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Foreign Affairs Committee

FCO Public Diplomacy: The Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012

Second Report of Session 2010–11

Report, together with formal minutes, oral and written evidence

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The Foreign Affairs Committee

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Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerks of the Foreign Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6394; the Committee's email address is foraffcom@parliament.uk
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Summary

The 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games is likely to be a ‘once in a generation’ opportunity for the UK to attract the attention and interest of the entire global community. The FCO wants to exploit the public diplomacy and ‘soft power’ potential of the Games as a tool that its global network of Posts can use to help open doors and gain influence with key individuals and groups in specific countries, in pursuit of the UK’s interests.

We welcome the many inventive proposals that the FCO has put forward for capitalising on the Games in its public diplomacy work. Many specific initiatives sponsored through its world-wide network of Posts display range, imagination and sensitivity. We encourage the FCO to continue with this campaign, and to give special emphasis to the excellent ‘International Inspirations’ programme. The FCO should spread the news that the 2012 Games will be “the world’s first sustainable Games”, with many examples of environmental good practice in the planning of the Games and at the Olympics site. It should continue to use the Games to “promote British culture and values at home and abroad”, and to support projects targeted at promoting British values to particular overseas audiences.

The Games offer an unparalleled opportunity to promote UK business, trade and inward investment. We note the FCO’s stated commitment to seizing this opportunity. We conclude that it is important that the action matches the rhetoric. We recommend that, in addition to the activities already being planned, the Government should give urgent consideration to holding a trade event during the period before or during the Games, at a suitably large and accessible venue.

The Games offer the prospect of enhancing the UK’s reputation in the world. Academic research shows that national reputations, especially of countries like the UK which are long-established actors on the world stage, tend to alter only gradually and in response to long-term trends. That being so, the FCO may be somewhat overstating the case when it claims that the Games will have “a profound impact on the UK’s international reputation”. Despite the many commendable specific initiatives, we are concerned that the overall message conveyed by the FCO’s campaign is somewhat ill-defined. The campaign should focus on sending out one overarching message. That message should be the one successfully deployed in the UK’s original Olympics bid, that London is an open and welcoming city, and that the UK is a diverse, inclusive and friendly country—in a word, that both London and the UK are generous. Such a message would help to redress some long-standing misperceptions of the UK.

The 2012 Olympics pose potential reputational risks as well as opportunities for the UK. The FCO should prepare itself to take swift action to rebut or challenge negative stories appearing in the world media.

The FCO’s public diplomacy work in connection with the Olympics should be regarded as a priority area. We note the shift to “no or low cost ways of doing business” following the emergency budget of June 2010. The FCO should keep the resourcing of this work under review, and should stand ready to restore some degree of central funding if it becomes apparent that it would be desirable and cost-effective to do so.
The Games should be promoted not only as “the London Games” but also, where appropriate, as an event hosted by the entire UK.

We have sought from the Government, and received, an assurance that the long-standing rights of freedom of expression and freedom to protest peacefully in the UK will not be suspended because of the Olympic Games.

We have considered other issues including the relationship, in promotional terms, between the Games and the 2012 Diamond Jubilee, and the possibility of the FCO taking action to work towards international implementation of the United Nations’ ‘Olympic Truce’.

We will continue to scrutinise the FCO’s public diplomacy work in the run-up to the Games.
Conclusions and recommendations

1. We conclude that the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games is likely to be a ‘once in a generation’ opportunity for the UK to attract the attention and interest of the entire global community. We note the academic research which shows that national reputations, especially of countries like the UK which are long-established actors on the world stage, tend to alter only gradually and in response to long-term trends. That being so, we think the FCO may be somewhat overstating the case when it claims that the Games will have “a profound impact on the UK’s international reputation”—and later in this Report we consider the danger that, if things go wrong, the Games could actually have an adverse effect on that reputation. (Paragraph 41)

2. Nonetheless, we welcome the many inventive proposals that the FCO has put forward for capitalising on the Games in its public diplomacy work. Many specific initiatives sponsored through its world-wide network of Posts display range, imagination and sensitivity. We are particularly impressed by the ‘International Inspirations’ programme, jointly organised by the FCO with UK Sport and the British Council, which aims to bring the benefits of sport to 12 million children in 20 countries. We recommend that the FCO should give high prominence to this programme in its public diplomacy work. (Paragraph 42)

3. We are concerned, however, that the overall message conveyed by the FCO’s campaign is somewhat bland and ill-defined. We recommend that the campaign should focus on sending out one overarching message. That message should be the one successfully deployed in the UK’s original Olympics bid, that London is an open and welcoming city, and that the UK is a diverse, inclusive and friendly country—that both London and the UK are, in a word, generous. Such a message would also help to redress some long-standing misperceptions of the UK. (Paragraph 43)

4. We conclude that, although it would be unrealistic to expect the FCO’s budget to remain unscathed at a time of economic stringency and public spending cuts, nonetheless it is important that the Department’s public diplomacy work in connection with the Olympics should be regarded, during the crucial 18 months leading up to the Games, as being a priority area. We are concerned that the decision to cut public diplomacy funding may result in the FCO’s work related to the Olympics becoming a matter solely of individual initiatives by Posts, without adequate central co-ordination. We recommend that the FCO should keep this situation under review, and stand ready to restore some degree of central funding if it becomes apparent that it would be desirable and cost-effective to do so within the wider context of the FCO’s pre-Games public diplomacy strategy. (Paragraph 48)

5. We conclude that the FCO is right to use the Games to “promote British culture and values at home and abroad”, and that it should continue to target specific overseas audiences to whom it is important to communicate the message that British society is based upon the ideals of tolerance, diversity, respect for human rights, and freedom of speech and religion. (Paragraph 51)
6. We welcome the unequivocal assurance by the Government that the long-standing rights of free expression and freedom to protest peacefully in the UK will not be suspended because of the Olympic Games. We recommend that the Government, both in the run-up to the Games and during the Games themselves, should firmly resist any pressure that may be applied by certain foreign governments to curtail the rights of freedom of expression and freedom to protest peacefully in the UK. (Paragraph 54)

7. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games offers an unparalleled opportunity to promote UK business, trade and inward investment. We note the FCO’s stated commitment to seizing this opportunity. We conclude that it is important that the action matches the rhetoric. We recommend that, in addition to the activities already being planned, the Government should give urgent consideration to holding a trade event during the period before or during the Games, at a suitably large and accessible venue, to secure the maximum commercial benefit to the national economy from this once-in-a-lifetime event when the eyes of the world will be on the UK and unprecedented numbers of VIP guests will be arriving on these shores. We further recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government should give a detailed update on its plans to promote trade and investment in conjunction with the Games. (Paragraph 64)

8. We note the Ministerial assurances that there has been no change of policy over emphasising the extent to which the 2012 Games will be the ‘greenest’ ever. We conclude that the UK can be proud of what has been achieved on the Olympics site in terms of promoting environmental good practice. We commend the FCO for commissioning the excellent documentary film, Going for Green, and recommend that by means of this film and in other ways it should continue to promote the ‘green agenda’ vigorously. We further recommend that “the promotion of environmental good practice” should be added to the FCO’s list of formal objectives for its public diplomacy work in connection with the Games. (Paragraph 68)

9. We conclude that the 2012 Olympics pose potential reputational risks as well as opportunities for the UK. The FCO is not the lead Department in contingency planning for organisational, transport or security problems during the Games, but it will have a responsibility for seeking to influence overseas perceptions of any problems that arise. We recommend that the FCO should make sure that, acting in concert with its Olympics public diplomacy partners, there is a ‘rapid response unit’ adequately resourced and prepared to take swift action to rebut or challenge negative stories appearing in the world media. We further recommend that this unit should be up and running significantly in advance of the start of the Games, that it should engage in intensive preparatory scenario-modelling, and that it should draw on the experience of successful media strategies by other recent host countries of major sporting events, notably Australia with the 2000 Sydney Olympics and Germany with the 2006 World Cup. (Paragraph 75)

10. We recommend that the FCO should instruct its Posts not only to promote the 2012 Games as “the London Games” but also, where appropriate, as an event hosted by the entire UK and its component nations and regions. (Paragraph 79)
11. We note that in 2012 the world’s media will be paying special attention to the UK not only because of the Olympic Games but also because of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. We conclude that there is no reason why this double cause for celebration should in any way send out conflicting images of the UK. (Paragraph 84)

12. We recommend that in promoting both the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the FCO should not attempt to mix together the messages of two quite separate events, but should promote each in its own distinctive way. (Paragraph 84)

13. We recommend that the promotion of the 2012 Games should include recognition of London’s status as the only city ever to have hosted the Games three times. We further recommend that, where possible and appropriate, surviving athletes from the 1948 Games should be invited to participate in the Olympic ceremonies and in events held to mark the Games, including those organised by overseas Posts. (Paragraph 85)

14. We recommend that, in its response to this Report, the Government should state what actions it proposes to take to work towards international implementation of the United Nations ‘Olympic Truce’, as part of its commitment to international peacekeeping and conflict prevention. (Paragraph 88)

15. We will continue to monitor the FCO’s public diplomacy work related to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We recommend that the FCO should supply us with regular (three-monthly) detailed written updates on that work during the run-up to the Games. (Paragraph 89)
1 Introduction

1. The 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games is likely to be the event with the greatest international profile for the UK during the 2010 Parliament. We have held a brief inquiry, with a view to finding out what the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is doing with respect to the Olympics, what the UK might reasonably hope to gain from the event in terms of public diplomacy, and how the FCO can best exploit the Games for public diplomacy purposes.

2. We held an oral evidence session to explore these issues on 10 November 2010. Our witnesses were Simon Anholt, independent policy adviser, author and researcher, who specialises in national identity and reputation, and who is co-producer of the annual Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index prepared for the FCO; Dr Patrick Spaven OBE, Visiting Fellow, Centre for Public Policy and Management, Manchester Business School, who specialises in the evaluation of public diplomacy; and Jeremy Browne MP, Minister of State at the FCO with responsibility for public diplomacy and for the FCO’s work in relation to the Olympic Games, accompanied by Conrad Bird, Head of Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications, FCO. In addition, we received written evidence from the FCO, from Professor Nick Cull of the University of Southern California (with whom we also held an informal meeting), and from Lord Bates of Langbaurgh. We are grateful to all those who submitted evidence.

3. In this Report we first review the concepts of public diplomacy, ‘soft power’ and ‘nation branding’. We consider the UK’s international reputation, and the lessons to be learned from other countries’ experience of hosting major international sporting events. We then consider in more detail the FCO’s strategy for the 2012 Olympics and the specific initiatives associated with it, as well as issues of funding, the promotion of trade and the ‘green agenda’, and other matters.
2 Public diplomacy and the UK

Public diplomacy and ‘soft power’

4. The concepts of ‘public diplomacy’ and ‘soft power’ have developed over the past fifty years. Public diplomacy has been defined as:

the transparent means by which a sovereign country communicates with publics in other countries aimed at informing and influencing audiences overseas for the purpose of promoting the national interest and advancing its foreign policy goals. [It] includes such activities as educational exchange programs for scholars and students; visitor programs; language training; cultural events and exchanges; and radio and television broadcasting. Such activities usually focused on improving the “sending” country’s image or reputation as a way to shape the wider policy environment in the “receiving” country.¹

5. The concept of public diplomacy was developed in the 1960s “partly to distance overseas governmental information activities from the term propaganda, which had acquired pejorative connotations”.² More recently, the term ‘soft power’ has been widely used to describe governments’ ability “to get what [they] want through attraction rather than coercion or payments”. Soft power “arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals, and policies. When [its] policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, [its] soft power is enhanced.”³

6. In the past 10 years the FCO has held two major reviews of its public diplomacy work: the ‘Wilton review’ of 2003, which concluded that the Government’s work in this field was unco-ordinated and ineffectively evaluated, and the subsequent review by Lord Carter of Coles, which reported in 2005. Lord Carter recommended the establishment of a Public Diplomacy Board to develop and monitor implementation of a new strategy. He offered a redefinition of British public diplomacy as:

work aiming to inform and engage individuals and organisations overseas, in order to improve understanding of and influence for the United Kingdom in a manner consistent with governmental medium and long term goals.⁴

The then Government accepted Lord Carter’s recommendations, and the Foreign Affairs Committee in the last Parliament reported on the FCO’s progress in implementing them.⁵

In 2008 the FCO published a collection of essays under the title, Engagement: Public Diplomacy in a Globalised World. In an introduction, then FCO Minister of State Jim

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¹ University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy, “What is public diplomacy?” (uscpublicdiplomacy.org)
² Ibid.
³ The quotations are from the coiner of the term ‘soft power’, Joseph Nye, Professor of International Relations at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, from the preface to his book Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics (2004)
⁴ Lord Carter of Coles, Public Diplomacy Review (December 2006), p 72
⁵ Foreign Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session 2005–06, Public Diplomacy, HC 903; and the Government’s reply, Cm 6840
Murphy MP commented that in the new context of globalisation and technological change, “public diplomacy must become an integral part of policy-making and delivery”.  

7. In October 2009, our predecessor Committee was informed by the FCO that the Public Diplomacy Board was being replaced by a new Strategic Communications and Public Diplomacy Forum, chaired by the Foreign Secretary. The new body would meet twice a year. It would be supported by a Public Diplomacy Partners Group which would meet at a lower level, under FCO chairmanship, roughly every six weeks, to focus on cross-cutting themes and events. The FCO Minister with responsibility for public diplomacy would henceforth “focus on providing specific ministerial supervision of the relationship between the FCO and its directly funded partners”, primarily the British Council and BBC World Service. Our predecessors concluded that “the new arrangements for the governance of the FCO’s public diplomacy work, with the relevant highest-level body now chaired by the Foreign Secretary rather than a more junior Minister, appear to be in accord with the more central place that public diplomacy is taking in the FCO’s work”.  

8. The Coalition Government which came to power in May 2010 has not yet made a formal declaration of its policy in relation to public diplomacy. The new Foreign Secretary, Rt Hon William Hague MP, referred to the concept of public diplomacy (though he did not use the phrase itself) in the first of his recent policy speeches, delivered at the FCO on 1 July 2010:

> if the increasingly multipolar world already means that we have more governments to influence and that we must become more active, the ever accelerating development of human networks means that we have to use many more channels to do so, seeking to carry our arguments in courts of public opinion around the world as well as around international negotiating tables. [...] In my mind, such communication will become all the more important over time and as we conduct our diplomacy across the world we overlook international opinion at our peril, and while we cannot possibly hope to dominate the global airwaves we must try ever harder to get our message across.

‘Nation branding’

9. In the collection of essays on public diplomacy published by the FCO in 2008, Simon Anholt wrote:

> When I started writing about an idea I called ‘nation brand’ more than twelve years ago, my observation was a simple one: that the reputations of countries are analogous to the brand images of companies and products, and are equally critical to the progress and prosperity of those countries because of their influence on the opinions and behaviours of each country’s ‘target audiences’: foreign investors, tourists, consumers, students, entrepreneurs, trading partners, the media, other governments, donors, multilateral agencies, and so on. [...]
Countries, cities and regions that are lucky or virtuous enough to have acquired a positive reputation find that everything they or their citizens wish to do on the global stage is easier: their brand goes before them like a calling card that opens doors, creates trust and respect, and raises the expectation of quality, competence and integrity. Places with a reputation—no matter how ill-deserved—for being poor, uncultured, backward, dangerous or corrupt will find that everything they or their citizens try to achieve outside their own neighbourhood is harder, and the onus is always on them to prove that they don’t conform to the national stereotype.8

10. Mr Anholt draws attention to the difficulty of changing a nation’s “brand”:

there is little or no evidence to suggest that private-sector marketing techniques can change national images. It is remarkable how many governments are prepared to spend large amounts of taxpayers’ and donors’ money on such campaigns without the support of any proper case-studies [...] and often without even the most rudimentary success criteria or mechanisms for performance measurement.9

11. Mr Anholt argues that “in reality, the images of places appear to be remarkably stable, and highly resilient in the face of any kind of deliberate manipulation”. He notes that the Anholt Nation Brands Index (NBI), a survey he has run since 2005 to track and analyse the global images of 40 countries using a panel of nearly 30,000 respondents in 35 countries, shows that almost no country’s image changed by more than 1 or 2 percentage points over the period 2005 to 2008.10

12. A change in a country’s image, Mr Anholt argues, usually takes place over decades not years, and is dependent on objective changes within that country or in its behaviour. Mr Anholt cites the slow improvement in the international reputation of Germany and Japan since 1945, to the point at which in 2008 they ranked first and eighth overall in the Nation Brands Index. In these cases, an “improved reality” led in due course to an “improved image”, but over a very lengthy period.11

The UK’s international reputation

13. Research shows that the overall perception of the UK overseas is a positive one. The FCO told us that:

In 2009, the FCO’s Public Diplomacy Group reviewed all available research into the UK’s reputation amongst international audiences. We concluded that the UK’s overall reputation worldwide was strong—ranking 4th out of 50 in countries in the 2010 Anholt Nation Brand Index. The UK was seen as fair, innovative, diverse, confident and stylish. However, negative images still persisted which painted Britain as arrogant, stuffy, old-fashioned and cold. We used these findings to identify the key themes about modern Britain we wanted to project overseas in order to overcome

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9 Ibid., p 33
10 Ibid., p 34
11 Ibid., p 34
false impressions that acted upon our prosperity and political influence. We want to showcase modern Britain as the open (welcoming, diverse, tolerant), connected (through our involvement in the UN and G20, politically, geographically, in terms of trade and travel), creative and dynamic place it really is.12

14. Simon Anholt noted that the UK’s reputation was very firmly established:

When you are talking about a country like the UK, which has been internationally prominent for centuries, I think you will find that the roots run very deep indeed. One of the reasons why the UK, to use that horrible phrase, punches above its weight in reputational terms, is because we have been at it for so long. We have so much influence and so much engagement with other people in other countries, and that’s one of the things that makes our reputation so good, because generally […] the more you know about a country, the more you approve of it.13

15. However, Mr Anholt also drew attention to the UK’s perceived weaknesses, which were that its people are seen as being—

A little bit arrogant. A little bit overbearing. A little bit cold. London, for example, in my City Brands Index is regarded to be an unwelcoming, expensive place. None of this is terribly bad, by the way, because it’s quite difficult to admire somebody and find them cuddly at the same time. Our reputation is the kind of reputation that nine out of 10 countries would give their right hands for.14

The reputational impact of major sporting events: lessons from other countries

16. In assessing the FCO’s public diplomacy strategy for the 2012 Olympics, what lessons can be learnt from other countries’ experience of hosting major international sporting events? The four most recent comparable examples are those of the FIFA World Cup held in Germany in 2006, the Olympics held in China in 2008, the World Cup held in South Africa in June/July 2010 and the Commonwealth Games held in India in October 2010. All four countries used their hosting of these events for the purposes of public diplomacy, with the intention of improving their international reputations. The results were mixed: from a public diplomacy perspective, the German World Cup can be regarded as an unqualified success and the Beijing Olympics as a qualified one, while the extent to which the South African World Cup and the Indian Commonwealth Games enhanced those countries’ reputations is rather more open to question. In addition, there are at least two cases in the more distant past—Barcelona in 1992 and Sydney in 2000—where the Games undoubtedly uplifted their host countries’ reputation. We briefly consider all six of these cases in the paragraphs that follow.
Spain 1992

17. Dr Patrick Spaven told us that the 1992 Games gave added momentum to the regeneration of Barcelona, not only raising the city’s profile abroad but enhancing its own citizens’ self-esteem. He added that the positive media coverage had also benefited Spain as a whole. He commented:

Barcelona [...] was a declining industrial city until it started to transform itself. It started to do that before the Olympics, and would have carried on even if there hadn’t been Olympics. However, it got an enormous boost from the Olympics—from potential markets, because people were looking at it, but the bigger factor was the internal market. [...] one million to 2 million people [...] became really proud of their city and went out to become public diplomats. There is no more effective public diplomacy than individuals talking to other individuals.15

Australia 2000

18. The Sydney Olympics in 2000 are also widely believed to have had a long-term beneficial effect on the reputation of Australia. Simon Anholt told us that:

What the Australians succeeded in doing with the Sydney Olympics was telling one very simple, very compelling story about the kind of country that it was, and people bought it and loved it. That is a country with a previously somewhat weak but generally positive reputation; there was nothing negative in there. In a situation such as that, an Olympics can have a strong long-term effect. It simply raised its game by a notch or two and it has benefited from it ever since. It has maintained the momentum.16

Germany 2006

19. Dr Spaven summarised the impact that Germany’s hosting of the 2006 World Cup had on that country’s image:

I was able to track with statistically reliable research data the changes to Germany’s reputation in and around their hosting of the FIFA World Cup. Germany improved its standing in the Anholt Nation Brands Index significantly in the six months leading up to the events and beyond. It maintained this advantage throughout the following year.

