure of agricultural payments in all EU countries.

The EU spends some £45 billion on agriculture every year and 20 per cent of recipients get 80 per cent of the funds. The EPLP believes that if the EU wants to be democratically accountable, the taxpayer should be able to see exactly where this CAP money is spent, but so far only Denmark, the UK, Estonia, Sweden and Slovenia make this information available. This system has to change. Transparency will help the reform process.

Breast cancer awareness

Labour MEPs have been rallying to support breast cancer awareness in the light of shocking statistics that every two minutes a woman in the EU dies of breast cancer. Labour MEPs have been highlighting the dramatic improvement in breast cancer survival in the UK and calling for increased awareness that is vital for early detection of the disease.

New rights for professionals to work across Europe

Labour's spokesperson on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, Arlene McCarthy MEP, led the fight for new laws to recognise professional qualifications throughout the EU, which will smooth the way for professionals who currently have difficulties taking up jobs in other member states. Labour MEPs also demanded that professionals have the linguistic skills to be able to communicate proficiently in the language of their host country.

Minority rights

In June Labour MEP Claude Moraes put a report before parliament proposing the recognition of gay rights and two

new categories of minority - stateless persons and linguistic minorities - to combat discrimination and racism in Europe. This report defines for the first time what it means to be a minority in the EU. When Europe was enlarged to 25 member states it was said that countries would be judged on how they treated their minorities. This report sets the ball rolling by defining these groups so the mechanisms can be put in place to report and deal with discrimination.

Dolphins saved by new tuna label

Dolphin friendly tuna will be much friendlier after the EP signed up to stricter standards for tuna fishing. The new standards will guarantee the end of dolphin deaths and the danger to other species like turtles and sharks. The 'dolphin safe' label will only be granted when no dolphins are reported injured or killed in fishermen's nets. Previous dolphin friendly labels have certified tuna which was caught by fishermen aiming to reduce dolphin deaths but stopped short of guaranteeing that dolphins would be safe. Catherine Stihler MEP, Labour's European spokesperson on fisheries said: "People's purchasing power has won the day. Consumers will not accept unnecessary deaths or damage to the environment to catch their food. The food industry has now woken up to this."

MEPs ban dangerous chemicals from children's toys

Labour MEPs voted to ban chemicals used in children's toys that can result in fertility problems and serious disease such as cancer. Phthalates which are used to soften PVC toys can get into the bodies of young children when they put plastic toys in their mouths. Parliament banned the three most dangerous phthalates from future use in toy manufacturing and placed tough restrictions on another three chemicals.

Farewell to EPLP Secretary General

At the end of October EPLP Secretary General, Nick Smith, resigned his post to spend more time with his family. Nick will leave the EPLP towards the end of November. The EPLP wishes him all the best in his future endeavours.

International notice board

Election watch

5 May – our sister party retained power in **Dominica**. Good news too in **Mongolia** where the Mongolian Revolutionary Party won the presidential election after losing the parliamentary elections. Sergei Stanishev, the young Leader of the **Bulgarian Socialist Party** has become Prime Minister, leading a coalition government following the general election in June. It was second time round for Jens Stoltenberg, who became Prime Minister following the victory of the **Norwegian Labour Party** in September. However, the **Hungarian Social Democrats** were unable to win their Presidential election whilst in **Albania**, the governing Socialist Party lost to the right-wing Democratic Party. In **New Zealand**, Helen Clarke won a narrow victory in the polls becoming New Zealand's first Labour leader to win three consecutive terms in office. In **Afghanistan**, Women's rights activist Malalai Joya was one of the first winners named following September's first parliament and provincial assembly elections. In **Germany**, after an extremely close election and much negotiation, the SPD lost the Chancellorship to the right-wing CDU and entered into a Right/Left coalition under Chancellor Angela Merkel. In **Poland**, the Law and Justice Party, which narrowly won general elections last month after beating the Democratic Left Alliance, is holding coalition talks after its candidate, Lech Kaczynski, also won the Presidential election.

Party of European Socialists

Tony Blair hosted a meeting in 10 Downing Street of eight Prime Ministers, fifteen party leaders and many leading politicians of the European institutions on the eve of the EU Informal Summit on social Europe and globalisation. The challenges and opportunities of globalisation and increased economic competition were discussed.

The regular co-ordination meeting (international secretaries) took place in Brussels on 2 June. This was to prepare the PES Council, which took place in Vienna on 22 and 23 June.



PES Leaders Photo



Rt Hon Tony Blair MP, PM Zapatero of Spain, PES President Rasmussen



Rt Hon John Prescott MP addresses the PES Council in Vienna



Tony McNulty MP discusses immigration issues in the Netherlands

The Labour Party delegation, was led

by the Deputy Prime Minister (who addressed the Council) and included the party chair, two members of the NEC (Maggie Jones and Mel Whitter), a Member of Parliament (Shahid Malik), a Member of the European Parliament (Neena Gill) and the International Manager. The Council agreed PES Priorities for 2006 and reform of the PES. More info available from the PES website (www.pes.org) or from the International Manager.

