



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

John Smith Memorial Trust
Fellows Conference,

Monday 4th July 2011,
Foreign & Commonwealth
Office, London



Welcoming message from The Rt Hon William Hague MP, Secretary Of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

I am delighted that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office is hosting today's Conference in collaboration with the John Smith Memorial Trust, together with Birmingham University and the School of Slavonic & East European Studies. I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the Conference's participants, and in particular to the Trust's 2010 and 2011 intakes of Fellows. I am sorry that other commitments prevent me from attending today in person, but I know that you have a very interesting programme ahead, and wish you every success.

The British Government supports the John Smith Memorial Trust's efforts to promote good governance in the post-Soviet space. The Fellowship programme is an essential component of that work and I am aware of the high calibre of its participants. I hope that you, the most recent group of the Fellows, will find

this conference and your time in the UK stimulating and productive, and this experience of our political institutions and practices will stand you in good stead on your return home. We believe that the core values on which our political system is based – transparency, accountability and, above all, the rule of law - are fully applicable in post-Soviet societies whatever our differences in cultural and historical traditions.

As future leaders, it is my hope that you will look back on your participation in the John Smith Memorial Trust's Fellowship programme as an important part of your formative experience as democratic politicians. If the Foreign & Commonwealth Office is able to contribute in a small way to that experience through hosting today's conference then I shall be very glad.

WILLIAM HAGUE