I was not able to identify any other factors that could have significantly influenced this change. No other country with a mature reputation improved its status significantly in the Index from its origins in 2005 until President Obama took office and dramatically lifted the results for the USA.17
20. Dr Spaven noted that “Germany’s public diplomacy effort was research-informed, highly co-ordinated and begun long before the event”. It was specifically targeted at particular audiences. For instance, a strand aimed at breaking outdated stereotypes of Germany as a nation of humourless, conventional people was directly focused at a mass youth audience. However, to avoid this message on its own undermining Germany’s reputation for reliable, high-quality engineered products, another part of the strategy aimed to protect that market.18

21. Simon Anholt was less persuaded that the 2006 World Cup had led to a long-term enhancement of Germany’s reputation. He commented that although there was “a measurable up-tick in other people’s perceptions of Germany […] it didn’t last for long. It went back down again after a year.” However, he considered that the World Cup was of real value in changing Germans’ self-perception:

We could see on television ordinary middle-class Germans gathering together and singing their national anthem without irony or aggression, and remembering the words. That was a really significant moment in Germany’s post-war history, because they suddenly discovered what it was like to be, say, Italian, and just to be ordinarily proud of the country you come from.19

**China 2008**

22. A recent academic analysis of China’s use of the 2008 Beijing Olympics in its public diplomacy work, by Meg Young of the USC Institute of Public Diplomacy, concludes that:

The 2008 Olympics offered the People’s Republic of China an unparalleled stage to demonstrate past achievements and future potential to a global audience. They also demonstrated intriguing lessons for public diplomacy practitioners. It is easy to say the Olympics were a success, and by most measures they were: China won the most gold medals (51), the games brought in the most television viewers ever (4.7 billion), they generated incredible press coverage and introduced Beijing as a world class city on par with Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Certainly the global public received greater exposure to China, its people, and culture in 2008 than in any year prior. However, public diplomacy isn’t just about exposure; it has many facets. During the 2008 Games two of these facets came into interesting tension: image creation and credibility. In the world of public diplomacy, any image that is created or promoted to a foreign public must be able to stand up under scrutiny in order to become truly credible. Some of the images that China sought to create were supported and even enhanced by the greater scrutiny brought by the international press during the Games. Other images were destroyed and harmed the credibility of the state. […]

China’s Government, accustomed to choreographing and managing images, spared no expense in putting on the best Olympic Games possible, and was able to create a spectacular image of modern China. However, the international press was always on
the lookout for cracks in the perfect veneer, and when they found them it was worldwide news. For every story of the Beijing’s improved air quality during the games, there were at least two detailing China’s environmental profligacy. For every story mentioning China’s efforts to create a more open environment for the press, there were many more describing the limits imposed on reporters. For every feel-good cultural piece about ethnic minorities there were dozens of articles and exposés about separatist efforts in Xinjiang and Tibet.

South Africa 2010

23. Early findings as to the impact of the football World Cup held in South Africa in summer 2010 suggest that, although the tournament was organisationally a success, its impact on South Africa’s international reputation may have actually been negative. Simon Anholt told us that:

It was widely believed that South Africa’s World Cup had improved the image of South Africa but my study has shown that it is nowhere near as clear-cut as that. In the minds of many people in the study, South Africa’s image actually deteriorated after the World Cup. That was perhaps as a result of the fact that many people overseas didn’t really know what South Africa looked like; all they’d seen was tourism promotion and they thought that it was a first-world country through and through. They then saw it on the television and realised that in many respects it’s still a third-world country, and the image was therefore corrected downwards.

24. Dr Patrick Spaven gave a more upbeat assessment:

South Africa probably gained overall from its successful handling of the FIFA World Cup, simply because it confounded pessimists by pulling off a relatively incident-free series of events.

India 2010

25. India hosted the Commonwealth Games at New Delhi in October 2010. The opening ceremony was widely praised, and the Games themselves ran relatively smoothly. However, world media coverage of the run-up to the Games was dominated by stories relating to delays, corruption, insanitary conditions in the athletes’ accommodation, and use of child labour in construction work. Simon Anholt commented that:

A lot of people have been hearing nothing but stories of India’s meteoric rise in commerce and economics and so on, and then they see what Delhi actually looks like. If you come from Toronto or London that might shock you. Therefore there will probably be a bit of a downward correction, but they will pick up again

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21 Q 33
22 Ev 35
afterwards, and one might say that that is a necessary correction because the perception has been restored to something closer to reality.\textsuperscript{23}

Likewise, Professor Nick Cull noted that:

> Just as hosting the Olympics can deliver a dividend to the host’s international image so there is a risk that a problem with the games could reflect negatively on the host. The negative press associated with India’s hosting of the 2010 Commonwealth Games is an example of what can go wrong.\textsuperscript{24}
3 The FCO’s strategy for the 2012 Olympics

The overall strategy

26. The FCO comments that the London Olympic and Paralympic Games will have “a profound impact on the UK’s international reputation”. They “will throw a spotlight on the UK like no other sporting event in generations. [...] There will be an estimated global audience of 4 billion. Around 14,700 participants will attend, with 120 heads of state, 25,000 journalists and 320,000 extra foreign visitors to the UK.”25

27. The FCO notes that:

The Foreign Secretary is determined that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office should play a full part in delivering a successful games and tangible international legacy for the UK. Overseas activity will concentrate on securing solid benefits linked to our foreign policy priorities: security, prosperity and strong bilateral relations and that these priorities will fit within the broad coalition government Olympic priorities.

28. The policy is being presented as a continuation of that of the previous Government. Ministers state that when they came to office, “some good foundations [were] in place, but the FCO now needs to build on them”.26

29. The UK’s original Olympics bid in 2005 emphasised the welcome that would be offered by London as a ‘world city’ with a diverse, youthful and open-minded population:

Thanks to the city’s diversity, there will be supporters from every Olympic nation. Every athlete will have a home crowd. And every Paralympian will enjoy a fantastic atmosphere too, from British crowds famous for their love of Paralympic sport. [...] London is a city which welcomes the world with open arms and an open mind. A city in which 300 languages are spoken every day and those who speak them live happily side-by-side. It is a city rich in culture, [...] with sport at heart, [and] which is a magnet for young people from all over the world. London is already their No. 1 destination.27

30. The FCO has set the following objectives for its Olympics campaign:

• **National interest**: To contribute to UK foreign policy goals by using the profile of the Olympics to promote British culture and values at home and abroad. To cement Britain’s reputation as a valuable bilateral partner and a vibrant, open and modern society, a global hub in a networked world.

• **Prosperity**: To bolster the UK economy, increase commercial opportunities for British business in target countries, and secure high value inward investment.

25 Ev 19
26 Ibid.
• **Security**: To enhance our security by harnessing the global appeal of the Olympics, particularly among the young, to reinforce values of tolerance, moderation and openness.

• **Cross-Government approach**: To work seamlessly with other Government Departments and partners, mobilising the powerful asset of the FCO’s unique network of Posts to deliver the greatest international impact for our strategy.

### Changing the image of the UK: specific initiatives

31. The FCO proposes "to use London 2012 as a catalyst for changing perceptions of the UK worldwide", and "to use [...] these new perceptions to increase the UK’s influence, and thus to assist in the delivery of the FCO’s objectives". As we have seen in paragraph 13 above, research shows that the overall international perceptions of the UK are positive ones. The FCO plans to use the Olympic Games to build on these positive perceptions in the following ways.

#### The ‘See Britain (Through My Eyes)’ campaign

32. This “exercise in soft power” has the aim of “invit[ing] audiences around the world to take a fresh and positive look at Britain”. It is conceived as an initiative in which all 243 Posts can participate, but is targeted especially at a smaller number of priority countries: “strategically-important countries where we saw particular potential to pursue British interests and where we aimed to work most pro-actively”. We have been supplied in confidence with the FCO’s list of priority countries.

33. As part of this campaign, the FCO has commissioned a series of 30 four-minute films featuring people with non-British citizenship or family background talking about what Britain has meant to them. Most of these films will be issued over forthcoming months. Three which have already been issued have the following subjects:

- **Zeinab Badawi**, Sudanese-born newsreader (talking about freedom of speech and Britain’s thriving media);

- **Mushtaq Ahmed**, Pakistani bowler and now spin bowling coach of the England cricket team (talking about British religious tolerance and diversity), and

- **Jonathan Mills**, Australian Director of the Edinburgh International Festival (talking about cultural and artistic diversity and dynamism).

34. The films will be disseminated digitally, through social media and the internet. In addition, Posts around the world will use them as a focus for events and activities.
Initiatives by Posts

35. The FCO has supplied us with examples of initiatives by individual Posts, often focusing on symbolic actions. These have included the participation by 55 Posts in the 2010 Sport Relief mile, raising money for local charities; the Jerusalem Consulate’s sponsorship of a female street car racing team in Palestine (which gained a total audience online in excess of 300 million at a cost of less than £10,000); Olympics- and Paralympics-related promotions by Posts with support from the core London team; and seeking out non-traditional partners including UK Sport, the Edinburgh Festivals and the National Theatre. Between autumn 2009 and April 2010, 117 initiatives were developed in 84 countries through 32 separate grants.\(^\text{32}\)

Next steps

36. Ministers have commissioned a “structured 18-month engagement strategy setting out priority countries and milestones”, and describe work on it as “well advanced”. The strategy will be aimed at priority countries (see paragraph 32 above) and diaspora communities in the UK.

37. Present and planned initiatives include:

- A TV documentary on the building of the Olympic Park, entitled Going for Green: Britain’s 2012 Dream. This was launched by the Foreign Secretary on 10 November; the FCO anticipates a global audience of between 150 and 300 million.

- The use of three “campaign Olympic Ambassadors” (the oarsman Sir Steve Redgrave, the Paralympian athlete Lady Grey-Thompson, and the Paralympian swimmer Chris Holmes) who will spread the 2012 messages globally. In addition, the FCO is “exploring” with Lord Coe what role he can play in the same endeavour.

- Bilateral activity using the pre-Games training camps of individual countries to encourage links between the UK and those countries (for instance, between Japan and the Loughborough region, where the Japanese team will be based).

- Promotion, in conjunction with UK Sport and the British Council, of the ‘International Inspirations’ programme, which aims to give 12 million children in 20 countries access to high-quality and inclusive physical education, sport and play.

- Spreading the message of the 2012 Games by using “friends of the UK” such as Chevening Scholars, and through regular events such as Queen’s Birthday Parties, receptions and trade events, and by using social network media and viral marketing (e.g. through dedicated Twitter and Facebook feeds, and by uploading new short films every two to four weeks).\(^\text{33}\)

38. The overall assessment of the FCO’s Olympics strategy and initiatives by our non-FCO witnesses was a mixed one. Professor Nick Cull stated that he was “impressed by the FCO’s
plan”, which is “well conceived to deliver helpful results towards appropriate policy objectives”. Simon Anholt commented that “there are one or two aspects of the Olympic plan that look to me to be very, very well thought-out, and that could seriously benefit some of those aspects of our culture and our personality”. He cited in particular the International Inspirations programme, as did both Dr Spaven and Professor Cull. The latter commented that the programme was an essential part of the bid and should be emphasized throughout the 2012 plan. It is of value in both practical and symbolic ways, and credit should flow to the UK from this. Perhaps representatives of those involved in that program could be built into 2012 ceremonial in some way.

39. Professor Cull also stated that he was impressed by the prominence being given to the Paralympics within the 2012 Plan, which he described as “a significant act of ethical leadership” by the FCO.

40. However, Simon Anholt also expressed a wish to see more “refining of [its] objectives” by the FCO:

There seem to be quite a number of messages that we are trying to get across about Britain during these Olympics. They are somewhat vague and anodyne. They are a bit motherhood-and-apple-pie. We would like to be seen as caring, sharing, tolerant, modern, technological, equal, and so on. I am afraid my heart sinks when I read these things, because it is what 90% of all countries want to be perceived as, and it is just not very distinctive. In my experience, you are lucky if you can prove one new thing about your country, let alone 12. I would love to see us just saying, "Here is the one thing which, through close analysis, we have decided the UK can be proved about itself"—the one thing. And then let’s go about proving that.

41. We conclude that the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games is likely to be a ‘once in a generation’ opportunity for the UK to attract the attention and interest of the entire global community. We note the academic research which shows that national reputations, especially of countries like the UK which are long-established actors on the world stage, tend to alter only gradually and in response to long-term trends. That being so, we think the FCO may be somewhat overstating the case when it claims that the Games will have “a profound impact on the UK’s international reputation”—and later in this Report we consider the danger that, if things go wrong, the Games could actually have an adverse effect on that reputation.

42. Nonetheless, we welcome the many inventive proposals that the FCO has put forward for capitalising on the Games in its public diplomacy work. Many specific initiatives sponsored through its world-wide network of Posts display range,
imagination and sensitivity. We are particularly impressed by the ‘International Inspirations’ programme, jointly organised by the FCO with UK Sport and the British Council, which aims to bring the benefits of sport to 12 million children in 20 countries. We recommend that the FCO should give high prominence to this programme in its public diplomacy work.

43. We are concerned, however, that the overall message conveyed by the FCO’s campaign is somewhat bland and ill-defined. We recommend that the campaign should focus on sending out one overarching message. That message should be the one successfully deployed in the UK’s original Olympics bid, that London is an open and welcoming city, and that the UK is a diverse, inclusive and friendly country—that both London and the UK are, in a word, generous. Such a message would also help to redress some long-standing misperceptions of the UK.

**Funding and organisation**

44. The FCO notes that for financial year 2009–10, its Public Diplomacy Campaign was allocated a budget of £1.7 million, which was used to cover “contractor costs, agency fees, creation of collateral (especially films) and was accessed by Posts for funding to take forward local public diplomacy activity”. The core campaign team in London consisted of three officials headed by a D6 (Home Civil Service Grade 7) team leader. The campaign also made use of outside specialists recruited on a short-term basis, and used a PR agency in its initial stages.

45. However, this separate funding stream was cut as part of the FCO’s contribution of £55 million towards government spending cuts in the emergency budget of June 2010. The FCO comments that “the workstream continues to have access to wider Public Diplomacy funds to support communications work at Post but the accent is now very much on no or low cost ways of doing business as well as increased use of commercial sponsorship.”

46. The FCO core campaign team, and Posts, are encouraged to work closely with the FCO’s “Public Diplomacy Partners”, including UKTI, the British Council, Visit Britain, UK Sport, LOCOG (London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games), the Government Olympic Executive, and the Mayor of London’s office. Asked to give examples of “no or low cost ways of doing business”, the Minister responded that “At the moment, the way we are looking to fund projects is through existing budgets, through small amounts of money that may be available more generally for our communications in the Department, and through commercial sponsorship where that is available”; though he conceded that “We may need to make more money available in the centre nearer the time”. Conrad Bird, FCO Head of Public Diplomacy, commented that the FCO’s ‘digital platform’ represented a way of maximising the impact of the UK’s messages across the world at minimal cost. He said that it was too early to give specific
details of commercial sponsorship, but that “our Posts are mindful of that, and have a track record of trying to pull together imaginative sponsorship in those areas”.42

48. We conclude that, although it would be unrealistic to expect the FCO’s budget to remain unscathed at a time of economic stringency and public spending cuts, nonetheless it is important that the Department’s public diplomacy work in connection with the Olympics should be regarded, during the crucial 18 months leading up to the Games, as being a priority area. We are concerned that the decision to cut public diplomacy funding may result in the FCO’s work related to the Olympics becoming a matter solely of individual initiatives by Posts, without adequate central co-ordination. We recommend that the FCO should keep this situation under review, and stand ready to restore some degree of central funding if it becomes apparent that it would be desirable and cost-effective to do so within the wider context of the FCO’s pre-Games public diplomacy strategy.

Promotion of British values and security

49. One of the FCO’s aims is to use the Games to “promote British culture and values at home and abroad”. This aim overlaps with that of “enhanc[ing] our security by harnessing the global appeal of the Olympics, particularly among the young, to reinforce values of tolerance, moderation and openness” and to “confound negative and sometimes malicious stereotyping which can feed into radicalisation and hostility towards us”.43 The FCO cites the example of its short film featuring England cricket coach Mushtaq Ahmed, who is “idolised in his native Pakistan”. In the film Mushtaq speaks positively about his experience of life as a Muslim in the UK, and the FCO anticipates that the film, marketed over the internet, will reach segments of Pakistani society, particularly a young male audience, who would be hard to reach by other means.44

50. Jeremy Browne also cited these films as an example of the promotion of “British values”:

They are an attempt to communicate with a Pakistani audience, a Muslim audience, about the culture of tolerance, acceptance and, I suppose, religious choice in this country. […] There is a set of values, which may not be unique to Britain, but which Britain espouses, that includes openness, democracy and multiculturalism in a tolerant, transparent society. If we are able to communicate those values to people using the games, that is all to the good.45

Likewise, Conrad Bird, Head of Public Diplomacy at the FCO, cited recent initiatives involving British Paralympians in Palestine as an example of “a good opportunity to demonstrate British attitudes towards disability”.46

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42 Q 48
43 Ev 19; Ev 20
44 Ibid.
45 Q 51
46 Q 52
51. We conclude that the FCO is right to use the Games to “promote British culture and values at home and abroad”, and that it should continue to target specific overseas audiences to whom it is important to communicate the message that British society is based upon the ideals of tolerance, diversity, respect for human rights, and freedom of speech and religion.

52. The Chinese government’s attempts to suppress freedom of expression and peaceful protest during the 2008 Olympic Games attracted much international criticism. When giving oral evidence to us, Jeremy Browne was asked—

Can you assure the Committee, unequivocally, that when the Olympic Games happen here [...] this country’s normal right to freedom of expression, peaceful protest and demonstration, and right to display banners, will be adhered to and upheld, regardless of their causing some possible embarrassment or sensitivity to those visiting dignitaries who allow no such freedom of expression in their own countries? 47

53. The Minister responded:

We have in this country a long-standing observance of free speech and freedom to protest [...]. That is very much part of our tradition, and it will not be suspended because of the Olympic Games being here. 48

54. We welcome the unequivocal assurance by the Government that the long-standing rights of free expression and freedom to protest peacefully in the UK will not be suspended because of the Olympic Games. We recommend that the Government, both in the run-up to the Games and during the Games themselves, should firmly resist any pressure that may be applied by certain foreign governments to curtail the rights of freedom of expression and freedom to protest peacefully in the UK.

Promotion of trade

55. In July 2010 the Prime Minister told FCO diplomats that they must become “economic ambassadors for Britain” and that there needs to be “quite a big step change in our approach to foreign and diplomatic relations in massively upgrading the importance of trade in terms of the contacts that we have with other countries”. 49 In another speech in July, Mr Cameron said that the UK “should be messianic in wanting to see free trade and open markets around the world, and our foreign policy will be helping to deliver that in a totally new, more hard-headed, more commercial way”. 50

56. The FCO comments that its public diplomacy work on the 2012 Olympics will “focus [...] sharply on the trade and prosperity agendas in line with the new government’s

47 Q 74 (Sir John Stanley)
48 Ibid.
The objective will be “to bolster the UK economy, increase commercial opportunities for British business in target countries, and secure high value inward investment”.

57. The FCO states that it will work closely with UKTI, in using the Games—

to help us drive up exports and create opportunities in wider markets, particularly using the 'Host2Host' agreements with other hosting nations (Russia and Brazil) to deliver the growth/prosperity objectives.

The Games will provide a catalyst for developing new businesses, encouraging existing businesses to look to grow and export to wider markets and as magnet for high value foreign investment. As well as jobs, skills and growth created as a result of firms supplying directly to the Games, there will be an opportunity to project the capability of UK companies in delivering major projects, on time and on budget, to the watching world. This is key to a sustained business legacy as companies go on to compete in international markets.

58. The FCO’s memorandum notes that “UKTI/FCO are planning a business hub at Games time to promote UK industry and inward investment”, and are looking at various venues, including Lancaster House, which would “resonate with target audiences”.

59. The scale of possible trade benefit arising from the 2012 Olympics is indicated by the fact that, according to the FCO, New South Wales attracted Aus$600 million in new business investment from the Sydney Games in 2000.

60. Dr Patrick Spaven told us that the Olympics offered “tremendous potential” for promoting British trade, “probably more than for any other potential benefit from the Olympics”. He noted that this could be done in two ways: first, by promoting the UK in general and London in particular as places with “a good climate for business”, with impressive infrastructure and benign regulation (or the lack of it); secondly, by utilising business opportunities offered by the Olympic site itself, in relation to infrastructure, rapid transit and environmental planning. Dr Spaven considered that it was too early to assess whether enough was being planned by way of trade promotion: “a lot of it will be about schmoozing business people from abroad […] Those are things that probably need to be finalised nearer the time.”

