



Press Release

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For immediate use

“Blair must use talks with Russia to bring about real progress on climate change” – Twigg

STEPHEN TWIGG, Director of the Foreign Policy Centre, today said:

“At Gleneagles, G8 leaders agreed to act with resolve and urgency on global warming, but much more progress can and should be made. The bilateral talks between Tony Blair and President Putin are a real opportunity to widen Moscow’s focus beyond security of energy supplies to the truly global issue of climate change.

“But talk is not enough: Britain must be able to demonstrate that it is committed to a sustainable and responsible energy policy at domestic level, through a more rapid shift to renewable energy. Such a policy will not only allow Britain to become a global leader in combating climate change; it will also reduce our dependence on imports of oil and gas from third countries, bringing stability to our supplies.

“Britain has recently signed a joint declaration with China on climate change, funding the use of ‘clean-coal’ power plants. Now that Russia is a signatory to the Kyoto protocol, Britain, working with its fellow member states in the EU should work in partnership with Russia to meet their carbon emission reduction targets.

“At a time in which about half the gas and one third of the oil used in the 25-country EU already comes from or via Russia, there is a great need for both sides to discuss a sustainable energy future openly together.”

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Editor’s Notes

1. The Foreign Policy Centre has recently launched a major new programme on Energy Security. It calls for a rapid shift to renewable energy sources in the UK from the perspectives of national security, economic prosperity and protection of the global environment. For more details and a pdf version of the programme’s initial publication, please see www.fpc.org.uk

2. Tony Blair is holding talks in London today with Vladimir Putin as part of the European Presidency programme. The discussions with the Russian President are set to focus on the world economy, energy and climate change as well as this year’s G8 commitments. Bilateral discussions between Mr Blair and Mr Putin will also take place tomorrow. Russia takes over the G8 Presidency from the UK next year. <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page8255.asp>

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