



## Traditional religion and political power: Examining the role of the church in Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine and Moldova

**DATE:** Wednesday 28th October 2015

**TIME:** 6.00pm-7.30pm

**VENUE:** Thatcher Room, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament, Victoria Embankment, Westminster, London, SW1A 2LW

### **Speakers:**

- **Gordon Marsden MP**, Secretary, All Party Parliamentary Group on Georgia (Labour)
- **Dr. Katja Richters**, Department of Orthodox Christianity, University of Erfurt
- **Adam Hug**, Policy Director, Foreign Policy Centre
- **Felix Corley**, Editor, Forum 18 News Service

Chair: **Baroness Berridge**, Chair of the All Party Group on International Freedom of Religion and Belief, (Conservative)

This *Traditional religion and political power: Examining the role of the church in Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine and Moldova* seminar (kindly supported by the Open Society Foundations) will provide an opportunity to examine the political and social role of the Orthodox Churches in Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova and of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The seminar will examine some of the key themes addressed in a new Foreign Policy Centre publication, including:

- the role the churches play in the development of new and re-emerging national identities
- the role of religious institutions as civil society actors in their communities
- the relationship between the church and the state, exploring the mutual support dynamic in the states that have given political space for the church to grow in return for political backing, examining the developing role of the church as a political actor
- the approach of the churches in promoting 'traditional' values in their societies and challenging the influence of 'Western/Liberal' values, with a particular focus on traditional gender roles and sexuality
- the reaction of the church to minority religions, particularly newer proselytising groups, exploring the approach to freedom of religion in these countries
- the way in which churches are expanding their role in education systems and the curriculum
- the role of religious institutions as economic actors and how this impacts their organisational strength and resources
- the parallels with Russia where the Orthodox Church has formed a central part of President Putin's national agenda
- the links between the Russian Orthodox Church and its counterparts in the region exploring the extent to which ecumenical collaboration and the supervision of certain denominations is used to extend or restore Russian influence

**The event is free and open to all. Please RSVP to [events@fpc.org.uk](mailto:events@fpc.org.uk)**

**Free copies of the new publication will be available**