61. Simon Anholt commented to us that the proposal to use Lancaster House as a “trade hub” during the Games sounded very much like “business as usual”. We queried with Jeremy Browne whether the Government was being unambitious in its planning for trade promotion. He responded by drawing our attention to the way that promotion initiatives
in the run-up to the Games would be targeted on individual countries based on commercial priorities, “particularly in key markets such as China, India and Brazil as well as established ones such as Germany and France”.\textsuperscript{58} Conrad Bird, Head of Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications at the FCO, added that “I think we may have under-described the huge trade and promotional effort that is being made. It really is very large indeed, and [includes] trade expo events [which] are in planning at the moment.”\textsuperscript{59}

62. The FCO subsequently submitted supplementary evidence emphasising that “trade and commercial opportunities will be a major focus for all of our Posts in the run up to 2012 and beyond”, and giving more detailed information about planned activities in this field.\textsuperscript{60} It drew attention to the scale of the Host2Host programme intended to forge relationships with other nations hosting major events before and after the London Games. This will “showcase UK expertise to our partner hosts in delivering major projects on time and on budget. The scope of opportunity is vast, with countries such as Russia and Brazil estimating approximately £90 billion spends on Olympic and related infrastructure projects.” In addition, the FCO/UKTI will “directly showcase[e] UK capability in delivering major events, through bid consultancy, design, architecture, construction, fit-out and ticketing solutions”, and by producing a ‘Supplier Directory’ of UK expertise in these areas.\textsuperscript{61}

63. The FCO points out that the 2012 Olympics will be “the biggest corporate networking event in the world”, and that it plans to capitalise on this by means of a “British Business Embassy” set up during the Games period to “provide a prestigious and cohesively branded platform to promote UK business”. There will be a series of sector events, including the annual Global Investment Conference, “designed to promote UK capability and attract high-value inward investment”.\textsuperscript{62}

64. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games offers an unparalleled opportunity to promote UK business, trade and inward investment. We note the FCO’s stated commitment to seizing this opportunity. We conclude that it is important that the action matches the rhetoric. We recommend that, in addition to the activities already being planned, the Government should give urgent consideration to holding a trade event during the period before or during the Games, at a suitably large and accessible venue, to secure the maximum commercial benefit to the national economy from this once-in-a-lifetime event when the eyes of the world will be on the UK and unprecedented numbers of VIP guests will be arriving on these shores. We further recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government should give a detailed update on its plans to promote trade and investment in conjunction with the Games.
Environmental issues

65. The FCO’s promotional film, *Going for Green: Britain’s 2012 Dream*, launched in November 2010, lays heavy emphasis on the ‘greenness’ of the London Olympics: what the film’s commentary calls “the radical proposal [...] to host the world’s first sustainable Olympic Games”. The film is being actively marketed to TV networks worldwide—at the distributor’s cost”—with an estimated audience of between 150 and 300 million people. The film draws attention to many examples of environmental good practice in the way the Games and their infrastructure have been planned, including:

- The decontamination of a heavily polluted landscape, with the largest soil clean-up ever attempted in Britain;
- 90% of material from buildings demolished on the Olympic site will be re-used rather than sent to landfill;
- Over 50% of construction materials have been sent to the site by sustainable means (railway or canal);
- The site will feature the largest public park opened in Britain since the 19th Century, incorporating wetland habitats for wildlife, and
- The park is designed to be absorbent, managing water flow from heavy rain and protecting 5,000 homes at risk from flooding.63

66. However, the promotion of environmental good practice is not listed amongst the Government’s formal objectives for its public diplomacy work on London 2012.64 The FCO’s written evidence does not mention the “green agenda” for the Games at all (except in a single passing reference to sustainability).65 We explored with Jeremy Browne whether the change of government had led to a downgrading of emphasis on the “green agenda”. He responded that he did not know why this had been omitted from the Government’s objectives for its public diplomacy work. He said there had been no policy shift, and added that “I am surprised and disappointed if it is felt that the environmental aspects have been given insufficient attention. We will need to turn the volume up on that.”66

67. In subsequent written evidence, Mr Browne commented: “We are very proud that British expertise has made 2012 what will undoubtedly be the greenest Olympics ever”. He drew attention to the *Going for Green* film, adding that the series of short ‘See Britain’ films also being promoted by the FCO would have a significant ‘green’ element; and that “our Posts [...] regularly promote green issues at their events and receptions.”67

68. We note the Ministerial assurances that there has been no change of policy over emphasising the extent to which the 2012 Games will be the ‘greenest’ ever. We

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64 See the objectives listed in the FCO’s written evidence: Ev 19; Ev 20.
65 Ev 21
66 Q 61
67 Ev 38
conclude that the UK can be proud of what has been achieved on the Olympics site in terms of promoting environmental good practice. We commend the FCO for commissioning the excellent documentary film, Going for Green, and recommend that by means of this film and in other ways it should continue to promote the ‘green agenda’ vigorously. We further recommend that “the promotion of environmental good practice” should be added to the FCO’s list of formal objectives for its public diplomacy work in connection with the Games.

**Risks**

69. In his written submission, Dr Patrick Spaven warns that:

> the Olympics are a double-edged sword. The focus can lead to negative change as well as positive. The balance depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of the management of the events, infrastructure, security etc. But public diplomacy has a role to play and the extent to which that role is leveraged positively depends on the quality of its strategy and how it is implemented. [...] it is easier for perceptions to change negatively than positively especially where communications are the only mediator. Part of any strategy must be about guarding against reputational damage.

68 Ev 34

69 Ibid.

70. Dr Spaven points out that London and the UK are currently perceived relatively positively by the world taken as a whole. In consequence, there is a real risk that “bad news stories” during the Games could actively damage that reputation. He comments:

> There are the obvious threats such as terrorist incidents, transport or crowd control problems, the “Heathrow experience”, doping scandals, Games infrastructure shortfalls. The risk of these types of threats can be reduced if not entirely eliminated.

> There is also the less controllable risk of more dispersed negative phenomena like crime or rudeness to visitors which elements of the media are fond of highlighting. The captive presence of the world’s media in and around the Olympics is indeed a double-edged sword. Many of them have time on their hands and are not averse to making mischief. Effective management of the media—without the heavy hand which can be destructive—is very important. Sydney is said to have handled this well in 2000 through its media strategy.

69 Ibid.

71. Dr Spaven noted that, “even if incidents take place, the impact on reputation need not be serious”. He cited the example of Chile’s San José mine rescue as showing how effective recovery from a disaster can lead to reputational success.

70 Ibid.

72. Simon Anholt also argued that an unsuccessful Games might damage the UK’s reputation more than a successful Games might enhance it:

> There tends to be an assumption that if one simply has an Olympics and it goes off without a hitch, it will somehow, in heavy inverted commas, brand the nation,
making it more famous and more popular. My own view is that that is highly unlikely to happen with the UK, because [...] the chances of us putting on an Olympics so good that people think more about the UK afterwards, or improve their impression of it, are very remote. You could argue from that point of view that there is a greater chance of us suffering from the Olympics than benefitting from them. I hope not, but anybody who imagines that a successful event will make us more famous is probably kidding themselves, and disastrous Olympics could set us back a few years.  

73. Mr Anholt stressed the importance of the Games organisers engaging in systematic scenario modelling:

You get a lot of people who are very good at scenarios who sit down and work out the 20 possible things that could go wrong and what impact those would have on all the things that matter to us. What have we got waiting to ensure that the damage is limited as far as possible? For example, if we were to have a dramatic infrastructure breakdown during the Olympics and getting people to the site was catastrophically bad, that would have an immediate impact on foreign direct investment, because it sends out a very clear symbol that this isn’t a place where things work. It would take a little effort to reassure people that that was an anomaly, rather than a pattern.  

74. Jeremy Browne pointed out to us that features of previous Games which have gone wrong, such as big budget overruns or delays in construction, were highly unlikely to occur in the case of the 2012 Games, because construction works at the Olympic site were currently on course to be completed comfortably in advance of the Games and within budget. Mr Browne noted that cross-Departmental contingency planning to deal with other risks, relating to security or problems with the transport system, was well advanced.  

75. We conclude that the 2012 Olympics pose potential reputational risks as well as opportunities for the UK. The FCO is not the lead Department in contingency planning for organisational, transport or security problems during the Games, but it will have a responsibility for seeking to influence overseas perceptions of any problems that arise. We recommend that the FCO should make sure that, acting in concert with its Olympics public diplomacy partners, there is a ‘rapid response unit’ adequately resourced and prepared to take swift action to rebut or challenge negative stories appearing in the world media. We further recommend that this unit should be up and running significantly in advance of the start of the Games, that it should engage in intensive preparatory scenario-modelling, and that it should draw on the experience of successful media strategies by other recent host countries of major sporting events, notably Australia with the 2000 Sydney Olympics and Germany with the 2006 World Cup.
London Olympics or UK Olympics?

76. Dr Patrick Spaven comments that most cities are so closely identified with their countries that perception changes as a result of the Olympics will be shared by both, as was the case with the Beijing, Athens and Sydney Olympics. However, he argues that there is evidence London may be different:

factor analysis of the City Brand Index survey results suggest that London and New York are perceived as “world cities”, somewhat detached from their hinterlands. London’s widely-appreciated openness to international influences and change are in juxtaposition to persistent popular perceptions of the UK as having insular and backward-looking tendencies (albeit in a complex mix with more “modern” identity elements).\(^{74}\)

77. Dr Spaven commented:

In my view it would be wrong to assume that perception outcomes—particularly positive ones—for London will be directly transferred to the wider UK. If this is the intention, the relevance of the messaging about London to the wider UK needs to be explicit and demonstrable.\(^{75}\)

78. Conrad Bird, Head of Public Diplomacy at the FCO, asked to comment on this issue, told us that the ‘See Britain’ films being promoted by the FCO “are not London-centric, they are a range of 29 stories from foreign nationals who have spent time and have travelled around the UK. In their entirety they show a very rich portrait of the entire UK via these people’s travels and where they have stayed. That presents a more balanced story than just a London, south-east message.”\(^{76}\)

79. We recommend that the FCO should instruct its Posts not only to promote the 2012 Games as “the London Games” but also, where appropriate, as an event hosted by the entire UK and its component nations and regions.

The Olympics: tradition and modernity

80. In 2012 the international media will focus on the UK not only because of the Olympic Games but also because of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. Events to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the Queen’s accession will take place across the country throughout the year, and will culminate in the official Jubilee Weekend on 2 to 5 June, two months before the start of the Olympic Games. Only one previous British monarch has celebrated a Diamond Jubilee: Queen Victoria in 1897.

81. Professor Nick Cull commented to us that:

While it makes sense to take full advantage of the coincidence of the Olympics with the Diamond Jubilee year care should be taken to avoid undercutting the image of British modernity with a heritage and tradition message tied to the Jubilee. While

\(^{74}\) Ev 35  
\(^{75}\) Ibid.  
\(^{76}\) Q 53
this dimension is probably inherent to the Jubilee, perhaps planning around that event should be to mix the message in some way.\textsuperscript{77}

82. Professor Cull advocated that one aspect of the Olympic Games relating to “heritage and tradition” should be emphasised: the fact that London will be the only city to have hosted the Games more than twice. He noted that London had hosted the Games—in 1908 and 1948, both times in response to emergency situations (the eruption of Vesuvius in the first instance and the war in the second). The 1948 games were marked by the austerity of the era (with the US government famously having to fly extra food to sustain the athletes). It is possible that both 1908 and 1948 might provide stories that could serve the general and bilateral public diplomacy goals of 2012. Looking back to 1908 and 1948 stresses the role of the UK as a nation with a profound commitment to sport and ethics of fair play.\textsuperscript{78}

83. Professor Cull proposed that the FCO should draw attention to positive stories from the 1908 London Games, including the coining of the phrase “the most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part”, and the first gold medal won by an African-American. He also suggested that surviving athletes from the 1948 Games might be honoured at receptions at FCO Posts, or at the 2012 Games themselves, adding that “such honour would be a valuable counter to the impression that the West is not respectful of its elders.”\textsuperscript{79}

84. \textbf{We note that in 2012 the world's media will be paying special attention to the UK not only because of the Olympic Games but also because of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. We conclude that there is no reason why this double cause for celebration should in any way send out conflicting images of the UK.} The two events are not strictly comparable. The Olympics will receive intense media coverage over a short period: 17 days in July/August for the Olympic Games, followed by 12 days in August/September for the Paralympic Games. The Jubilee, on the other hand, will be celebrated throughout the year, beginning on the anniversary of Her Majesty’s accession on 6 February. Both events will send out messages about the kind of country the UK aspires to be. The messages will be different but compatible. The Diamond Jubilee will, quite properly, look backwards in thanksgiving for Her Majesty’s sixty years of service, and will celebrate a country “grounded” in its rich history and the long continuity and stability of its constitutional arrangements. The Olympics will, equally properly, look to youth and the future. \textbf{We recommend that in promoting both the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the FCO should not attempt to mix together the messages of two quite separate events, but should promote each in its own distinctive way.}

85. \textbf{We recommend that the promotion of the 2012 Games should include recognition of London’s status as the only city ever to have hosted the Games three times. We further recommend that, where possible and appropriate, surviving athletes from the

\textsuperscript{77} Ev 37
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
1948 Games should be invited to participate in the Olympic ceremonies and in events held to mark the Games, including those organised by overseas Posts.

**The Olympic Truce**

86. The ‘Olympic Truce’ derives from a custom observed during the ancient Olympic Games, whereby the city-states of Greece refrained from hostilities with each other for the duration of the Games. In its modern form, dating from 1993, the Truce is proposed by the United Nations General Assembly, which passes a resolution in advance of each Games calling upon its member states “to take the initiative to abide by the Truce, individually and collectively, and to pursue in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations the peaceful settlement of all international conflicts”. It is intended that the relevant motion will be put to the General Assembly in 2011 by Lord Coe in his capacity as Chairman of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games; he will be acting also on behalf of the UK Government and the International Olympic Committee. Baroness Rawlings, speaking on behalf of the Government in the House of Lords in October 2011, said that “The Government take the truce very seriously and will be taking measures to make sure it is properly observed and promoted in relation to the 2012 London Olympic & Paralympic Games”.

87. Lord Bates of Langbaurgh sent us written evidence relating to the Olympic Truce. He noted with regret that no mention of the Truce was made in the FCO’s written or oral evidence to us. He commented:

> If past experience is to be repeated then the London 2012 Olympic Truce Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly will be immediately signed by all 193 member states of the United Nations and then universally ignored.

Lord Bates proposed that the UK should take positive initiatives to turn the Truce into a reality in conflict situations around the world, arguing that the Truce, “as originally intended, could be a powerful force in the public diplomacy efforts of the FCO”. He argues that any such measures would be dependent on the other parties involved accepting the offer of a truce: “if other parties, state or non-state, do not accept the offer then we are under no obligation to hold to it ourselves”.

88. **We recommend that, in its response to this Report, the Government should state what actions it proposes to take to work towards international implementation of the United Nations ‘Olympic Truce’, as part of its commitment to international peace-keeping and conflict prevention.**

**Future scrutiny**

89. **We will continue to monitor the FCO’s public diplomacy work related to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We recommend that the FCO should supply us with regular (three-monthly) detailed written updates on that work during the run-up to the Games.**
**Formal Minutes**

**Wednesday 26 January 2011**

Members present:

Richard Ottaway, in the Chair

Mr Bob Ainsworth  
Mr John Baron  
Ann Clwyd  
Mike Gapes  
Mr Frank Roy  
Sir John Stanley  
Rory Stewart  
Mr Dave Watts

Draft Report (*FCO Public Diplomacy: The Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 53 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 54 read, amended and agreed to.

Paragraphs 55 to 89 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.


*Ordered*, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

*Ordered*, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Written evidence was ordered to be reported to the House for printing with the Report, together with written evidence reported and ordered to be published on 9 November and 8 December 2010.

[Adjourned till Wednesday 2 February at 2.00 pm]
Witnesses

Wednesday 10 November 2010

Simon Anholt, independent policy advisor, author and researcher, and Dr Patrick Spaven OBE, consultant in research and evaluation for public diplomacy

Jeremy Browne MP, Minister of State for public diplomacy and the Olympics, and Conrad Bird, Head of Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

List of written evidence

1. Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ev 19, 38
2. Dr Patrick Spaven OBE Ev 34
3. Professor Nick Cull Ev 36
4. Lord Bates of Langbaurgh Ev 42
Oral evidence

Taken before the Foreign Affairs Committee on Wednesday 10 November 2010

Members present:
Richard Ottaway (Chair)
Mr Bob Ainsworth
Mike Gapes
Andrew Rosindell
Mr Frank Roy
Sir John Stanley
Rory Stewart
Mr Dave Watts

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Simon Anholt, independent policy advisor, author and researcher, and Dr Patrick Spaven OBE, consultant in research and evaluation for public diplomacy, gave evidence.

Q1 Chair: I welcome everybody to this session of the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, and our single hearing into the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s Public Diplomacy: The Olympics. We have two witnesses in the first session: Mr Simon Anholt and Dr Patrick Spaven. Simon Anholt is an independent policy adviser, author and researcher and is considered to be a leading expert in his field. He specialises in national identity and reputation, public diplomacy and the public perceptions of nations. He is one of the few people I know who has actually had an index named after him: the Anholt Nation Brand Index, about which he will no doubt speak.

Dr Patrick Spaven is a consultant in research and evaluation for public diplomacy, specialising in evaluation, results-based management and social research. He is a visiting fellow at the Centre for Public Policy in Management at Manchester Business School, and was previously a senior manager with the British Council.

I give a warm welcome to both of you. Do you have an opening statement that you would like to make, or shall we get straight into the questions?

Simon Anholt: Let’s plunge straight in, shall we, Patrick?

Q2 Chair: Thank you very much. Let me open the batting. When mugging up for this session, I was struck by how, in the aftermath of the Second World War, Japan and Germany had bad reputations, but 50 or 60 years later they are first and eighth respectively in the index, for their reputations and as a result of their public diplomacy. Quite clearly there is a way in which perceptions can be changed. My first question to you both is: to what extent is public diplomacy effective in changing perceptions of a country in the wider world? Apart from the two to which I have referred, have any other countries been particularly successful in using public diplomacy in this way?

Simon Anholt: It all depends on what you mean by public diplomacy. This subject, as I am sure you have discovered, is very hard to discuss, because there is so little rigour or systematic use of the terminology. Public diplomacy is a term that can cover a whole host of evils. Definitions of it range from the very precise, the very traditional and the very old-fashioned to the very broad definition that you have yourself just used, which is about the general long-term management of national reputation.

I would argue that the cases of Japan and Germany were more export miracles than public diplomacy miracles. Some necessary political changes stopped them being immediately perceived as pariahs after the second world war, but after that point the way that those countries began to worm their way into international public esteem was through the export of high-quality consumer goods, and after a few years, people began to discover that, if they could trust the Braun razor or the Sony hi-fi, perhaps they trusted the company that made them. China is doing precisely the same thing now. If that is public diplomacy, yes, it works.

Q3 Chair: Staying with Mr Anholt for a moment, whatever public diplomacy might be, how effective can the Foreign Office be in changing public perceptions?

Simon Anholt: If we are talking about people’s perceptions of the country generally, that’s a very long haul indeed. One of the things that my work and research has shown me over the last 15 years or so is that national images are incredibly robust. They really don’t change very much, and that is precisely because the people who hold those images of other countries don’t want to change them. They are very reassuring. The way we all navigate our way through a very complex globalised world is by having a series of clichés in our minds about what sorts of places these countries are, and we will do almost anything rather than change our minds. That is simply the way it works. They are normative constructs and the temptation is to resist changing them.

A Finnish journalist rang me the other day and said, “No doubt you read about the competitor in our sauna competition who died as a result of overheating himself. Surely this has damaged the reputation of Finland.” I said, “No it hasn’t.” but it’s an interesting question, because if we really did change our minds about places every time a new piece of information came along, life would be literally unliveable. We would spend our whole time re-evaluating our perceptions of countries, people and companies, and
we would never have time to do anything else. So we hang on to those prejudices for dear life, and we will only change them if we have no other choice, and that tends to be as a result of dramatically, consistently changed behaviour over many years.

In terms of the overall reputation of the country, the Foreign Office, or any other individual agency of Government, or civil society or the private sector, can do very little, because those images are cultural constructs and they are deeply rooted in the global commons. But, at a higher level, in terms of impact on tourism arrivals, or foreign direct investment or recruiting talent—the other things that matter to the business of the country—yes, those can be effective in the shorter term.

**Dr Spaven:** I won’t go over the same ground. I agree with Simon on more or less everything he has said so far. What I would like to point out is that national image doesn’t exist independently of what people have in their heads. What we are dealing with is 6.8 billion little UK brands. Every single person in the world has some idea of what the UK is. How those images are formed will depend on what exposure they have had to the UK, if any, either directly or indirectly. Ultimately you have to get down to a fairly small scale before you can start to work out, first of all, whose impressions of the UK you want to change and how to do it. You have to learn much more about those individuals to be able to develop a strategy for dealing with that. You can’t just assume that they are part of an undifferentiated mass that you can project images onto. It just doesn’t work like that.

I spent 24 years in the British Council and I have learned the hard way about the ineffectiveness of a lot of the kind of projective public diplomacy that we have been used to in the past. However, there are some good points that I can elaborate on later.

**Q4 Mike Gapes:** The previous Government had a public diplomacy effort, including producing a major report by Lord Carter, which attempted a definition. I do not think that this is the time to rerun all of that, but it would be helpful if you could at least say whether you broadly agree with the definition that was given in that report in 2006.

**Simon Anholt:** Yes, because I was on that Public Diplomacy Board, so I was one of the contributors to it—not to the Carter review, but to the work we did subsequently to the Carter review. That, if you like, is a very correct but somewhat narrow definition of public diplomacy. It’s simply words to the effect of the engagement of a Government with overseas public opinion as distinct from élite or Government opinion.

