

# European & External Affairs Committee

## EUR2 06-05 (p1)

Date: 7 July 2005

Time: 09:30 - 12.00

Venue: Glyndwr Suite, Bryn Howel Hotel, Llangollen

Title: Minister's Report

### Purpose

1. To provide an update on a range of issues arising since the last meeting of the Committee.

### Recommendation

2. Members to note the content of the report.

### Background

3. The Committee last met on 16 June. This paper provides an update.

### First Minister's International Activities

16 June 2005 Visit of HE Mr Aramas Taurantas, Lithuanian Ambassador - I met Mr Taurantas who was in Cardiff for the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. He also took the opportunity to meet representatives from the WDA, WTI, the British Council and the Law School at the University of Glamorgan and attended the Committee meeting on 16 June.

1 July 2005 Participation in visit to the UK by the College of Commissioners - The Prime Minister hosted a day-long visit to the UK by the European Commission. As well as plenary sessions, I participated in 3 "break-out" meetings focusing on areas of specific interest to Wales. Participation in this day permitted the Welsh Assembly Government to contribute to the development of the shared UK / EU approach to the Presidency

4 July 2005 Informal meeting with Journalists from Belgium, Egypt, Latvia, Macedonia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Turkey and the UK - I held an informal meeting with these Journalists which was a British Council Wales-led project, to explore the role of the media in building trust between governments and nations. This was an opportunity to highlight Wales' expertise in open and accessible government and promote Wales internationally.

## Other Issues

### EU Council Summit, 16 &17 June 2005

There were two main items of business – the Constitutional Treaty and the European budget for the period 2007 - 2013. Following the rejection of the Treaty in the French and Dutch referendums, the Council decided to pause for a "period of reflection," with no time limit decided for the exercise. The Council failed to reach an agreement on the budget issue, the key issues being the UK rebate and the Common Agriculture Policy. I made a statement to the Assembly on the outcome of the Council on 22 June. A link to the transcript of the debates is at [http://assembly/rop/ROP/Plenary%20Session/2005/June/rop050622qv7.html#\\_Toc107307879](http://assembly/rop/ROP/Plenary%20Session/2005/June/rop050622qv7.html#_Toc107307879)

## Rhodri Morgan AM

### First Minister

### EEAC First Minister's Report

Date	Assembly Minister/ Official/ Division	Event	Objectives	Outcomes
16 June 2005	First Minister	Visit of HE Mr Aramas Taurantas, Lithuanian Ambassador	Mr Taurantas visit coincided with the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. He took the opportunity to meet the First Minister, WDA, WTI, the British Council, the Law School at the University of Glamorgan and is attending EEAC.	Wide ranging discussion on EU issues - referenda in France and the Netherlands, budget, 'Better Governance for Wales' White Paper, Lithuania's economy and its relationship with its neighbours.

20 June 2005	Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside	Agri-Council, Luxembourg	Ensure WAG Policy is taken on-board when UK discuss/vote on European Agriculture & Fisheries Policies	Political agreement secured on the text of the new rural development regulation. A number of amendments, which will benefit Wales, including more generous support for forestry, and small & medium sized enterprises.
22 June 2005	Minister for Finance, Local Government and Public Services and Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport	Visitors from Montenegro	The delegation was led by Ms Vesna Kilibarda, Minister for Culture, Montenegro. She was accompanied by 6 or 7 visitors including a representative of the British Council The objectives of the meeting were to discuss devolution, sustainability and culture.	<p>The visitors were very pleased to have an opportunity to meet the Ministers and thanked them for their time.</p> <p>The meeting and subsequent visit to Blaenavon increased their appreciation of a holistic approach and working in partnership in relation to developing cultural and environmental heritage.</p> <p>The visit increased their understanding of the long term benefits of sustainable development.</p> <p>The visitors were impressed with the way in which the Welsh language was integrated into cultural development whilst at the same time developing an international approach.</p>

22 to 25 June 2005	Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside	Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD) Cape Town	Steering Committee meeting and Sustainable Development project visits.  Representing and promoting Welsh Policies on the International Stage.	<p>The Steering Committee signed up to a Cape Town Call for Action which congratulates the Global Call to Action Against Poverty and reaffirms the Network commitment to the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition the meeting agreed the first Communication Strategy for the Network and agreed to adopt sustainable language development as a new policy priority for the Network. Wales leads on both of these issues.</p> <p>The Minister also had the opportunity to visit the Cape Town students who won the competition to attend the nrg4SD Cardiff Conference in 2004 which maintains our link with the COSAT college in Khayelitsha.</p>
1 July 2005	First Minister	Participation in visit to the UK by the College of Commissioners	The Prime Minister hosted a day-long visit to the UK by the European Commission. As well as plenary sessions, the First Minister participated in 3 "break-out" meetings focusing on areas of specific interest to Wales.	Participation in this day permitted the Welsh Assembly Government to contribute to the development of the shared UK / EU approach to the Presidency.

4 July 2005	First Minister	Informal meeting with Journalists from Belgium, Egypt, Latvia, Macedonia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Turkey and the UK	The overall objective of this British Council Wales-led project was to explore the role of the media in building trust between governments and nations.	The opportunity to highlight Wales' expertise in open and accessible government and promote Wales internationally.
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