The Labour Party hosted a meeting of PMs' personal representatives (Sherpas) on 7 September. The meeting, taking place for the first time outside of Brussels, discussed strengthening the European economy; demographic challenges and ways in which the offices of PES Prime Ministers could cooperate more in the future. Colleagues from Spain, the Czech Republic, Sweden and Bulgaria attended the meeting, in addition to colleagues from the No 10 Political Office.

International Newsletter

PES international secretaries met again in Brussels on 15 September at the regular co-ordination meeting to prepare for the forthcoming Presidency and Leaders meetings. Robert Evans MEP represented Ian McCartney, Labour Party Chair at the PES Presidency meeting in Brussels on 22 September. The Deputy Prime Minister addressed a Conference in October on Social Europe in Brussels, organised by the PES and the ETUC. Also in October, Tony McNulty spoke at a PES meeting in Amsterdam on Asylum and Immigration, organised in co-operation with our Dutch sister party. Tim Nuthall (Party Press Officer) represented the party at a seminar in Brussels on communications.



Labour Party Chair Ian McCartney and PES President Poul Nyrup Rasmussen sign the 'Make Poverty History Band' in the European Parliament

ECOSY

Labour Students and Young Labour hosted a weekend meeting of representatives of ECOSY (Young European Socialists) on 12 and 13 November. Politicians, political staff and academics addressed the group and various issues were widely discussed including the EU Presidency and the forthcoming EU Youth Council.

Socialist International Council

The Socialist International Council met in Tel Aviv and Ramallah on 23 and 24 May to discuss the Middle East Peace Process. The party was represented by Ian Stewart MP and the International Manager. The Council was addressed by both the Leader of the Israeli Labour Party Shimon Peres and the President of the Palestinian Authority Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas). A declaration on democracy and peace in the Middle East was adopted and papers on financial and economic issues; trade and social rights; reform of the UN; sustainable development and the information society were discussed.

A global network of parliamentarians from SI member states was also established. More information on all of the above is available from the SI website (www.socialistinternational.org) or from the International Manager.

Bi-lateral work

Labour Party staff travelled to **Germany** and **Sweden** to discuss campaigning. The leader of the **Finnish** Social democrats, Eero Heinäluome, met with Labour Party Chair Ian McCartney in July to discuss party development issues. Colleagues from the Democratic Left Alliance in **Poland** spent two days in London meeting with key party staff, including the General Secretary. The party also hosted colleagues from the **Ukraine**. Several colleagues from the **Australian** Labour Party held meetings with colleagues in London and future work with the **ANC** was discussed with a visiting colleague from South Africa. Colleagues from the Province of the Western Cape also participated in a series of meetings to discuss work with the media. Meetings were also held with colleagues from **Macedonia** and the **Hungarian** Embassy kindly hosted a reception for members of Young Labour and Labour Students in order to gain a greater understanding of Hungary.

Sister Party conferences

The **Swedish** Social Democrats held their Congress in Malmo between 29 October and 03 November. The Prime Minister sent a video message of support, which was warmly welcomed by the delegates. In his message, the Prime Minister spoke of the successes of the Swedish Social Democratic Party; the numerous areas of cooperation between the two parties and the two governments and of his personal regard for Swedish Prime Minister and Party Leader, Göran Persson. Apart from speeches from key Swedish Social Democrats, the Congress also adopted a series of policy guidelines, including a new international programme (available, in English, from

www.sap.se.)

Britain in the World Policy Commission Update

Conference 2005 agreed new proposals improving Partnership in Power (PiP) - the party's policy-making process - giving members, local parties and affiliates a stronger voice in shaping party policy. The Britain in the World Policy Commission is one of six commissions that deals with issues relating to foreign policy, defence and international aid and development and is comprised of members and stakeholder groups within the party. The commission is responsible for engaging with the party on these policy issues, looking at how we address future challenges we face in these areas and building a dialogue with party stakeholders.

The Britain in the World Policy Commission has consistently received a large number of submissions, reflecting the importance of foreign policy to our party, on a range of issues, including: how Labour can take forward its efforts to tackle global poverty and promote social justice; how we can work for peace and security in an increasingly uncertain world; and how we can secure a stronger Britain in a stronger Europe. The commission maintained a close and open dialogue with the government and party stakeholders in the previous round of Partnership in Power meaning the party's 2005 manifesto reflected the strength of feeling across a range of issues. These included working for an international arms trade treaty; a goal to provide 100 per cent debt relief for the world's poorest countries and a timetable of 2013 for achieving the UN target of 0.7 per cent of GNI spent on international development.

In the first year of the new round of PiP, the commission has drawn up a work programme dealing with topical issues. The commission will be focusing on issues such as the future of Europe; the next steps in the 2005 agenda on international development and the progress achieved during the UK's presidency of the G8 and EU; tackling the threats posed by global terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and working towards an international arms trade treaty; and promoting human rights, peace and democracy around the world.

During Conference, Britain in the World Policy Commission members had the opportunity to meet privately with the Prime Minister of Mozambique. The list of the new members of the Britain in the World Policy Commission will be published in the next edition of the international newsletter. Each policy commission will also have its own individual website explaining the labour party policy making process and issues currently under discussion in each policy commission. Watch this space for further details