**Q5 Mike Gapes:** The current Government have sent us a memo that refers to the FCO’s Public Diplomacy Group study in 2009, which concluded that, overall, we had a strong reputation worldwide, and we were fourth out of 50 countries in your 2010 index. We are seen as fair, innovative, diverse, confident and stylish. Given what you have just said about the historical length of time that it takes for things to change, is that the image that we would have had 20, 30 or 50 years ago?

**Simon Anholt:** Broadly, yes. When you are talking about a country like the UK, which has been internationally prominent for centuries, I think you will find that the roots run very deep indeed. One of the reasons why the UK, to use that horrible phrase, punches above its weight in reputational terms, is because we have been at it for so long. We have so much influence and so much engagement with other people in other countries, and that’s one of the things that makes our reputation so good, because generally—very generally speaking—the more you know about a country, the more you approve of it. That is also why it is so robust—because it is literally knitted into the culture of other populations. It is one of our most powerful assets.

**Q6 Mike Gapes:** What are the areas of weakness?

**Simon Anholt:** Characterial, if that’s a word—to do with our character, our perceived persona. We are perceived by a great many people—

**Q7 Mike Gapes:** Is this duplicitious Albion?

**Simon Anholt:** A little bit, yes. A little bit arrogant. A little bit overbearing. A little bit cold. London, for example, in my City Brands Index is regarded to be an unwelcoming, expensive place. None of this is terribly bad, by the way, because it’s quite difficult to admire somebody and find them cuddly at the same time. Our reputation is the kind of reputation that nine out of 10 countries would give their right hands for. I don’t think there is anything wrong there at all. When we are talking about the Olympics, the question has got to be: are people going to find the reality even better than the expectation, or possibly slightly worse?

That’s where the risk or the reward come in.

**Q8 Mike Gapes:** Dr Spaven, do you want to add anything to that?

**Dr Spaven:** I just add the word boring, which British people are thought to be. But then, so are the Germans and they haven’t done badly either in the index.

**Simon Anholt:** Never underestimate being boring. Boring is a good thing to be.

**Dr Spaven:** Exactly. It is a question of what matters—what matters in terms of what we want to achieve. We have to think about outcomes and then work back from there.

**Q9 Mike Gapes:** Would you say that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and presumably other Government Departments, in the recent past have been successful in what they have tried to achieve?

**Simon Anholt:** Yes, I think there have been some successes. As long as it’s accepted that this is about, as Patrick said a moment ago, fairly tactical, fairly modest, fairly localised initiatives. Where you have a situation in country X, where you have noticed that there is a negative perception that is demonstrably harming our interests and you set to work to fix that negative perception in that country among a certain population group over a certain period of time, it is possible to achieve results. The question, as always, in these initiatives is about sustainability, because the tendency for people’s perceptions of the country to snap back to the default is very strong indeed. Patrick
Dr Spaven: I have to admit that I spent most of the year abroad, and so I spend most of my time in other countries. I have the Public Diplomacy Board doesn’t exist any more, I am sure that it is in my brief.

Simon Anholt: I am rather out of the loop because I haven’t been close to the supply side. You have to work on their agendas; you have to see it through their eyes. Quite frankly, it has to be more about them than us. All public diplomacy needs to do that.

Q10 Chair: In the past six months have you seen any significant change in approach from the new Government compared with the previous one?

Simon Anholt: I am rather out of the loop because the Public Diplomacy Board doesn’t exist any more, so I spend most of my time in other countries. I have no idea what’s going on.

Dr Spaven: I have to admit that I spent most of the last year in Africa. I picked up signals there, but I haven’t been close to the supply side.

Q11 Chair: I am sure that it is in my brief somewhere, but what has happened to the Public Diplomacy Board?

Simon Anholt: It had a four-year term, which expired last year. I believe—you will need to check this—that another group has been set up out of some of the remains of the previous group. That group has the word “influence” in it and is a work in progress.

Mike Gapes: It was effectively taken back in-house by the FCO, which now has a closer role.

Q12 Chair: Are you satisfied that there is still a group of people addressing the same subjects?

Simon Anholt: I am afraid that I can’t be, because I just don’t know what’s going on. I would be more satisfied if I were part of it.

Q13 Chair: Mike Gapes was the previous Chairman of the Committee. The board was exercising a sort of oversight role, which you say has now gone in-house. Is there now no independent oversight role—

Simon Anholt: I can’t be sure of that.

Q14 Chair:—other than this Committee?

Simon Anholt: I really can’t be sure of that, and one would need to ask the FCO about its work in progress.

Q15 Chair: We’ve got the Minister after you.

Simon Anholt: Okay, let’s see what the Minister says.

Q16 Andrew Rosindell: What is your overall assessment of the FCO’s strategy in terms of public diplomacy? What do you think it is doing right, and what do you think it is not getting right?

Chair: Feel free to talk at length on this point.
Q18 Andrew Rosindell: The new Government want to use the Olympics to promote British trade. The previous Government emphasised the more environmental issues. How do you assess that?

Dr Spaven: If I was starting out, I would emphasise those as the most important things. I do not see a dichotomy between environment and trade. On the contrary, I think that they’re extremely complementary.

Sitting suspended for a Division in the House. On resuming—

Q19 Chair: My colleague Andrew Rosindell, who has yet to return from the Division, was asking questions about trade, and whether the Government were placing more or less emphasis on trade. You were halfway through answering. I don’t know if you can remember where you were.

Dr Spaven: I think I was about 25% through it. It depends whether we are talking about the Olympics as an opportunity.

Q20 Chair: I would like to focus more in this next part of the session on the Olympics and the opportunities that it presents.

Dr Spaven: There are quite a few references to opportunities to promote wealth creation, inward investment and so on here, but they are quite difficult to read because they are very general. Probably not a lot of the specifics have been worked out yet—or if they have they are not in this paper. I make two observations.

There are two levels at which the Olympics offer opportunities for that area of UK business. One is projecting specifically London, and more generally and to a lesser extent the UK, as places with a good climate for business. Climate for business is a complex issue; it is all about infrastructure, benign regulation or the lack of it— all sorts of things. Those issues can be projected through the Olympics if it is done skilfully, but that area is more about broadcasting than narrowcasting.

Then you have specific connections to make in and around the Olympics—hopefully the successful management of a large-scale project, particularly infrastructure in and around the Olympic sites, rapid transit and so on, and the whole green issue. That is why I said a little while ago that environment and trade are interconnected these days. The opportunities are there; the question is how they are mobilised. I cannot comment on that, because there is not enough information, but there is tremendous potential for doing it successfully, probably more than for any other potential benefit from the Olympics.

Equally, there are risks. For example, if the transit does not work, Britain’s reputation—

Q21 Chair: We will be coming to risk in a moment. I don’t think you have had a chance to read the FCO’s submission to the Committee on the matter. In the second part, there is a section on trade and investment activity; given that trade is very much the theme of the new Government’s foreign policy, it seems a bit thin. Right at the end, it says that UKTI and the Foreign Office are planning a business hub at games time to promote UK industry in Lancaster House. Wouldn’t something like a trade fair be a more appropriate way of promoting trade, rather than a hub?

We then have UKTI’s Host2Host programme, and we will be probing the Minister on that in a moment. Do you have any views on that?

Simon Anholt: Yes. When I read that sentence about the event at Lancaster House, I thought to myself that that sounds pretty much like business as usual, good stuff and necessary. But the thing that one has to understand about the Olympics is that they are first and foremost a gigantic media opportunity. That is why one does it; that is why one spends the money on it. It is the only time in the year when a country can be the object of fixed contemplation by billions of people around the world for weeks at a stretch.

There are two ways of taking advantage of that. One of the ways, in very practical terms, is to make an impression on the people who are coming to the Olympics, some of whom—a great many—will be business people, and I’m sure one should be doing things like Lancaster House and so forth. The other thing that one should be doing is taking advantage of that media opportunity to make sure that the right pictures of the country are being broadcast around the world, as far as possible. This is where the whole issue of national reputation comes in.

I won’t go into risk, because we are coming to that, but it is worth saying that it’s what people see on television that really makes the difference over the longer term. There tends to be an assumption that if one simply has an Olympics and it goes off without a hitch, it will somehow, in heavy inverted commas, brand the nation, making it more famous and more popular.

My own view is that that is highly unlikely to happen with the UK, because it’s image is so very good indeed, and we are such a prominent country—more, some would claim, than we deserve to be—and the chances of us putting on an Olympics so good that people think more about the UK afterwards, or improve their impression of it, are very remote. You could argue from that point of view that there is a greater chance of us suffering from the Olympics than benefiting from them. I hope not, but anybody who imagines that a successful event will make us more famous is probably kidding themselves, and disastrous Olympics could set us back a few years.

The point is that even in the general media, one is sending out messages to people who are also business people. They are consumers and television watchers in their spare time, but they are also potentially investors, they’re potentially students and incoming business visitors and so on. We need to make absolutely sure that the stuff they’re seeing is first rate, and symbolically representative of a first-rate country.
Q22 Chair: Patrick, do you feel that enough is planned on the trade side?

Dr Spaven: As I say, I think it is probably early days. A lot of it will be about schmoozing business people from abroad. I imagine that there is something to think about there. Those are things that probably need to be finalised nearer the time. From this document, I cannot really tell whether there is enough and whether it’s the right sort of thing. I suspect that not a tremendous amount has been done yet.

Q23 Andrew Rosindell: The final point is on promoting British culture and values. Do you think that the Olympics will be used appropriately to enhance, say, promote British culture? The logo of the Olympics does not really project British cultural values, does it?

Simon Anholt: I think that logos are of vanishing consequence. I couldn’t care less about them. I don’t think people really mind about logos one way or another. Earlier, Mike Gapes raised a question about the negative perception of the UK, and we spoke about this perception of our aloofness, arrogance and so forth. There is a job to be done there. There are one or two aspects of the Olympic plan that look to me to be very, very well thought-out, and that could seriously benefit some of those aspects of our culture and our personality.

Specifically, there is a project, which I was sorry to see mentioned only in passing in the FCO document—and its name is misspelt—called International Inspiration. There is a little bit of information about it. Basically, this is a project to introduce sport and sport education to 20 million children in 12 countries by 2012. When I first heard about it, I jumped up and down. I have been around many, many Governments in my life when they have been hosting, or bidding to host, an Olympics. In one way or another, they all ask themselves the same question, which is: “How can we best benefit from this opportunity?” This, the London Olympics, is the first time that I had ever heard a Government asking themselves a different question, which was: “How can we best share the benefits of this wonderful opportunity?” International Inspiration is a wonderful example of that. It is what we promised when we bid for the games. We wanted to ensure that we shared the opportunity with people around the world.

My own vote would be for taking a look at things, such as International Inspiration, which really hit very hard and are a perfect antidote to the negative perceptions that exist about Britain. Let’s put a lot of clout behind those, because they really prove the point; they don’t say it, they prove it.

Dr Spaven: I would endorse that example, because it sounds like an example of the exchange model of public diplomacy, where there is as much benefit to the people in other countries as there is to the people in the UK. The broadcast and transfer model is just Britain telling the world about how clever it is. The latter can work in very special circumstances if it is done brilliantly, but it is a high-risk model. The exchange model is almost no risk at all. It is resource-intensive, but from what little we know from the evaluation of public diplomacy—there has been very little of that over the years—those things tend to work, because they create lasting relationships.

Q24 Mr Watts: Is there any evidence that Olympics anywhere have a long-term beneficial effect on the economy, visitor numbers, and the reputation of an area?

Simon Anholt: I can speak for the reputation. There have been a couple of cases that are celebrated because they really made a substantial long-term difference to the reputation of the country, and they are probably Barcelona and Sydney. There were very special sets of circumstances. Australia’s reputation at the time of the Sydney Olympics was beginning to grow. People were starting to consider it as a viable long-haul but exciting tourist destination, and the profile of the country was already beginning to rise. Films such as “Crocodile Dundee” helped enormously, because people saw a picture of a country that they rather liked the look of.

What the Australians succeeded in doing with the Sydney Olympics was telling one very simple, very compelling story about the kind of country that it was, and people bought it and loved it. That is a country with a previously somewhat weak but generally positive reputation; there was nothing negative in there. In a situation such as that, an Olympics can have a strong long-term effect. It simply raised its game by a notch or two and it has benefited from it ever since. It has maintained the momentum. One thing that one has to understand about a major event of this sort is that it is not a sprint to the finish; it is a relay race. We spoke before about sustainability. Countries have to become obsessive about asking themselves, “What do we do next?” People get exhausted planning these things, so you have to have other teams standing by to take the baton and do the next big thing. Brazil is doing that and China is doing that. They have big events mapped out in two or four-year intervals for the next few decades, and I think that is the way one has to look at it. Patrick is the expert on Barcelona because he was posted there when it was going on.

Dr Spaven: Yes, Barcelona is probably the most often quoted success story. It is quite a long time now since 1992. What happened there was that it had, not exactly a blank slate, but a fairly uniform backdrop on which to impose the messages. Barcelona, as many of you know, was an interesting city but it was a bit grimy. It was a declining industrial city until it started to transform itself. It started to do that before the Olympics, and would have carried on even if there hadn’t been the Olympics. However, it got an enormous boost from the Olympics—from potential markets, because people were looking at it, but the bigger factor was the internal market. I mentioned that in my submission. One million to 2 million people—not exclusively from greater Barcelona, a city of 3.5 million—became really proud of their city and went out to become public diplomats.

There is no more effective public diplomacy than individuals talking to other individuals. If someone understands that a message is coming from the Government, they are much more likely to be sceptical about it. If the message comes from a person,
especially if there is a relationship, it is going to be far more credible. If you have millions of people saying that Barcelona is a wonderful city, fine. So that worked at the time, but it carried on working because the people were so proud of what had happened in Barcelona that they were prepared to invest more and more in their city. That meant money from their wallets carried on transforming the city. It was that cumulative effect that sustained the improvement of the city, and that created the Barcelona we know today, which is unfortunately a bit more congested than it was when I was living there. The momentum effect definitely was an outcome from the Olympics—no question of that.

Q25 Mr Watts: Would it be true to say—you also used the Australian example—that, for the Spanish one, the benefits were specifically for Barcelona, not for Spain? Economically and in terms of visitor numbers, it does not seem to have had the desired effect in the long term.

Dr Spaven: Yes, there was an effect for Spain as well. Barcelona, a city roughly equivalent in size to Madrid—though different—became complementary to it, whereas for so many years before that they had been diametrically opposed. Barcelona had been the junior and somewhat aggrieved partner, and it became a jewel in the crown of Spain. That has benefited Spain as a whole. I can’t prove it, but that is my impression. I lived there for six years and saw that happening at the time, and I go back frequently.

Simon Anholt: I think these internal effects should never be underestimated. One of the things I was searching for in the FCO’s paper and couldn’t find was any reference to this really significant point about the London Olympics. For all the reasons that we have spoken about up to now, I think there is a fairly good chance that, even if it’s a success, it is not going to have any major impact on the reputation of the UK, because people already believe what they are going to believe.

Where it might really make a difference and could bring something new to the UK’s perception of itself is by creating structures that, as a country, we fire on all cylinders, and that the same sorts of messages about the country are coming from every sector—and civil society, business and so on. So, clearly, co-ordination is a no-brainer, but my experience of working with this Government and many other Governments overseas is that the moment you stop forcing people to co-ordinate they will stop co-ordinating, because the tendency is for them not to do so. They have got their own mandates, targets, audiences and businesses. Therefore, the only way to make people co-ordinate and work together long term—what we have occasionally called joined-up government in the past—is by creating structures that make it impossible for people not to co-ordinate. I think one has to be a little bit fiercer about it.

At the moment, it tends to be that people sitting in meeting A then go to meeting B and reporting on the proceedings of meeting A to the people in meeting B. I don’t think that is good enough. In the countries I have seen where this is really working, you have actually got people from the different departments—from business, from civil society—sitting together in, to some degree, policy-making groups and doing policy together so they can’t ignore each other. When we are doing tourism, we cannot ignore foreign direct investment, and when we are doing foreign direct investment we cannot ignore foreign policy or the military or anything else, because they are all working together. In most countries, and the UK is no exception, the kinds of bodies, structures and organisations we have to deal with this were all designed in the 19th century and are singularly unfit for purpose in the modern age, where reputation is everything.

Q27 Rory Stewart: That is a very exciting point, Simon. To exploit you slightly before the arrival of the Minister and the Head of Public Diplomacy, can I push you both on this point? If you were sitting in our position, what would you drill down on, in terms of resources, institutional structures, and bureaucratic structures in the FCO? What should it be doing concretely to change its public diplomacy?

Simon Anholt: A very important part of a country beginning to take control of its reputation is creating the right structures to do so. We have spoken endlessly in this country about the need for greater communication between the sectors, and that much is obvious. This is a very busy world. If this is a supermarket, it is a supermarket in which we are competing against 204 other similar products in one way or another. Therefore, it is incredibly important that, as a country, we fire on all cylinders, and that the same sorts of messages about the country are coming from every sector—and civil society, business and so on. So, clearly, co-ordination is a no-brainer, but my experience of working with this Government and

Dr Spaven: My recent experience in this area of co-ordination—I agree that co-ordination is very important—is from Sweden, where, to some extent, I have had some input. What Sweden has done is create
a looser form of co-ordination, which is possible in a
country like that, which is obviously smaller than the
UK. In this model, which is more of a network model,
the glue between the international influence
organisations—the obvious ones—is a concept of
brand. What Sweden has done with its brand is not
project it outwards; it created it to have everybody, as
it were, singing not from the same hymn sheet, but
certainly the same hymn book. So, it is a segmented
brand, but it nevertheless has a measure of agreement
and has resources that people use in a networked way.
The Sweden Promotion Forum does meet from time
to time, but it does not force the issue. That may be
possible for the UK to some extent. I suspect it
probably needs a bit more accessible co-ordination
here.

Q28 Rory Stewart: Can I ask you what this actually
looks like bureaucratically? What is this thing? What
is it that you would be asking? If you were Foreign
Secretary, what would you be doing?
Simon Anholt: In a couple of other countries, I have
set up a thing that is deliberately crudely called the
national marketing agency, which is responsible for
managing these reputational issues. It has some
limited power to make policy. It creates a national
strategy through broad consultation and it has senior
members, very often at ministerial level, depending
on the size of the country, from all the relevant
sectors. That is what, when I first started writing about
the subject 15 years ago, I called a hexagon of
national image, which is policy, culture, population,
exports and so on. I will send you a copy. They are
all sitting together and all doing this together at a very
high level, at the policy level, because that is what
really makes the difference.

There is another very specific thing that I would like
to see done. That is, if it is at all possible, a bit more
refining of the objectives here. There seem to be quite
a number of messages that we are trying to get across
about Britain during these Olympics. They are
somewhat vague and anodyne. They are a bit
motherhood-and-apple-pie. We would like to be seen
as caring, sharing, tolerant, modern, technological,
equal, and so on. I am afraid my heart sinks when I
read these things, because it is what 90% of all
countries want to be perceived as, and it is just not
very distinctive. In my experience, you are lucky if
you can prove one new thing about your country, let
alone 12. I would love to see us just saying, “Here is
the one thing which, through close analysis, we have
decided the UK can best use the Olympics to prove
about itself”—the one thing. And then let’s go about
proving that.

Chair: Because of the vote, I’m going to extend the
session by 10 minutes. We were due to stop about
now, but there are still a couple of questions left.

Q29 Mr Ainsworth: Let’s turn now to the
downside—to the negative. You’ve flagged up a
couple of opportunities, but one could be forgiven for
believing that there is a lot more risk in this than
opportunity. London is perceived as a pretty exciting,
positive city. What are those risks and how do we
position ourselves so as best to manage and mitigate
them?
Simon Anholt: First of all, yes, it’s certainly true that
London has a pretty good reputation. None the less, I
would never advocate resting on laurels. A reputation
is not something you learn; it’s something you rent.
And you have to keep paying the rent on it.

Q30 Mr Ainsworth: And it is an opportunity. That’s
what you appear to be saying.
Simon Anholt: And it is an opportunity. Even though
clearly there are risks, I would never advocate
avoiding risks. One has to do these things from time
to time and, as a prominent nation, it is very important
that we do prominent, daring things from time to
time—as long as we remember to make them
prominent and daring. I would say that the risks to
our overall reputation are very slight, just because I
have so seldom seen a country ever manage to damage
its reputation in any serious way over the long term,
even when trying very vigorously. Invading other
countries doesn’t seem to do it. It is difficult to
imagine what one could do to damage one’s reputation
permanently, if one has a good, robust reputation—as
we luckily enough do. Long decline over many years
would do it, but we’re not planning on having that.
In the short term and on a much more superficial level,
yes, there are risks. If the Olympics are in some way
or other not a success and are a disaster, that will have
a short-term impact on trade, on tourism, on
investment, on foreign students coming in and so on.
We need to be scenario planning. If we are not already
doing so, we need to take the approach that Shell
pioneered in the 1950s, which has been imitated
throughout the world in corporations and, to some
degree, in the public sector as well. You get a lot of
people who are very good at scenarios who sit down
and work out the 20 possible things that could go
wrong and what impact those would have on all the
things that matter to us. What have we got waiting to
ensure that the damage is limited as far as possible?
For example, if we were to have a dramatic
infrastructure breakdown during the Olympics and
getting people to the site was catastrophically bad, that
would have an immediate impact on foreign direct
investment, because it sends out a very clear symbol
that this isn’t a place where things work. It would
take a little effort to reassure people that that was an
anomaly, rather than a pattern.
We should not only be anticipating those potential
risks, but trying to insure against them in advance. In
the remaining months building up to the Olympics,
we should be doing everything we can to build up a
strong perception that we are very, very good at
infrastructure. We should be demonstrating that the
infrastructure is very modern, is working hard and we
are making investment in it. That will mean we
maximise our chances that if something does go
wrong, it will be perceived as an anomaly, rather than
proof that things are going downhill. That sort of
approach is essential.

