



# Press Release

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For immediate use

## Africa needs ideas not just money from EU

A gathering of academics, policy-makers and other key stakeholders from Africa and Europe will send a strong message to Hilary Benn, ahead of his meeting with EU Development Ministers in Leeds on 24<sup>th</sup> October, that Africa needs ideas not just money from the European Union development fund.

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

“Africa needs ideas not just money from the EU. Our conference will look beyond conventional notions of international development assistance. We need a broader political agenda that looks beyond the ideas of poverty alleviation and good governance. What the Africa Commission, and the Live8/Make Poverty History agenda showed is that we have moved on from simply handing out aid to African governments. We must also develop the tools to develop citizenship and best practice in partnership with African societies.

“The meeting will look at three cross-cutting perspectives of the problems confronting African development:

- Land reform
- A political understanding of conflict prevention
- Promoting African centres of excellence”

“Establishing network centres of excellence, continent-wide is regarded as one of the most effective ways of strengthening Africa’s development. These centres of excellence can provide the means of developing best practice across African regions. Centres could be established in hospitals, schools, universities, businesses and other centres of learning and development. Networks of excellence are regarded as essential for mobilising regional resources to confront and solve common sustainable development problems.”

The seminar will be hosted by Stephen Twigg, Director of the Foreign Policy Centre and a former Education Minister under Tony Blair. Speakers include Donald McKinnon, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, Malcolm Bruce MP, Chair of the International Development Committee and Lena Sundh from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### ENDS

#### Editor’s Notes

The conference, *‘Looking Beyond the Commission for Africa: Re-prioritising EU development assistance’*, has been organised by the Foreign Policy Centre in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Royal Institute for International Relations. It is a one day event (10.00 to 17.00) on Monday 10 October 2005 at the Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London, SW1Y 5HX. To attend the conference, please email [Josephine.osikena@fpc.org.uk](mailto:Josephine.osikena@fpc.org.uk) or call 020 7388 6662.

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