Mr Ainsworth: And reaction too.
Simon Anholt: And reaction too.
Q31 Mr Ainsworth: Are there systems that we should be putting in place?

Simon Anholt: Absolutely. Here we get into the area of public relations, which is not really my field. Certainly any good PR person would be able to say to you, “How would damage limitation work in a situation like this?” Broadly speaking, it is about ensuring that the moment a bad story gets out, you are very, very close to the media and you can get on to them straight away. That means if incorrect or exaggerated information is published, you can immediately issue timely and accurate rebuttals. More importantly, for every one negative piece of information about a tube train that breaks down, you can send 100 pieces of information about something excitingly good.

Countries are always complaining to me about the fact that the media prefer negative to positive stories. That is actually not true. The media prefer exciting stories to boring stories. You can’t tackle an exciting negative story with a boring positive story. The trick of the thing is to find exciting stories that are positive and are even more exciting than the negative ones. If we are building high speed train lines and so on, that is potentially more exciting than one tube train breaking down. That is how you combat it.

Q32 Chair: In fact, a disaster such as that of the Chilean miners and their survival and recovery was an exciting, good-news story. Patrick, do you want to add anything?

Dr Spaven: I am not quite as sanguine as Simon about the level of risk. Britain is trying to project itself as a country that knows how to manage big projects. This is its best opportunity. It wants to show that its governance, human rights and all the rest of it, China is a different matter. We know that China’s reputation was going down quite steeply before the Olympics. Before the Olympics it had the fastest-deteriorating reputation of any country in the index, but that has been checked and it has started to rise. Whether it has risen back to what it would have been in 2003 we don’t know, because the index didn’t exist in those days.

Simon Anholt: And continues to improve.

Dr Spaven: Yes, which is interesting, because China’s reputation was going down quite steeply before the Olympics. Before the Olympics it had the fastest-deteriorating reputation of any country in the index, but that has been checked and it has started to rise. Whether it has risen back to what it would have been in 2003 we don’t know, because the index didn’t exist in those days.

Simon Anholt: I think the Beijing Olympics was a clear case of simply revealing more of the country to a population that knew very little about the country and imagined a great deal, and what they saw was generally reassuring.

The index doesn’t just measure overall reputation; it measures it in some detail. On the question of governance, human rights and all the rest of it, China is still regarded as a pariah by the majority of the world’s population. So that’s the ball and chain around its ankle. None the less, on most of the other indices it continues to rise and, as Patrick said, it got a big boost from the Olympics. Every country that hosts a major event is in every sense a special case. That was the right moment for China to have its Olympics, and it benefited arguably as much as it possibly could have done from that opportunity. And China continues to invest; they are treating it as a relay race and not as a sprint. They have had the Shanghai Expo, and they continue to invest massively in cultural relations, building Confucius centres all over the world. They can afford to do so; they are doing it well, they are doing it right. The ball and chain aside, this is an exemplary case of how to improve your image.

Q33 Mr Roy: I’d like to take you back to what we were talking about in relation to Germany in 2006, and the China Olympic Games two years ago and the Delhi Commonwealth Games that have just finished. We know that Germany benefited from that two-year impact. But now, looking back, what has happened to the performance that came in 2006 to Germany? In relation to China, were the games a success for China in relation to public diplomacy? Were lessons learned?

Thirdly, was Delhi a success, bearing in mind the very bad news that we had from Delhi the week before the games on the athletes’ village, which I think clouded a lot of people’s vision? Where do we sit with those three in terms of lessons learned?

Dr Spaven: I don’t know whether anyone has done a serious micro-analysis of the impact of Germany 2006 or China 2008, and certainly they won’t have done it yet for Delhi, and probably won’t. We have evidence from Simon’s index, but I would slightly moderate the picture that you (Simon) presented of Germany. Yes, Germany has slipped back a bit in the index from the immediate post-World Cup heights of late 2006.

Simon Anholt: But not all the way.

Dr Spaven: But not all the way. If you take a longer view, if you look at late 2005, Germany was sixth in the index. Now it’s—third?

Simon Anholt: Sometimes, yes.

Dr Spaven: So Germany’s status, in so far as the index tells the story—I believe that it does, because it is a very robust, large-scale survey—seems to be significantly better off in image terms now than it was in late 2005. The only factor that I can find to explain that is the 2006 FIFA World Cup, around which it managed public diplomacy, in a very broad sense—international influence—as well as I’ve seen any country, and in a purposeful way. What happened in Barcelona was almost incidental; it wasn’t a grand strategy. Germany had a grand strategy, which I think they designed and pulled off very well.

China is a different matter. We know that China’s overall reputation has improved since, and has—

Simon Anholt: And continues to improve.

Dr Spaven: Yes, which is interesting, because China’s reputation was going down quite steeply before the Olympics. Before the Olympics it had the fastest-deteriorating reputation of any country in the index, but that has been checked and it has started to rise. Whether it has risen back to where it would have been in 2003 we don’t know, because the index didn’t exist in those days.

Simon Anholt: I think the Beijing Olympics was a clear case of simply revealing more of the country to a population that knew very little about the country and imagined a great deal, and what they saw was generally reassuring.

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Delhi’s a rather different matter. A phenomenon that I’ve sometimes observed is that countries can over promise. South Africa is a rather similar case. It was widely believed that South Africa’s World Cup had improved the image of South Africa but my study has...
shown that it is nowhere near as clear-cut as that. In the minds of many people in the study, South Africa’s image actually deteriorated after the World Cup. That was perhaps as a result of the fact that many people overseas didn’t really know what South Africa looked like; all they’d seen was tourism promotion and they thought that it was a first-world country through and through. They then saw it on the television and realised that in many respects it’s still a third-world country, and the image was therefore corrected downwards. I think that the same thing is going to happen to India. A lot of people have been hearing nothing but stories of India’s meteoric rise in commerce and economics and so on, and then they see what Delhi actually looks like. If you come from Toronto or London that might shock you. Therefore there will probably be a bit of a downward correction, but they will pick up again afterwards, and one might say that that is a necessary correction because the perception has been restored to something closer to reality.

Mr Roy: Unlike Glasgow in 2014, hopefully.

Q34 Chair: Time is virtually up. Patrick, right at the beginning you said there were some points that you wanted to make. Do you feel that you’ve got all your points over?

Dr Spaven: One message that I’d like to leave is that we know very little about the effectiveness of public diplomacy, particularly in the narrow sense. Despite the fact that we now have an academic centre for public diplomacy in Southern California, which is doing some good work—some of it is rather uninteresting—we are just in the foothills of understanding about this and I make a plea. I think that research-wise we are learning quite a lot, but in terms of evaluating actual programmes—understanding what works and what doesn’t and with what markets—I think that we are woefully ignorant. So we need to do something about that, and not just because that’s my business.

Q35 Chair: Simon, have you something that you’d like to say in 30 seconds?

Simon Anholt: By contrast, I’m going to sound rather fluffy, but I just make a plea for us to be less boring. In 15 years of advising Governments around the world, I’ve found that the single most common reason why countries are misjudged is that they generally speaking make quite good policies but very boringly. I would like to see more stuff in here that’s genuinely imaginative and genuinely extraordinary, because that’s what breaks the mould; that’s what makes people admire, respect and take interest in other countries, and I’d like to see us asking ourselves about relevance: “Why would anyone care about Britain?” It is not, “How do we make ourselves famous?” it’s “How do we make ourselves relevant?” How do we touch people in other countries so that they go to bed at night thinking, “I’m glad Britain exists”? I think that those are the big questions that we are perhaps not really addressing here.

Q36 Chair: And do you think that the headlines we’ve got at the moment are good, but boring?

Simon Anholt: Yes, and possibly not really very relevant to me sitting in Peru or Korea.

Chair: Thank you both very much indeed. That is really appreciated.

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Mr Jeremy Browne MP, Minister of State for public diplomacy and the Olympics, and Conrad Bird, Head of Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, gave evidence.

Q37 Chair: Jeremy, good to see you again.

Mr Browne: Good afternoon.

Chair: Thank you. For the benefit of the public, this is the second session of this hearing into the FCO’s public diplomacy in the Olympics. Our two witnesses are Jeremy Browne, who is the Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, responsible for public diplomacy and the Olympics, and Mr Conrad Bird, the Head of Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications in the Foreign Office. And good afternoon to you, Mr Bird.

Conrad Bird: Good afternoon.

Chair: Both of you are very welcome. Jeremy, do you want to make an opening statement, or would you like to go straight into questions?

Mr Browne: Which would you prefer? I can say a couple of words, if you like, but I will keep it brief. Thank you for giving me this opportunity. London 2012 is, as we all know, an absolutely huge international event, with a potential television audience of as many as 4 billion people. I can certainly mark my life by Olympic Games, going through in four-year chunks. We have not had one in this country since 1948, and the nature of public diplomacy and of Britain’s place in the world has changed a little bit since then.

We are very keen to use the opportunity. Of course, the games are primarily a celebration of sporting endeavour, and a great opportunity to regenerate a substantial part of East London, but they are also—this is the purpose of the conversation we are having this afternoon—a very good opportunity to communicate Britain’s strengths to a global audience. That is what we intend to do, both in the run-up to the games and in the games themselves.

Q38 Chair: Going on from there, what do you see as the principal opportunities here, in more detail? And what, indeed, is the downside? To what extent is the Foreign Office taking the lead in promoting the upside and minimising the downside?
Mr Browne: There are lots of opportunities. We could devote the entire hour just to that, so shall I try to skim through them a little bit more?

Q40 Chair: We have had the benefit of your submission in writing, so we have got an idea.

Mr Browne: I think the crucial, main opportunity is how we position Britain to a global audience that spends a little bit of time thinking about Britain’s attributes but will have more opportunity to reflect on them in the run-up to the games. That is partly about explaining to people our capacity for creativity, innovation and dynamism—the sort of qualities that we hope would attract people in commercial terms. The games are also an important opportunity to display our basic competence, to show that we are capable of running a huge, logistically complicated event efficiently, on time and on budget, but also with some élan, some creativity and some wit about it, which will make people remember it in the future. All of those are part of what we are trying to do.

It has already started. For example, the President of Chile was here a few weeks ago, on a hugely successful visit. He had an audience with the Queen and he met the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, but before he left, I went with him on a visit to the Olympic park, where he was shown around by Sebastian Coe, and he certainly seemed to me to be awestruck, both at meeting Sebastian Coe and at seeing the scale of our creativity and engineering in the Olympic park. That was a great opportunity. We continue to use those opportunities. I am showing the Brazilian ambassador around in a few weeks’ time. He is new to this country. Obviously, Brazil hosts the next Olympic Games after us. So it is an opportunity the whole time to showcase what we are capable of doing.

Q41 Chair: And the weaknesses and threats?

Mr Browne: Quite a few of the threats are beyond our control. We hope that the games capture the public imagination, both in this country and around the world. Obviously, if world records are falling, that will capture the imagination more than if athletes perform less impressively, but that is not something we can control. We hope that the weather is nice, but we can’t control that either. I suppose there are some specific events that could reflect badly on us, for example if the games facilities weren’t ready on time, but I am absolutely assured that there is no danger of that happening. In fact, when I went to the Olympic park for the first time as a Minister, I was amazed to find that the plan is to have the entire site finished a year in advance, so there could even be a slippage of a few weeks. Before becoming a Minister, my perception had been that for the entire site to be finished a year in advance, so there could even be a slippage of a few weeks. Before becoming a Minister, my perception had been that for all such things, the finishing touches are still being made and the paint is drying as the athletes arrive. The fact that we will be so far ahead of the game bodies very well, in reputational terms. There is always a risk with very large events, however, in terms of managing that number of people and external threats from terrorism, for example, so we have a constant dialogue between the Government Departments that have an interest to try to ensure that we are alert to any potential problems and do our best to mitigate them.

Q42 Chair: The Minister for Sport and the Olympics sent out his newsletter this morning, stating that the velodrome will be ready in January or February next year—Mr Bird is nodding. The research that was done by the Foreign Office showed that the UK was seen on one hand to be fair, innovative, diverse, confident and stylish, but on the other hand we were seen as arrogant, stuffy, old-fashioned and cold. Do you think that those are fair perceptions? Could those negative perceptions be changed and, if so, how can the Olympics be used to change them?

Mr Browne: We all, as British citizens, get a sense of how Britons are perceived abroad, and the Foreign Office research probably reflects fairly accurately some of our observations when we travel to other parts of the world. I do not think that the Olympics represent a magic wand that can completely alter how people around the world view Britain, either for the good or the bad. It is part of a process that we are constantly engaged in, which is about trying to make people around the world see Britain in a favourable light.

The Olympics are, of course, a particularly distinct and important opportunity. There is a stretch of time, with the games themselves and then the Paralympic games later in the summer, when literally billions of people will be looking at this country and seeing how we organise our affairs and how we put on a huge global show. They will see whether we can do that with imagination, creativity and a sense of excitement, but also with rigorous organisational competence. If we can do those things, I hope that that will benefit us. If you look at how we are perceived by potential foreign investors, you will see that there are some slightly more old-fashioned features of the British character that are actually quite an attribute and that we ought not to discard lightly, if at all. For example, there is the sense that the British are trustworthy and reliable. Those might be slightly doughty qualities, but they are nevertheless quite good if you are trying to seal a business deal with someone. All those are attributes that we should be careful to preserve, but sometimes we might be seen as lacking a sense of creativity and adventure, which I think is an unfair perception. If we can address that, that will be all to the good.

Q43 Chair: Do you think that there is a difference between being old-fashioned and being traditional? I am talking about the telephone boxes, the red buses, the Coldstream Guards and all that stuff.

Mr Browne: Well, I think it’s all quite benign. There is a bit of a parody, with lots of policemen in hats that seem funny to people from elsewhere in the world, and double-decker buses and so forth. I have often observed that when tourists come here they seem to enjoy all those things, which are all fairly harmless. At the risk of making a fairly party political point, I have been quite struck in my ministerial travels by how people around the world were impressed by the way we formed a coalition Government in May, as they observe that in other countries that seems to take months and months and leads to endless wrangling...
and falling out. We seemed to deal with it in a measured, efficient, orderly and civilised British manner. That impressed quite a lot of people. Perhaps it’s at a subconscious level, but they all seemed to think that it showed the sort of organisational competence that it is part of our reputation.

One of the interesting things is that many of the areas in which Britain is commercially strong are in the type of value-added, creative industries that, ironically, are perceived not to be particularly part of our national character. There is a mismatch between where we potentially can lead the world in terms of the goods and services that we trade, and where we are very strong, and how our national character is perceived by many audiences as not being particularly strong in areas where we are fairly good.

Q44 Chair: Is your approach in the various projects that you are sponsoring to go for the mass audience or to target a small elite of opinion formers?

Mr Browne: I think that it’s both. If billions of people are watching on television, they will have the opportunity to view events in Britain that they would not normally have viewed. The hundreds of thousands of people who come to this country, who might not otherwise have come, will obviously have much greater opportunities to engage with this country and its people. On the other hand, I suppose you can’t get much more elitist than taking the President of a country around the Olympic park. I think he left impressed by what he saw. I hope that we will be able engage with the people of Chile on a mass scale, but to spend an hour or two taking the President around also had value.

Q45 Chair: On that point, I read in my briefing that you are expecting up to 120 Heads of State to visit in that year. That’s going to need quite some organisation to handle, if we are going to do it properly and effectively, and get maximum value from it. What sort of machinery are you putting in place to deal with that?

Mr Browne: I completely agree with your observation. I should start by saying what a fantastic opportunity it is. We’ve got the G20 meeting in South Korea—admittedly, the 20 Heads of State represent pretty much the 20 most prosperous countries in the world, broadly—but we will have a much larger international gathering than that, with a very diverse range of significant Heads of State and Heads of Government all in Britain, all talking to people in Britain and seeing how Britain operates. Some may never have been here before, but others will be remaking old acquaintances.

That is a great opportunity for us, but of course there is a threat, or a potential hazard, in that it needs to be well organised. We are alert to that, in terms of the protocol that we need to observe, which we are organising in the Foreign Office. Also, there is coordination with other Departments. I sit on a cross-departmental committee, which takes in many aspects of the games. It is obviously led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport—the Olympics Department—but there is also a Transport Minister and a Home Office Minister on it. The reason for that is that all of those considerations will come together, in terms of how the games are perceived, whether by visiting Heads of State or by individuals who have travelled here from elsewhere in the world just because they want to watch some of the games being performed.

Q46 Mr Ainsworth: Minister, to use your words, you are going to tackle this hugely important and fantastic opportunity with imagination and élan. That’s a good job, isn’t it, because you haven’t got any money; you’ve removed the FCO’s Olympic campaign fund in its entirety. What consequences will flow from that, and have there been any other cuts as a result of the spending review?

Mr Browne: You are right, Mr Ainsworth, to say that there were some in-year budget reductions across Government in the financial year 2010–11, which included reductions in the Foreign Office budget.

Q47 Mr Ainsworth: In the emergency Budget in June, you took away the separate Olympic campaign funding stream, didn’t you? That was in 2009–10.

Mr Browne: Yes, we did, for the existing financial year. I suppose I would make a few observations. One is that some of the costs were one-off costs incurred in previous years. I think that you have all been invited to watch a film this evening called “Going for Green”. We can speak more about the environmental aspects if you want, but it is a attractive and compelling film about the environmental aspects of constructing the site. The film doesn’t need to be remade this financial year; it was already made the previous financial year. Some of the activity and work has already been done. We do have small sums of money where that is necessary.

The other thing I would say is that one should not always assume within the Foreign Office that the commitment to any given task is demonstrated by the size of the programme funding available for that task. For example—I keep citing the same example—the President of Chile coming here and looking around the site might have brought some marginal additional cost to somebody, but that was factored into his visit to the UK. He seemed to enjoy it; it worked very well on a reputational level, but it did not require a specific programme fund.

When I go to Mexico in a few weeks’ time, the people there are very alert to environmental issues and they are about to host a major international summit. I will be showing an opinion-forming audience there the film about the environmental impact. Again, the cost is marginal, if non-existent, because the film already exists and I’m going there anyway. A lot of the public diplomacy that we are doing every day in post, particularly in key countries with which we wish to engage strongly, can take place as part of our normal activities, funded by normal budgets.

Q48 Mr Ainsworth: Have you got any more information about commercial sponsorships? You appear to think that this can be done more and more through partnerships and commercial sponsorships, or at no or low cost. Can you give some examples of
no or low-cost ways, and say how those commercial sponsorships are going?

**Mr Browne:** I can, but Conrad might want to come in with a few more details. We may need to make more money available in the centre nearer the time. At the moment, the way we are looking to fund projects is through existing budgets, through small amounts of money that may be available more generally for our communications in the Department, and through commercial sponsorship where that is available. Obviously, we have to be mindful of the broader sponsorship contractual arrangements to do with the games. Where we are in a position—for example, in an overseas embassy—to have an event where commercial sponsors are able to contribute, we are keen to take those opportunities as a way of saving the taxpayer money. Would you like to expand on that, Conrad?

**Conrad Bird:** I would just add, on the no-cost opportunities, that we have a very substantial digital platform. That is a way of maximising the impact of our messages right across the world. That is an effort to push things forward on the no-cost side. As for the commercial opportunities, with this change in budget circumstances, I am thinking historically of the year of the Shanghai expo. We linked up with companies there and were able to hold joint events, which did not transgress any lines. At the moment, our posts are investigating commercial opportunities, but we have to be mindful of the contracts around the Olympic Games. To be honest, it is too early to tell you specific details, but as they come in, I will be happy to share them with the Committee. Our posts are mindful of that, and have a track record of trying to pull together imaginative sponsorship in those areas.

**Q49 Mr Ainsworth:** There is a multitude of interest groups and various organisations all with a piece of the pie of the Olympics. As a result, is there a danger that we wind up with some mixed messages—too many cooks spoil the broth—and that we are not effectively focusing on where the benefits will come?

**Mr Browne:** I think there is a danger and that is what we are seeking to avoid. It is a huge event and there are lots of interested parties. There are lots of Departmental Departments that have an interest in the event. Lots of other organisations are also relevant. Of course, in the Foreign Office we have our posts around the world that we are keen to engage and to sell the opportunities enthusiastically. That is why we need to knit it together; we need to co-ordinate effectively within our Department, between Departments and other agencies and organisations. We need to prioritise: we need to think about how we get the maximum impact. That is what we are constantly trying to do. That is why, for example, we’ve tried to ensure that our activities in other countries reflect our commercial priorities, and it is why there are categories of countries to which we are particularly trying to direct a disproportionate amount of focus. We are constantly trying to ensure that there is no duplication and that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing.

**Q50 Mr Ainsworth:** Is there a single message about Britain that we’re trying to get out? What is the main message?

**Conrad Bird:** I completely agree that it would be very helpful, as we come towards the games, if we have one consistent message. We’ve got lots. We have talked about being open, welcoming and creative. We need to have business messages, which need to be tailored. Is there one over-arching message that can pull a lot of that together? We have just come from a meeting with No. 10, which was attended by all of the public diplomacy partners, and we discussed that very thing. As we move towards the glide path into 2011, we are working with people from No. 10 to develop a singular, compelling proposition that overarches everything, behind which we can pile our messages. We are very aware of the need for a consistent message that we can all get behind. Having said that, there is a lot of join-up between the current messages, which we are working on as we speak.

**Mr Browne:** I don’t think there’s any difficulty. I’m not sure that we’ll arrive at a single word, but I think the most compelling messages are the ones that I rehearsed with the Chairman at the beginning of this discussion. The only cautionary note that I would add is that there are several good messages, and I wouldn’t wish us to be so focused on the core. No. 1 message that we lose sight of those. There’s a very good environmental message about how the site is being put together and how we’ve undertaken that work. Quite a lot of it is cut and dried. It is not just about being mindful of the amount of water that we use; it is also about high-tech engineering. There is a good regeneration message about East London. There is a good message about volunteer culture. I am told that 240,000 people have applied to be considered as volunteers. We need 70,000, so we are three-and-a-half times oversubscribed, which is a positive message about the spirit of volunteerism in Britain. I am not saying that that should be the No. 1, central message, but those are all messages that I would like us to communicate to people in addition to the most obvious message, which is that we are capable of hosting a compelling, attractive, exciting and massive sporting event. If we can get all those messages across, so much the better, but I take your point that the danger is that, if we have too many messages, people won’t remember any of them. We, therefore, need a hierarchy, so that people leave with a clear idea of what we’ve been trying to achieve.

**Q51 Mr Watts:** Minister, in your documentation you say that the FCO wants to promote British culture and values. I think I understand how you would promote culture, but could you fill us out the details of what you mean by values? What are the target groups for that message? Will there be different messages for different groups? For example, will there be a message on values to the Islamic world? Could you give us some flavour of what you mean by that?

**Mr Browne:** Possibly. Have you got the CDs? Sorry, they’re like a prop, but they are a perfect example of the mini-films that are being shown in British
Chair: We have them.

Mr Browne: So you’ve seen them. They are an attempt to communicate with a Pakistani audience, a Muslim audience, about the culture of tolerance, acceptance and, I suppose, religious choice in this country. Technically, that perhaps wouldn’t be a relevant message to other countries. There is a set of values, which may not be unique to Britain, but which Britain espouses, that includes openness, democracy and multiculturalism in a tolerant, transparent society. If we are able to communicate those values to people using the games, that is all to the good.

Q52 Mr Watts: I understand the use of the video. How else will you get that message across?

Conrad Bird: I was thinking most recently about an exercise we did in Palestine—the Speed Sisters example—and the combination of the Paralympian Tanni Grey-Thompson arriving in Palestine and also sponsoring activities round there. We felt that that Paralympics was a good opportunity to demonstrate British attitudes towards disability. We felt that could be an example of promoting the British way of doing things and our values. With many of these projects values are more difficult, but we are trying to communicate them through those more subtle means.

Q53 Mr Roy: Can I just come back to that point about British culture? I actually think the big difference in British culture depends on which country of the United Kingdom you live in and what part of that country. There is a massive difference between the culture of the people I represent and the culture of someone from central London or somewhere else in the south. What will you do to highlight the difference in culture, as I would say to you that there is not just one British culture?

Conrad Bird: The example I cited was Jonathan Mills and the Edinburgh festival. The stories we have taken are not London centric, they are a range of 29 stories from across the UK, people who have spent time and have travelled around the UK. In their entirety they show a very rich portrait of the entire UK via these people's travels and where they have stayed. That presents a more balanced story than just a London, south-east message.

Q54 Rory Stewart: Just to push again on messaging, there might be a concern that the messages we are sending—creative, dynamic, competent—are a little vague and anodyne and do not necessarily resonate for someone in a developing country. How will we make sure that we get something that is exciting, challenging and makes people wake up and remember Britain in a distinctive way, rather than just a series of slightly waffly stuff?

Mr Browne: I suppose this follows on a bit from Mr Roy’s point. There may be large numbers of people in the world who think that all British people go to work in a bowler hat with an umbrella under an arm—there is nothing inherently wrong with that and a few people probably still do—but it is an inaccurate portrait of Britain today. I was struck by the fact that the Olympic stadium in Beijing was designed and built by Arup, the British company. It is seen as a very interesting architectural structure in China at the last Olympic Games, but there was a lot of British involvement in it. It is important that audiences in a country like China where the economy is doubling in size every six or seven years—the Prime Minister is there this week to try to drive home advantages in terms of British trade and investment between China and the United Kingdom—see that Britain and British industry can be very creative, innovative and dynamic. I had a discussion recently with the Brazilian ambassador who is going to visit the Olympic site soon—Brazil will host the games after us. We were talking about the Brazilian Grand Prix, which took place last weekend. He was talking about engineering and what we have to offer in this country. Britain is still the sixth-largest manufacturer in the world but I was saying, “Look at the high tech creativity around Formula 1.” So many of the teams are based in Britain and so many of the people who are designing the cars and also the marketing around it are British people or companies that are based in Britain. It is quite important for us to convey those qualities to an international audience who may otherwise have a view of Britain that is a little bit more staid and perhaps a little bit less creative.

Q55 Rory Stewart: The other witnesses were talking in a very interesting way about the kind of message that you are selling being something that could be important domestically as well as internationally. If you could get the right brand it could make Britain more at ease with itself, and overcome some of our own anxieties about what kind of country we are, if you could project in both directions at once. Is just being creative, innovative and dynamic something that is really likely to appeal either internationally or domestically? Does it really make a nation? Is that really a brand?

Mr Browne: About 1% of the world’s population is British—just under—and the other 99% is the responsibility of the 1% who make up. If we suppose the Foreign Office is predominantly concentrating on how we are perceived by the rest of the world. Looking at home—I am no better placed to make this observation than anyone else in the room, really—sometimes we, as a country, can be a bit fatalistic about our ability to organise and host major events. We can feel that that is something that we don’t do. Quite often a sigh goes round, “Oh gosh, why can’t we organise things on time and on budget?” Well, here we are. We are going to organise something on time and on budget. It will be a huge international event and I think that quite a few people in this country, who were perhaps somewhat cynical about the games back in 2005 when we were awarded the opportunity to host them, will, as we get nearer and nearer to the time, be excited by it and some of their worst fears won’t be realised. I hope that that will make people feel positive about the way we are able to organise events like this.

Q56 Rory Stewart: Is there something institutionally that you could do in the Foreign Office, in the design
of the Foreign Office, to make this marketing branding exercise more inter-Departmental and more co-ordinated? It may simply be that I am being unfair to you by forcing you to speak like a brand management agency when you are not, but are you going to bring in people who know that stuff?

Mr Browne: Let me answer that quickly. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, probably rightly, feel that a lot of the internal communications is their lead. There are two main reasons why the Foreign Office is involved. One is the point the Chairman made about the number of foreign visitors coming to this country, including Heads of State and Heads of Government. The other is the opportunity that the games affords us to communicate to the rest of the world through, say, the internet, or, more formally, through our posts in individual countries and major cities. That is the predominant reason for our involvement, rather than trying to rebrand how Britain perceives itself to a domestic audience here in Britain. Having said that, I take your point that there is a degree—probably 90%—of overlap. We are communicating to people in Tokyo or Rio shouldn’t be incompatible with the way we are trying to look at ourselves, but we have not been asked as a Foreign Office to come up with a way of making people feel better about themselves in the East Midlands—or the West Midlands, I don’t know why I picked the East Midlands at random. I hope that that will be the effect, but that is not, I suppose, the core function of the Foreign Office. Having said that, you may feel that there are some particular aspects.

Conrad Bird: I was wondering if I could answer the co-ordination point, because I think you are absolutely right—the co-ordination of this is critical. First, within Government, and with our public diplomacy partners, we meet regularly with GOE, VisitBritain, UKTI, British Council, BBC World Service, Cultural Olympiad and so on in order to ensure that there is consistency right across and, in terms of the answer about the substance on the ground, to make sure that something fantastic, like International Inspiration, is reflected. Our embassies know it is happening in-country and they can make the most of the opportunity, because it is by substance that you demonstrate these attributes in that way.

Equally, we are very aware of Simon Anholt, his skills and the Anholt index. Simon has advised us and we held recently a Wilton Park event on public diplomacy where we invited experts, like Simon, from right across the world to discuss public diplomacy. In fact, in January we are holding another wider meeting of what we call the public diplomacy partners and the community of experts who can assist and guide us on this. So we are very mindful that we really do not have all the answers and we need to pull in and invite in the thinking of specialists who can substantially upgrade our effort.

Mr Browne: May I just make one brief additional point? When we are trying to co-ordinate effectively between Departments, we are alert to the fact that there may even potentially be conflicted interests. Let me give you an example. The best way to ensure that visiting Heads of State feel like the important people that they are is to close large numbers of roads so that they can be transported very efficiently from where they are staying to the stadium. That may not be the best way in which to enthuse paying spectators who are not able to get there very easily or conveniently as a consequence. We are trying to ensure that when we work with the Department for Transport, for example, different considerations come into play and we get the balance right. The Department for Transport is probably also working with the Home Office to try to ensure that the balance is right between ease of transport and security considerations. There is a whole package of considerations, and we hope to get that package right.

Q57 Chair: I believe that some roads are going to be closed during the games.

Mr Browne: That is more an area for the Department for Transport than for me. The sheer numbers of people coming to Britain and the scale of the event mean that it is inevitable that some provisions will have to be made in transport terms. The people organising the games are very mindful of the need to make it a successful games for everybody. That is reflected in the ticket pricing and the diversity of venues that have been chosen.

Q58 Chair: Sticking on public diplomacy, let’s look at trade and investment opportunities. It doesn’t need me to tell you that there are huge opportunities here for us on inward investment, exports, refreshing old contacts and building up our reputation. Going through the documentation that you sent in to us before this inquiry, you deal in detail with a lot of areas, but the section on trade and investment activity looks rather thin. You make brief reference to the host-to-host programme and then you have two-and-a-half lines saying that, “Lancaster House is going to be used as a business hub at the games time to promote UK industry.” I hope that there will be a bit more to it than that. We put the point about Lancaster House to one of our witnesses earlier and he said that it was rather like business as usual. I must say that I rather agree with him. Why not have a trade fair or something? I am not talking about an Expo here, but surely we could be making a much bigger push than at the moment appears to be the case.

Mr Browne: I take your underlying assumption as a good starting point, which is that the games are an opportunity to promote trade. Some of that may be in a slightly intangible way. The fact that Britain is front of mind for billions of people around the world and that people, I hope, will be enthused by the way in which we organise the games may, in years to come, make them more inclined to open up a European office in Britain rather than elsewhere in Europe and to be well disposed towards us. It may be hard to measure that. We are trying to be more specific. The hierarchy of countries in which we are looking to be most active and have the most organised programme of events running up to the games is based on commercial priorities. For example, the embassies in those countries will host a series of events and they can tailor them. It is appropriate and sensible that they should vary from country to country. The events will be around milestones such as when the tickets go on
I agree with you that it is a grand setting. Sebastian Coe and other famous British Olympians will be part of the programmes for engagement in those countries to add a bit of stardust if you like and to create the obvious link between our public diplomacy and commercial activities with the games themselves. We will see programmes of events in the next 22 months, particularly in key markets such as China, India and Brazil as well as established ones such as Germany and France. Those activities are already getting off the ground. We hope that they will help to improve the context in which British companies operate in those countries.

Q59 Chair: Sticking to my point, do you think just Lancaster House is enough for you as a business hub during the games and the run-up to them? Mr Browne: We are open to ideas and suggestions. That was thought to be a prestigious venue and a good platform for organising links with business and commercial audiences. Most people think it is a fairly grand setting—although it may not be up to scratch for everyone.

Q60 Chair: I agree with you that it is a grand setting. I am just wondering if it is extensive enough. Mr Browne: If you consider the list are going to be over-served and are expected to come to the plate on this. At the same time, we will look at that closer to games time and see how we can make the most of it. I hope to reassure you on that by giving you more details.

Mr Browne: May I add one extra point that comes to mind, which links to Mr Roy’s earlier point? I understand from memory that the Japanese team will be based at Loughborough in Leicestershire—in that part of the country. Consideration has been given to tailoring programmes that take into account all the different aspects of the games.

Q61 Mr Roy: Coming back to the environmental issues and the positives and negatives, a positive is that the promotional film “Going for Green: Britain’s 2012 Dream” is certainly a very good idea. It emphasises the green issues and the importance that was given to the whole Olympic project in the past. It is all about what we have already done. Where I am worried and slightly negative—believe it or not—is that the written evidence from the FCO doesn’t mention a green agenda for the games at all, except for a single passing reference to sustainability. Equally important is the promotion of environmental good practice, which isn’t listed at all in the formal objectives for the public diplomacy work in London. Why is that? Mr Browne: I don’t know. When I became a Minister and I started to examine the work that had been done—obviously a lot of it had been in train since 2005—I was struck by the prominence given to the environmental agenda, both in terms of the regeneration of part of East London and the broader environmental agenda. That work sought to illustrate how effective British designers and businesses are at building buildings that are effective in terms of energy efficiency, transport considerations and so on. I am surprised and disappointed if it is felt that the environmental aspects have been given insufficient attention. We will need to turn the volume up on that. I gave an example of the high level of environmental consciousness in Mexico because it is hosting a successor conference to Copenhagen—although not on the same scale—in Cancun in a few weeks’ time. That video and promotional work on what we are doing in Britain on environmental projects, and using the Olympics as a means of illustrating that, will feature in the visit that I’m doing there and in what we’re doing there through our embassies.

Q62 Mr Roy: Surely that’s in the past. What I’m trying to get at is whether there’s a difference in emphasis on green issues. What you’re talking about is what’s already passed. What I’m worried about is the fact that there’s a passing reference to green issues in the paper that we’ve received, and that there’s nothing at all in relation to public diplomacy in it. Why is that? Mr Browne: If the inference of your question is that the environmental aspects of the games were seen as a big selling point and now there has been a conscious policy shift and they are not seen as a big selling point, that is certainly not the case. If that is the impression that has been created I regret that, because we are keen to use the games to make some big points about environmentalism in this country. I keep going back to the film—it’s not just the film, but the film does it very effectively. It’s all kinds of imaginative ways, with everything from cleaning the soil that is contaminated to using the canals to bring goods on to the site without using lorries, to the amount of water that is recycled for flushing the...
In terms of the public audience, I go to Conrad Bird:
the public. If it's not in your paper, it is not being given out to
see all the good green aspirations. The good green issues that
there have been, but I don’t in the public diplomacy paper now. From the outside,
interested in is what’s happening in the future, and
that is the story of what has happened. What I’m
Q63 Mr Roy: That’s all very well, but with respect,
that is the story of what has happened. What I’m
interested in is what’s happening in the future, and
why there is no mention of the environmental issues in
the public diplomacy paper now. From the outside,
I see a difference in emphasis. I see highlighted all
the good green issues that have been, but I don’t see all the good green aspirations.
Conrad Bird: May I help you on the second point?
I’m just looking at our returns from the British
embassy in Moscow, and from Japan. We are trying
to arrange a conference on 10 February entitled,
“Ecological urbanism: a sustainable and energy-
efficient approach in urban architecture.” And in
Japan we are looking at an event at the embassy house
on the sustainable nature of the Olympic site, in
terms of urban regeneration, future use and environmental
impact. The key audiences will be opinion formers on
climate issues, investors in low-carbon industries and
the Japanese general public as well. It will position
the UK as a world leader in sustainable, high-
technology, low-carbon development. That is being
used as an opportunity at post level, in order to meet
objectives.
Q64 Mr Roy: But not being given out to the public?
If it’s not in your paper, it is not being given out to
the public.
Conrad Bird: In terms of the public audience, I go
back to the “Going for Green” film again. We hope
that, through the broadcast deals we make and
therefore recover money on, it’s going to have an
audience of up to 300 million viewers.
Q65 Mr Roy: In the past.
Mr Browne: A future audience of 300 million.
Q66 Mr Roy: But with due respect, the film’s about
the past. I want to know about the future. Are you
going to put an emphasis on that?
Mr Browne: The site’s virtually built. We don’t need
to rebuild it in a more environmental way. I suppose
that inevitably there are phases. There was a phase of
“What were the environmental solutions that we found
in putting together the games?”, which includes
finding an enormous piece of contaminated land,
putting the power cables underground, washing all the
soil that was contaminated, building sports stadiums
using less energy, and making them more energy-
efficient to operate, et cetera. There is that phase, but
everyone goes to the site. They are still putting the
finishing touches, but the basic shape of the site is
largely complete. So, the phase from now through to
the games is probably about explaining to people what
we’ve been doing, because most of the engineering
and the design is complete. In some parts of the park,
they are planting the trees for landscaping, so it is well
advanced. If we are going to try and show off, if you
like, how environmentally sustainable the Olympic
park is, we will inevitably be telling the audience
about what we have been doing to make it
environmentally sustainable, because most of the
environmental sustainability is around the
construction of the site.
Q67 Mr Frank Roy: I am sure you will agree that,
in future, there are an awful lot of green issues that
can still be brought up and promoted.
Mr Browne: We are trying to promote them. If you
could think of lots more examples over and above the
ones we have, I would be more than happy to promote
those as well. It is a compelling story and it is one of
the features of the games about which we think we
have a very good story to tell.
Conrad just gave a couple of examples, and when I
was in China recently I attended a conference in
Shanghai—it wasn’t directly linked to the Olympics,
so I won’t dwell on it for long. However, what is
interesting is that they are trying to wrestle with
challenges that are presented by, literally, hundreds of
millions of their citizens moving from rural areas to
cities, and the question of how to grow those cities in
a way that is reasonably environmentally sustainable,
in terms of the amount of steel they use, the buildings
and how they heat them, their transport infrastructure
and so on. If we can demonstrate that we have
technological expertise, creativity and imagination in
how we meet those tasks, we make ourselves more
attractive to people in those countries that are
wrestling with such difficulties.
Chair: Minister, I know you have to go in nine
minutes’ time. We still have a couple of areas that we
want to probe.
Q68 Andrew Rosindell: Minister, I have just a few
questions. First of all, it’s a huge event; what if things
go wrong? Have you considered the risks? Do you
have contingency plans to deal with delays or,
possibly, a terrorist attack, or other problems that may
occur? What are your back-up plans to deal with those
sorts of situations?
Mr Browne: On that bleak question, I hope that
features of previous games that have gone wrong,
such as big budget overruns or delays in construction,
which are directly within our control—my understanding and hope is that they will not go wrong
in 2012. I hope that we will deliver the games on
budget and they will be easily on time. Actually, there
will be lots of time in advance to make sure that
everything is operationally effective, and to plan as well as we possibly can for the games to run smoothly. Of course, beyond that, there are always factors that are not directly within our control, but we are trying to handle those as effectively as possible. I attended a cross-departmental committee a few days ago and discussions took place about trying to make sure that we effectively manage the large additional influx of visitors to the country, over and beyond what we would normally get in a summer holiday period. That includes, as the Chairman has said, a large number of VIP visitors who will all be here at roughly the same time. There is consideration of how to make the transport system effective when there are extra people using it. There is consideration about trying to make sure that the ticketing is effective at the site, so that there aren’t people with tickets who cannot get into the events because the systems don’t work properly. There is consideration, of course, as there always is—the police attend the committee, as well as Ministers—about public order, terrorism and all those matters. We are trying to plan as effectively as we possibly can, as a Government, to try to prevent the worst situations from happening, and to try and respond effectively if they do.

Q69 Andrew Rosindell: The year 2012 is not only the year of the Olympics, but the year of the Queen’s diamond jubilee, which means 60 years on the throne. That will be another huge event during that year and an historic occasion for the country. What is the Foreign Office doing to ensure that that also has prominence, in terms of promoting Britain’s image abroad?

Mr Browne: You are right; it is a huge event in its own right, and it is also a huge public diplomacy event, if you want to see it in those terms. We will certainly use the opportunity of the Queen having been on the throne for 60 years to celebrate her reign right around the world, and our embassies and others will mark it with opinion formers and other audiences in host countries. I think there are sensitivities potentially underlying part of your question, which is whether we bundle all of these up into one event. That would not be appropriate; 60 years since the coronation of the Queen is a notable event, if you want to put it that way, in its own right.

Andrew Rosindell: Accession, not coronation.

Mr Browne: Where it is appropriate, however, and due sensitivities are observed, we can mark that at the beginning of June. With the Olympics in July, there may be opportunities there, but we don’t want to detract in any way from the 60th anniversary.

Andrew Rosindell: May I ask one more thing?

Chair: Well, he’s got to go in three minutes.

Q70 Andrew Rosindell: I am pleased to hear you are not bundling the two things together, but can you give us an assurance that the diamond jubilee will not be sidelined and overshadowed by the Olympics?

Mr Browne: I think I can do that. I have not discussed with every single post precisely how they anticipate marking and celebrating the diamond jubilee in 2012, but I am sure that they will want to mark it and celebrate it as a very big and significant event for Britain and the Commonwealth in its own right, and it will stand alone as a significant occasion.

The only caveat I would add to that is that there may be appropriate opportunities—for example, in a very large gathering of influential people at the British ambassador’s residence in a capital city somewhere in the world—to say how exciting it is that their Head of Government or their Head of State will be visiting Britain the following month for the Olympic Games; that may be an appropriate linkage.

I take your point about the Olympics not overshadowing or blurring in an inappropriate way into the 60th anniversary celebrations. That would be something that we would wish to avoid.

Chair: I am sure they will both be great in their own right.

Q71 Mike Gapes: A quick question about one issue that is causing great concern in London: the marathon is not intending to run into the Olympic stadium through East London. That is causing enormous concern. As a Minister, is there any possibility you can look at that issue?

Mr Browne: I can refer your concerns to relevant Ministers, but the Foreign Office is not responsible for the organisation of the individual races or the routes they take. I appreciate that is the only one where there is any potential for dispute about the route. I mean, it is not like the 100 metres. I take your point that normally the marathon runners come in and they do a few laps in the stadium at the end.

Q72 Mike Gapes: My second point concerns learning from the lessons of previous Olympic Games. What lessons have we taken from Beijing? Related to that, what lessons have we learned from the Commonwealth Games in India?

Mr Browne: The last time that Britain hosted the Olympic Games was in 1948, and the nature of the games has changed out of all recognition since then. If you go to the site—I don’t know whether you have all been to the site—the facilities for the media are absolutely enormous. That is an example of the way the games have changed since we last hosted them. Obviously, we have to learn from each previous games, and we have worked with countries that have hosted the games recently. For that matter, we are working and will work closely with the Brazilians when they come to host the games after us. Having said that, each games is not only a process of continuity from the previous games but an individual and unique event. I would not expect us to run the games exactly as the Chinese, the Greeks or the Australians ran them, but obviously we work with those countries and we are keen to learn from them.
anticipate some of the difficulties that India had in that regard.

Q74 Sir John Stanley: Minister, for me, the single most distasteful feature of the Beijing Olympic Games was the way in which the Chinese authorities lighted upon any individual who might exercise their right to freedom of expression or peaceful protest, put them under house arrest, and locked them up or sent them miles away from Beijing and the media. I thought that the Prime Minister made an admirable speech in China yesterday, stressing how fundamentally important to our society is freedom of expression. Can you assure the Committee, unequivocally, that when the Olympic Games happen here, the Prime Minister’s words will be translated into action—that this country’s normal right to freedom of expression, peaceful protest and demonstration, and right to display banners, will be adhered to and upheld, regardless of their causing some possible embarrassment or sensitivity to those visiting dignitaries who allow no such freedom of expression in their own countries?

Mr Browne: Let me say a couple of things about that. First, I think many people admired the way that the games were organised in Beijing. They were a celebration of China’s arrival as a major world player, and I do not want to detract from the spectacular organisational success of its games, including, for example, the opening and closing ceremonies, as well as the sport itself.

I said a moment ago to Mr Gapes that each games is distinctive. You have probably put your finger on an area of obvious distinctiveness, which is how we conduct our affairs in Britain compared with China. I think that throughout the games, in formal aspects such as the opening ceremony, but also in the overall ambience of the country while the games are taking place, the feeling will be distinctive and different from what it was in China in 2008. We have in this country a long-standing observance of free speech and freedom to protest; we witnessed that today in Westminster. That is very much part of our tradition, and it will not be suspended because of the Olympic Games being here.

Chair: Minister, thank you very much indeed, and you, Mr Bird. It has been a very helpful session, and you have provided very useful information.
Written evidence

Written evidence from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FCO Public Diplomacy: the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

1. This paper answers the Foreign Affairs Committee’s request for information on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s Olympics Public Diplomacy Activity. A short annex which describes the FCO’s programme of wider activity is attached (Annex A) to provide a broader view of the FCO’s Olympic work.

2. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will throw a spotlight on the UK like no other sporting event in generations. It is equivalent to staging world championships in the 26 Olympic disciplines back to back. There will be an estimated global audience of 4 billion. Around 14,700 participants will attend, with 120 heads of state, 25,000 journalists and 320,000 extra foreign visitors to the UK.

The Government’s International Approach

3. London 2012 will have a profound impact on the UK’s international reputation. The Government is therefore determined to ensure that the Olympics are a success and to seize all opportunities which they present.

4. The Coalition Agreement makes clear that the Government will “work with the Mayor of London to ensure a safe and successful Olympic and Paralympic Games in London in 2012, and urgently form plans to deliver a genuine and lasting legacy”. The Prime Minister and Cabinet colleagues have begun working closely together to make this happen. The Prime Minister has said publicly that we must seize “the opportunity of this great decade of sport—and especially the Olympics—to deliver a lasting tourism legacy for the whole country and not just London”.

5. The Foreign Secretary is determined that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office should play a full part in delivering a successful games and tangible international legacy for the UK. Overseas activity will concentrate on securing solid benefits linked to our foreign policy priorities: security, prosperity and strong bilateral relations and that these priorities will fit within the broad coalition government Olympic priorities.

6. The Foreign Secretary and Jeremy Browne, the Olympics and Public Diplomacy Minister, are giving priority to this topic. They have looked carefully at the work which has already been carried out. They recognise that some good foundations are in place, but the FCO now needs to build on them.

7. In order to drive forward activity across the FCO’s network, Ministers have commissioned a structured 18-month engagement strategy setting out priority countries and milestones.

8. This work is well advanced. We look forward to sharing it with the Committee before Jeremy Browne’s evidence session on 10 November. Our current thinking on priority countries is at Annex B. We will work with Diaspora communities in the UK as part of this work. We will be focusing on the following objectives:

   — National interest: To contribute to UK foreign policy goals by using the profile of the Olympics to promote British culture and values at home and abroad. To cement Britain’s reputation as a valuable bilateral partner and a vibrant, open and modern society, a global hub in a networked world.

   — Prosperity: To bolster the UK economy, increase commercial opportunities for British business in target countries, and secure high value inward investment.

   — Security: To enhance our security by harnessing the global appeal of the Olympics, particularly among the young, to reinforce values of tolerance, moderations and openness.

   — Cross-Government approach: To work seamlessly with other Government Departments and partners, mobilising the powerful asset of the FCO’s unique network of Posts to deliver the greatest international impact for our strategy.

9. We will achieve government and FCO objectives on prosperity, security and bilateral relations as follows:

Prosperity

10. We will work closely with UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), on activities which reinforce our message of Britain as an open, welcoming, creative and dynamic society with unparalleled skills and expertise. We will use the Games to help us drive up exports and create opportunities in wider markets, particularly using the “Host2Host” agreements with other hosting nations (Russia and Brazil) to deliver the growth/prosperity objectives.

11. The Games will provide a catalyst for developing new businesses, encouraging existing businesses to look to grow and export to wider markets and as magnet for high value foreign investment. As well as jobs, skills and growth created as a result of firms supplying directly to the Games, there will be an opportunity to project the capability of UK companies in delivering major projects, on time and on budget, to the watching world. This is key to a sustained business legacy as companies go on to compete in international markets.
12. Throughout, we will prioritise activity designed to project Britain, in the Foreign Secretary’s words, as “a home for enterprise, wealth creation, new ideas and opportunity”. This will include targeting relevant business audiences for exposure to our film, created in collaboration with the Olympic Delivery Authority, of the Olympic Park build. It clearly demonstrates the passion, technical expertise and ingenuity available in the UK. We will also instruct Posts to work with the international UKTI network and with business contacts locally to involve them in events, e.g. capitalising on the interest in London 2012 to secure as much engagement as possible with key commercial contacts by pursuing their involvement in key events or to provide sponsorship to support Post activities.

13. We will keep special focus on UKTI’s key industry sectors (including low carbon, creative industries, life sciences and advanced engineering) and 17 key markets, which are reflected in our priority country list. Examples of activity could include using the Queen’s Birthday Party and other diplomatic events creatively to spotlight innovative British companies active in or seeking an entry to local markets. We will also arrange for FCO Ministers to accompany senior foreign visitors to visit the Olympic Park to see British construction and engineering expertise at first hand.

SECURITY

14. We will work closely within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and across Whitehall to find ways to increase the security of the UK. We will do this by confounding negative and sometimes malicious stereotyping which can feed into radicalisation and hostility towards us. This work plays into the Government’s “Prevent” counter terrorism strategy.

15. An example of work in this area is a short film we have produced about Mushtaq Ahmed, England cricket coach and idolised in his native Pakistan. Mushtaq speaks positively and powerfully about his experience of life as a muslim in the UK. We expect this film, marketed over the internet, to reach segments of Pakistani society—particularly a young male audience—who would be hard to reach by other means.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

16. London 2012 offers an opportunity to convey an image of 21st century modern Britain across the world. London 2012-related activity will be prioritised in the communications plans of Embassies in key countries. This will involve working particularly with priority Posts to make sure that we identify and implement projects which will help them to target their key audiences and contacts with focused, clear messaging about the UK, in line with their wider strategies for engaging with their host countries.

17. We will take advantage of 2012-related initiatives such as Pre-Games Training Camps to forge bilateral ties between regions around the UK and the country of the national team coming to train in that area (UKTI are already using this connection to encourage better trade understanding and market knowledge and to showcase what the UK regions have to offer). We will also create bonds with countries which are part of the International Inspirations programme, through which the UK aims to bring sport to 12 million children in 20 countries.

18. Our plan will focus on concrete activities in Embassies in certain key countries, as well as London-led work, in particular with LOCOG. We will give particular attention in our work in the UK to Diaspora communities and the powerful leverage they can apply.

CAMPAIGN 2012: ACTIVITIES TO DATE

19. In May 2009, the FCO approved the following objectives for public diplomacy work on London 2012.

— To use London 2012 as a catalyst for changing perceptions of the UK worldwide (see paragraph 20 below)

— To use London 2012 and these new perceptions to increase the UK’s influence, and thus to assist in the delivery of the FCO’s objectives (focussing sharply on the trade and prosperity agendas in line with the new government’s priorities).

— To support Public Diplomacy Partners in the effective achievement of their own strategic objectives

— To energise and excite the FCO network with new ways of working.

20. In 2009, the FCO’s Public Diplomacy Group reviewed all available research into the UK’s reputation amongst international audiences. We concluded that the UK’s overall reputation worldwide was strong— ranking 4th out of 50 in countries in the 2010 Anholt Nation Brand Index. The UK was seen as fair, innovative, diverse, confident and stylish. However, negative images still persisted which painted Britain as arrogant, stuffy, old-fashioned and cold. We used these findings to identify the key themes about modern Britain we wanted to project overseas in order to overcome false impressions that acted upon our prosperity and political influence. We want to showcase modern Britain as the open (welcoming, diverse, tolerant), connected (through our involvement in the UN and G20, politically, geographically, in terms of trade and travel), creative and dynamic place it really is.

21. This research and strategy work led to the development of the “See Britain (Through My Eyes)” campaign—an exercise in soft power with the aim of delivering, through our 243 Posts, a programme of public
diplomacy events and activities that invite audiences around the world to take a fresh and positive look at Britain. This ongoing campaign will continue to promote British values, showcasing the “Big Society” agenda as well as positioning the UK as an ideal bilateral partner and a nation with an enduring status in international affairs. We will be able to refresh old relationships and start conversations with new audiences and opinion formers.

22. This campaign was also an opportunity to highlight best practice and encourage innovation in Public Diplomacy work. Unlike other FCO communications campaigns which have focused on particular policy issues or regions, to reflect this global event, this was conceived as an initiative for Posts everywhere. However, we identified a number of strategically-important countries where we saw particular potential to pursue British interests and where we aimed to work most proactively. This list comprised countries which were influential at a global level and/or on particular policy issues. It also factored in considerations such as levels of trade and tourism, and how negative their view of the UK was, measured by nation branding surveys. This list, along with emerging priorities for the new government, provides the basis for our current thinking on priority countries at Annex B.

23. We have created a series of 30 four-minute films using people whose testimony about Britain will resonate with local audiences. They feature UK residents like the heart surgeon Sir Magdi Yacoub and the Sudanese born newsreader Zeinab Badawi, speaking about what Britain has meant to them. They are being released through an online, digital campaign which began in July but will also be used by Posts around the world as a focus for events and activities. The first film to be released online featured Japanese judo star Kosei Inoue. In addition to being used by our Embassy in Tokyo as a focus for a major event, it has secured over 5,000 hits on the FCO’s YouTube channel. A list of subjects for these films and DVDs of sample films are attached (Annex C).

24. We have focussed on symbolic actions. For instance, 55 Posts and a total of 3,800 runners took part in the 2010 Sport Relief mile, raising money for local charities. The run in Guangzhou, South China, raised enough money to build a learning skills room for a school for children with severe learning disabilities, and gained coverage on over 40 websites across China and Taiwan with a combined readership of 40 million. In a separate initiative, at very little cost, the Jerusalem Consulate sponsored a female street car racing team in Palestine. The drivers’ sported British branding, and the team was covered extensively on local television, and in daily and monthly news and leisure print media as well as online. It has gained a total audience in excess of 300 million at a cost of less than £10,000. A dual language Facebook page has already gathered 2,500 friends.

25. Working through a core London team, we have supported and encouraged local creativity by Posts and Public Diplomacy partners overseas. The team provides central coordination eg working to set up partnerships with other organisations, liaising with Public Diplomacy Partners and Olympic organisations, and creating and distributing material to use on the ground (films; scripts and lines for use in press articles, blogs and websites etc). We have created a range of methods to communicate with staff and PD partners about the campaign, and to share good ideas and best practice, included the dedicated “Collaborate” extranet site. This innovative approach has attracted interest from other Departments. It has over 800 members (Annex D).

26. Reaching the largest audiences for our initiatives through carefully developed media and digital engagement plans. For example, a social networking campaign around the Shanghai Expo, featuring the British band Keane, achieved double its targets with 169,000 visitors and 1m page views.

27. Using partnership to reinforce and further extend our messages and audience reach. We have sought out a wide range of non-traditional partners whose activities, messages and potential audiences complement and overlap our own. Examples include UK Sport, the Edinburgh Festivals, and the National Theatre: Mexico City and Athens have run successful pilots using screenings of live National Theatre performances as a hook to engage with key local audiences.

28. Between autumn 2009 and April 2010, 117 initiatives were developed in 84 countries through 32 separate grants. Further information on examples of campaign activity can be found in Annex E.

**Next Steps: The Plan from Now Until the Games**

29. As we get closer to 2012, one of our core “good news” stories that can be told is that of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games themselves. We have worked closely with the London 2012 Organising Committee in our preparations, and emphasised the specific opportunities and appetite for the FCO and its Public Diplomacy Partners to spread messages about the Games through our unique global network.

30. Planned initiatives with an explicit London 2012 link include:

31. A TV documentary on the building of the Olympic Park, made in partnership with the Olympic Delivery Authority, which was launched to UK public diplomacy and Olympics partners by Jeremy Browne in September 2010 and will be publicly launched by the Foreign Secretary on November 10th. The film is being actively marketed to TV networks worldwide—at the distributor’s cost—to ensure that the remarkable story of the sustainable master plan for the Park, and the spectacularly successful progress on build, is told worldwide for the first time. The potential impact on British reputation in engineering, construction, design and sustainability is enormous. The expected global audience will be between 150–300 million. We also intend to continue to
use this as a key promotional tool right through 2011, ensuring, for instance, that it is shown in our Embassies to influence people from government, business, tourism and other opinion formers.

32. The FCO team have also secured the ongoing services of a trio of campaign Olympic Ambassadors. Sir Steve Redgrave and Lady Grey-Thompson, as well as our leading male Paralympian, blind swimmer Chris Holmes. In 2009 Baroness Grey-Thompson toured Israel, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon on an experimental ambassador visit. A full programme of meetings with Government ministers, Paralympic associations, business audiences and young people included a first ever debate on the rights of the disabled at the UNESCO palace in Beirut. The highly successful visit obtained media coverage on an international and local level, with a total reach of over a million people (see Annex E). We will seek to replicate this and aim to continue to make the most of our Ambassadors’ participation and energy. Lord Coe will play an important role in delivering our 2012 messages abroad. We are exploring how best to do this with him.

33. Pre-Games Training Camps also offer opportunities to build bilateral activity, encouraging closer links between the home country of a national team and the UK. The Japanese team will be based in Loughborough, for example. Our Embassy in Tokyo in conjunction with the regional UKTI team has already been vigorously taking forward opportunities to build links between Japan and the East Midlands Loughborough region. We expect it to produce solid opportunities for Public Diplomacy work around links between schools in the two countries and new ways of promoting trade links.

34. We are working closely with UK Sport and the British Council on public diplomacy work around the “International Inspirations” programme. This formed part of London’s winning bid in Singapore. It pledged that a UK Games would “…reach young people all around the world and connect them to the inspirational power of the Games so they are inspired to choose sport”. It aims to give 12 million children in 20 countries access to high quality and inclusive physical education, sport and play. Countries where the programme is active include Azerbaijan, Zambia, India Bangladesh, Jordan, Mozambique, Nigeria, and South Africa.

35. We will use friends of the UK, eg ex-Chevening Fellows and Scholars to build a body of authoritative voices with strong links and motivation to become involved in our efforts overseas. We will continue to consult with communications specialists, seeking their expertise in no or low cost ways to refresh and challenge our strategy.

36. Based on successful activities planned around Beijing in 2008, the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics and, most recently, in Tokyo and New York in July 2010 to mark the ‘two years to go’ point, we will make greater use of regular events such as Queen's Birthday Parties, receptions and trade events, by effective media planning and strong prosperity and security messaging. We will target guest lists for such events to make the most of the Olympics impact.

37. We will continue to provide energetic leadership to our Public Diplomacy Partners who meet monthly and include representatives from UKTI, British Council, Visit Britain, UK Sport, LOCOG, the Government Olympic Executive, and the Mayor of London’s office. An organogram showing the bodies involved in Olympics Public Diplomacy work is at Annex F.

38. Digital diplomacy enables us to maintain a simultaneous global and local digital presence. We will further our use of social network media and viral marketing (eg through dedicated twitter and facebook feeds). We will be uploading new short films every 2–4 weeks, pegging particular subjects and themes to milestones in the relevant country. This approach offers high levels of interactivity and insight, fed back at a faster pace. The global public can engage in two way dialogue—an approach proven to generate trust.

39. We have worked across Government and with LOCOG to agree a unique licensing deal for the Olympics logo. This includes a “toolkit” of striking London 2012-branded imagery and materials that reflect our campaign messages. It has been approved for use by FCO, UKTI, Visit Britain and the British Council around the world. It will be an essential component in allowing us to harness the power of London 2012 to secure economic advantages for the UK as host nation, build important tourist markets, and boost British reputation.

THE WIDER OPPORTUNITY: THE GAMES AND BEYOND

40. The Olympic legacy will not only provide a springboard for British trade and investment for many years beyond the games; the Games will also create a “soft power” legacy, building a wide network of influential relationships and will have a lasting effect on increased British influence.

41. 2012 is also the year of the Diamond Jubilee, bringing even greater attention to the UK particularly from the Commonwealth, but also from countries vital to British interests such as the USA.

42. Looking beyond we will see Glasgow host the Commonwealth Games in 2014, and potentially England hosting the World Cup in 2018. We will be ready to make strong positive connections between this and the London Olympics on 2 December when an announcement is made in Zurich.

43. We will organise our work to exploit particular opportunities and milestones, for example around 500 days and one year to go to the 2012 Games, around the Olympic torch ceremonies, as well as continuing to make use of and highlight non-Olympics related activities which fit our campaign objectives. A plan of these activities can be found in Annex G.
Resourcing

44. The core FCO Public Diplomacy Campaign team in London consists of a D6 (Home Civil Service Grade 7) Team Leader position, a C4 (HEO) and B3 (EO) officer.

45. The FCO employed, on a short term basis, a small number of outside specialists and a PR agency to help set up the campaign. They provided expertise in pulling together a strategic vision, messages and a central story around them. They worked with film production companies to create powerful audio-visual materials; set up partnerships and processes; and helped us to manage virtual and online communities to build networks among FCO and Public Diplomacy partner staff at Posts across the world.

46. For FY 2009–10, the campaign was allocated a budget of £1.7 million which was used to cover contractor costs, agency fees, creation of collateral (especially films) and was accessed by Posts to bid for funding to take forward local public diplomacy activity. This separate funding stream was cut as part of the FCO’s contribution of £55 million of cuts for the emergency budget in June 2010. The work stream continues to have access to wider Public Diplomacy funds to support communications work at Post but the accent is now very much on no or low cost ways of doing business as well as increased use of commercial sponsorship.

Conclusion

47. In coming months, we will build on the strong foundations of our 2012 Public Diplomacy work to greatly increase our worldwide efforts to provide strong delivery of our goals. We are in good shape to do so.

48. Despite the current economic circumstances, the London 2012 Games offer an exciting opportunity which we are strongly placed to seize. We can use them to secure a lasting legacy for British reputation overseas and a big fillip to our trade and investment activity.

49. We welcome the Committee’s interest in this work and look forward to its recommendations.

Annexes

A—FCO Olympic Programme strands
B—Priority countries
C—List of “See Britain” short film subjects
D—“Collaborate” site
E—Case Study examples of activity
F—Organogram of PD Partners group
G—London 2012 PD Project Milestones

Annex A

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

LONDON 2012 PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The London 2012 Co-Ordination unit (Senior Responsible Officer: Sir Alan Collins) oversees the FCO’s contribution to the Games. It keeps FCO activity on track and provides assurance to London Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and Government Olympic Executive (GOE) of the FCO’s ability to deliver, through the London 2012 Board.

There are three significant parts to the London 2012 Programme: Direct Impact, Opportunity and behind the scenes work. Games time operations are being developed to cover crisis management and Communications.

The Programme

Jeremy Browne is FCO Minister for the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympics Games.

Sir Alan Collins, currently Director General for Trade and Investment USA, former High Commissioner to Singapore (instrumental in the original bid) and international adviser to the London 2012 bid delegation, is the London 2012 International Legacy Champion for the FCO, UKTI and BIS. He is also in charge of strategic direction of London 2012 work in the FCO and UKTI.

Stakeholders: There are four main London 2012 partners who together comprise the Olympic Board: the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG); the Greater London Authority (GLA); the British Olympic Authority (BOA); and HMG. Government work on the Olympics is co-ordinated by the Government Olympic Executive in DCMS. Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (supported by Hugh Robertson MP, Minister for the Olympics), oversees the work of the GOE and sits on the Board for HMG.

1 Not printed: classified.
The FCO London 2012 Board sits on a bi-monthly basis and is chaired by Sir Alan Collins. Stakeholders and the OGC sit on the board as do those responsible for delivery.

Direct Impact Role

The FCO plays an important role in the delivery of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games. The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and the Government Olympic Executive rely on the FCO to receive and manage an estimated 180 heads of state for the opening and closing ceremonies. Indirectly the FCO will, through posts overseas and UKBA, deliver visa services to Olympic tourists and Olympic Family members who fail to obtain their accreditation for a variety of reasons.

The key departments responsible for these activities are:-

Protocol Department:
- Protection arrangements for Heads of State/Government (current estimated maximum of 180) and logistical support for many other VIPs who have their own country protection staff but are not receiving UK close protection
- Managing Diplomatic Co-ordination (ie LOCOG, Protocol and GOE)
- Engagement with security partners to scope the requirements for the security of the Heads of States/Government and ensure appropriate delivery

Migration Department
- Communicating entry requirement at political level to posts and to government
- Liaising with UKBA on the accreditation process and entry into the UK

We also work in close collaboration with:

UKTI
- Promoting UK PLC in collaboration with UKTI—an important area of work. More detail given at the end of this annex.

Behind the Scenes

Press Office
- Passing on Games related information to the foreign press
- Handling media around the intensive international engagements/meetings that will take place in the run-up to and during the Olympics

Counter Terrorism Directorate
- Stakeholder engagement with the Met and Home Office, to ensure the international angles are fully covered on counter-terrorism and security

Estate & Security Directorate
- Ensure protective security of staff, buildings and information leading up to and during the Games

Geographic Directorates
- Engagement with relevant internal and external stakeholders to ensure international communities concerns/requirements are addressed e.g. co-ordination of bilateral meetings with Protocol, discussion of visa concerns with UKBA etc.

Business Continuity
- Protection of the FCO’s critical work to ensure resilience within directorates for Games

Games Time Operations—Crisis/Incident Management

During the Games the FCO will have an incident management team in place to cover all eventualities that have an International angle to them. Planning is at an early stage but developing well.

In preparation for Incident/Crisis management the FCO has been building strong relations with the Metropolitan Police, LOCOG and GOE to ensure that the flow of information from the Games Time Communication Centre is timely and accurate. The FCO has a secondee based in the Metropolitan Police who leads on security and policing at major international events.

The incident management team will be based in a designated crisis management area within the FCO and has access to dedicated technology and communications.

We envisage there being a need to keep senior officials and ministers and up to date on incidents that take place and ensure good communication links to our Heads of Missions.

To ensure that this important piece of work is realised the FCO are building on their crisis management experience overseas. The crisis management teams will consist of members that have crisis management
Trade and Investment Activity

Trade and investment is an important part of the economic legacy of the Games. The international spotlight on the UK offers significant potential for promoting the UK as an attractive place for high level investment, international growth, and as a trading partner for years to come.

The Games and the international exposure they will attract will help drive inward investment into the UK and deliver new business partners for UK firms through highlighting UK expertise in delivering international events of this scale. The Australians successfully enhanced this sector’s ability to promote itself internationally and win supply contracts at global events such as Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008.

UKTI’s Host2Host programme is helping to develop trade links through MOU’s (essentially trade agreements) with host and bid cities of Olympic Games and other major sporting events. The programme aims to increase supply opportunities in global markets and offer opportunities both for increasing investment in the UK and increasing UK exports. Current Host2Host partners include Brazil, Russia, South Africa, Canada and Singapore; other partners are being pursued.

We know from Sydney that hosting the Games can provide a tremendous incentive for high value inward investment: New South Wales attracted Aus$600 million in new business investment from the Sydney Games in 2000. Similarly, the Canadian Government believes that its hosting of the Winter Games has created, and will continue to create, a significant boost to inward investment into the country, though it is too soon to put a figure on the value of this.

Many of the 2012 sponsors are overseas owned and employ a significant number of British workers in the UK. Such companies include GE, Coca Cola, Panasonic, Samsung, McDonalds, EDF, UPS, Adidas, Atos Origin, Omega, BMW and Cisco. This demonstrates the value of FDI into the UK, not purely for the support of the Games but for the longer term sustainable employment that overseas owned companies create.

Lancaster House: UKTI/FCO are planning a business hub at Games time to promote UK industry and inward investment and are looking at various venues which would resonate with target audiences.

Annex C

LIST OF SEE BRITAIN SHORT FILM SUBJECTS AND PROPOSED DIGITAL LAUNCH DATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality/Country</th>
<th>Profession/Sector</th>
<th>See Britain messages/ themes</th>
<th>Date of Launch + Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kosei Inoue</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Olympic Judo Gold Medalist</td>
<td>Multicultural</td>
<td>27 July 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Mills</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Director Edinburgh International Festival</td>
<td>Tolerant Forward Looking</td>
<td>2 years to go</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| Mushtaq Ahmed          | Pakistan            | Cricket Legend Spin Bowling coach of England Cricket team | Modern Dynamic Multicultural Fun Arts and culture Multicultural Multi-faith Tolerant Democratic Sport | 16 August 2010
<p>|                       |                     |                                                 |                                           | First week of Edinburgh festival               |
| Lucelia Taranto Rodrigues | Brazil             | Architecture Lecturer Nottingham University     | Warm/welcoming Open/modern Sustainability Green Energy Forward Looking Tolerant Multicultural | 28/29 September Coincide UKTI trade event in Rio (sports) |
| Andre Camara          | Brazil              | Photographer                                    | Multicultural Resilience Equality/Democratic Respect | 28/29 September to coincide with Trade Event October 2010 |
| David Sable           | US                  | Director NT Live                                | Multicultural Accessible/Democratic Creative Dynamic Multicultural | 28/29 September Live new season |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality/Country</th>
<th>Profession/Sector</th>
<th>See Britain messages/ themes</th>
<th>Date of Launch + Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sir Magdi Yacoub</td>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>Heart Transplant Surgeon</td>
<td>NHS Democratic Egalitarian Medical Innovation Forward Looking Multicultural Cosopolitan Tolerant Creative</td>
<td>End of October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel Taride</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>CEO Hertz Europe</td>
<td>Modern Egalitarian Commonwealth Democratic Freedom of Speech Multicultural Scientific/Innovation Modern Forward Looking Multicultural Meritocratic</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Ajor Nana Twumasi- Ankrah</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Squadron Leader Household Cavalry UK Military</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giovanna Tinetti</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Astrobiologist</td>
<td>Scientific/Innovation Modern Forward Looking Multicultural Meritocratic</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Troika fashion designers</td>
<td>SN—France CF—Germany</td>
<td>Designers</td>
<td>Fashion expertise Innovation Sustainability Open Modern Multi-Cultural Connected International Hub Innovation Sustainability Open Cool/Modern</td>
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<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Conny Freyer and Eva Rucki</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Playwright/social commentator</td>
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<td>Bonnie Greer</td>
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<td>Fashion pioneers Multicultural Open Cool/Modern Multicultural Open Modern TBA</td>
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<td>Zeinab Badawi</td>
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<td>Chef</td>
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<td>Camila Batmanghelidj</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>Social Entrepreneur Charity head</td>
<td>Eccentric Open Minded Caring/warm Egalitarian Compassion Opportunity Tolerant Opportunity Freedom of Expression Embracing Change Multicultural Open-minded Compassionate Humorous Opportunity</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Multicultural Forward Thinking Multi-faith Tolerant Opportunity Freedom of Expression</td>
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<td>Ching He Huang</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Chef Businesswoman</td>
<td>Multicultural Open-minded Compassionate Humorous Opportunity</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name  Nationality/Country  Profession/Sector  See Britain messages/themes  Date of Launch + Reason

Carlos Acosta  Cuba  Ballet Dancer  Creative Welcoming Multicultural Cosmopolitan  TBA around one of his productions

Dr Claudia Bausewein  Germany  Palliative Care Doctor Rehabilitation  Expertise Leading research Caring Modern Innovative Entrepreneurship Sport Connected Equal opportunity Tolerant  TBA

Manoj Badale  India  Businessman  Entrepreneurship Sport Connected Equal opportunity Tolerant  UKTI Announcement of Business Embassy?

Prince Seeiso  Lesotho  Ambassador in UK  Warm/Friendly Welcoming Multicultural Caring Modern Innovative  TBA

Sir Anwar Pervez  Pakistan  Chairman Bestway  Equal Opportunities Entrepreneurial Respect Multicultural Freedom of Expression Tolerant  TBA

Shadia Mansour  Palestine  Hip Hop Artist  Multicultural Freedom of Expression Creative Open  TBA

Alina Ibragimova  Russia  Violinist  Multicultural Freedom of Expression Creative Tolerant  TBA

Polly Courtice  South Africa  Director Cambridge Programme for Industry  Sustainable Development Open minded Forward Thinking  TBA

UK personalities  2  2  2  2  2

Kwame Kwei-Armah  UK  Actor/Playwright  Energetic Multicultural Creative  TBA

Sir Steve Redgrave  UK  Former Olympian Rowing Ambassador  Success Achievement Motivation Dedication Equal Opportunities Forward Thinking Multicultural Dynamic  TBA

Polly Courtice  South Africa  Director Cambridge Programme for Industry  Sustainable Development Open minded Forward Thinking  TBA

Annex D

THE SEE BRITAIN COLLABORATE SITE

A password protected extranet community for our staff and Partners’ staff to access materials, share ideas and showcase achievements.²

Both the number of members and amount of activity on the collaborate site has steadily risen since it went live in November 2009. It now boasts an online community of 782 members where staff showcase their achievements and draw inspiration from See Britain activity taking place worldwide.

— A central repository of ‘See Britain’ material, films, image libraries, toolkits
— 5mins 26secs—average time spent on site
— 69% return visits
— 34 discussion groups

² Images not printed.
CASE STUDY: SPEED SISTERS

BACKGROUND

Speed Sisters is a project conceived and managed by the British Consulate in Jerusalem with funding and support from the See Britain Strategic Communications campaign. Car racing is a relatively new but hugely popular sport in Palestine while Britain is recognised as a country that has real expertise and credibility in this area. Our Consulate in Jerusalem spotted the opportunity to support a project in car racing and so reach out to a different Palestinian audience and show the UK in a different light ie as a modern, cool, relevant, inclusive and collaborative country with citizens who share similar values and passions to Palestinians.

OBJECTIVES

— Challenge negative perceptions about the UK in Palestine (recent results from the Gallup World View survey state that 70% of Palestinians disapprove of UK leadership).

— Present the UK as socially inclusive, open and collaborative. Capitalise on improved perceptions of the UK brought about by our support for the Speed Sisters project, to re-frame policy conversations and enhance the UK’s reputation.

— Support objective 1 of the Occupied Palestinian Territories country business plan—specifically to ‘Implement an engagement and communication strategy that enhances the UK and international community’s reputation as honest brokers’.

— Support wider campaigning for MENA Partners for Progress.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is young Arabs particularly those involved in rally driving and motor sports and Arab women.

ACTIVITY

During 2010 the See Britain campaign provided financial and practical support to a female Palestinian car racing team who had struggled to compete due to a lack of funding. FCO support funded improvements to a donated car, provision of a racing kit and a training event in which two world class female rally drivers visited Palestine to train the Speed Sisters and share knowledge and expertise. This training was an important aspect of the project as people from different cultures and backgrounds united in their passion for motorsport. UK sponsorship was made clear from the start with British flags adorning the team’s car and helmets.

IMPACT AND EVALUATION

The Speed Sisters have competed in three races so far, which have been well-received by the media with coverage on all major western and Arab news channels, in British and Arab women's magazines and over 1,000 online and print articles. “Look”, a UK female glossy magazine, with a circulation of over 300,000 also featured the story. Media coverage has been entirely positive and has reached an audience in excess of 300 million. The two face book pages “UK in Jerusalem” and “Speed Sisters” have attracted over 3,000 friends and continue to grow. There is a constant flow of positive commentary (approximately 300 interactions per week) and thanks for British support.

We have also funded a documentary that is still in production but will be shown on UK and Arab television and will be distributed digitally.

The project has impacted on post relationships with local interlocutors. The Governor of Ramallah, the head of the Olympics committee and the Minister of Sport and Youth have attended racing events and expressed support. Prime Minister Salam Fayyad is aware of the project and thanked the UK at the Queen’s Birthday Party. The project has opened up a more nuanced, rational and reasonable discussion with Arab youth, whose previous attitude to the UK was dogmatic and uninformed. This change in perception contributes in part to the re-framing of policy conversations around counter-terrorism and conflict resolution.

CONTINUING ACTIVITY

The team have completed the planned races but momentum and interest in the Speed Sisters continues to grow. Palestinian businesses have offered further sponsorship to help guarantee the project’s future but the FCO intends to remain involved in this project and maximise the dividends for the UK’s reputation.

3 Images not printed.
CASE STUDY: SPORT RELIEF

BACKGROUND

Sport Relief, the sporting branch of Comic Relief, is a global initiative, which harnesses the power and passion of sport to raise money to help vulnerable people in the UK and the world’s poorest countries. The 2010 Sport Relief Mile involved hundreds of thousands of people across the world, running one, three or six miles in aid of charity. Sir Steve Redgrave, Ambassador for the See Britain through my eyes campaign, challenged the FCO and Public Diplomacy Partners to take part: “I can’t think of a better way for Britain to show how much it cares about the world and its problems than for those who represent us overseas—all of YOU—to take part in this year’s Sport Relief mile in March”.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Sport Relief mile were to:

— Enhance perceptions of the UK worldwide, challenge stereotypes of Britain as cold and stuffy and present the UK as innovative, dynamic, lively and passionate about international partnership
— Present the UK as charitable on an international and local level
— Energise and excite the FCO network with new ways of working by holding a worldwide event which involved all Embassy staff and contributed to the FCO’s “One Team” approach

ACTIVITY

55 posts participated in the Sport Relief Mile between 19 and 21 March in a variety of weather conditions—colleagues in Kazakhstan ran in the snow whilst those in Oman ran along the beach in a temperature of 30 degrees.

Posts received a Sport Relief Mile ‘event pack’ which included information on how to organise the event, some equipment such as start and finish banners and advice on how to maximise press coverage.

Posts collaborated with Public Diplomacy Partners including the British Council, UKTI and Visit Britain in organizing their event. A Sport Relief group on the London 2012 hub ‘Collaborate’ was set up, which attracted over 180 members, and which provided a discussion / advice forum and other supporting materials.

OUTCOME AND EVALUATION

Based on data received from posts, £43,000 was raised for 55 charities, involving 3,871 participants. The event attracted major media attention, with tens of millions of people potentially able to access information about the event through newspapers and websites. Charities to benefit included Sport Relief, Animal Friends League, Abdullah Children’s Hospice, the Norwegian Red Cross, Ronald MacDonald House and the Chilean earthquake appeal.

INDIVIDUAL EXAMPLES

— In Guangzhou, South China, the mile raised enough money to fully furnish a living skills room for disabled children in a local project.
— In Kuwait, the event raised £1,080 and received unprecedented media coverage for a public diplomacy initiative from major Kuwaiti papers and the daily news bulletins of three TV broadcasters. Post estimate 222, 000 people received information directly from these sources.
— In Seoul, South Korea, the event was covered by Yonhap News (the Korean equivalent of Reuters), the only state-run wire news service agency in Korea.
— In Beirut, Lebanon, the mile was covered by most of the major daily papers, including Al Mustaqbal newspaper and Al Massira magazine, with a combined circulation of 10,000.
— In Colombo, Sri Lanka, the event attracted the attention of two TV channels and three English language papers and raised £1,724 for the Foundation of Goodness.

ENERGISED, ENTHUSIASTIC NETWORK

The Sport Relief Mile resonated with posts and prompted a surge in activity and enthusiasm worldwide. Posts commented that the event encouraged them to explore new ways of engaging with locals and prompted further See Britain activity. It also raised staff morale being a voluntary, fun activity held out of the office. Many posts plan to hold a second Sport Relief event in 2012, which would tie in to London 2012 activity.

Posts used the See Britain collaborate site to showcase their events. This increased use of the site and further increased See Britain’s exposure and audience.

* Images not printed.
CASE STUDY: DVD: ROAD TO LONDON, PRETORIA

BACKGROUND

The South African Sports Confederation and the Olympic Committee approached the British High Commission in Pretoria, seeking a venue to launch the eight corporate sponsors for their London 2012 Paralympic Team. Post capitalised on the visit by the Lord Mayor of the City of London to host an event with UKTI for business leaders and local media contacts. The event was themed the “Road to London” during which the sponsors’ logos were revealed by the SASCOC President on the windows of a replica modern London bus.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the visit were to:

— Challenge the perception of Britain as a being outdated, old fashioned and steeped in colonial baggage
— Maintain the UK’s “market share” of influence with South Africans,
— Promote the UK as open, creative, connected and dynamic

TARGET AUDIENCES

In line with its broader Communications Strategy, post targeted the following sectors:

— Business leaders—highlighting that the British economy was open for business, hungry for creative new activity and connected to wider European markets
— Media network—illustrating that the UK is a dynamic world leader in sporting excellence and the proud host of a range of major events
— Youth- promoting the core values of the campaign
— General public—challenging existing media perceptions that regularly portray the UK as a dated, colonial master rather than a “Premier League” partner.

ACTIVITY

In partnership with UKTI and Visit Britain, post worked with a local production company to mix dynamic images of the UK with an inspiring soundtrack to create a bespoke promotional DVD of the UK. The aim was to produce a balanced portrayal of contemporary and ancient Britain—the soundtrack was classical with a modern twist. The DVD, branded “UK, be a part of it” had a sporting theme promoting British excellence across all parts of the UK.


The event was compared by Carol Manana, co-host of the FIFA World Cup 2010 Draw, and was attended by approximately 150 guests. The President of SASCOC, the Lord Mayor of the City of London and South African Paralympic athletes Hilton Langenhoven and Natalie du Toit (inset) attended the event.

OUTCOME AND EVALUATION

Feedback on the DVD was positive with respondents commenting that they felt more patriotic having watched it. In response to the question “Has the DVD made you think differently about the UK?” 60% of respondents answered “no”, but said that the DVD reinforced what they already knew to be true of the UK. It is hoped that subsequent events, involving a different audience demographic, would bring an 80–90% positive response.

The media coverage produced a solid impression of a modern dynamic Olympic event. All of the TV coverage used footage from the DVD. The Mayor of London and swimmer Natalie Du Toit were interviewed in front of the DVD branding. Approximately 60% of all print coverage had some reference to the DVD.

The DVD and associated pocket guide cost just over £7,000 while reception and other costs were borne by other parties.

CONTINUING ACTIVITY

Since the premiere of the DVD in March 2010, it has been put on the post’s website and on You Tube. It was shown at functions ahead of and during the 2010 World Cup. Post will continue to use the DVD and the images/design in other appropriate events / contexts.
London 2012 Public diplomacy Stakeholder Map

Public Diplomacy Partners
- British Council
  - Pre-Games Training Camps, Connecting Classrooms programme, International Inspirations
  - Joint events and projects with FCO colleagues overseas
- UK Trade and Industry
  - Olympic Legacy Unit
  - Maximise economic benefits of London 2012 Games to the UK, host2host initiative
  - FO trade initiatives, London 2012 toolkit, Pre-Games Training Camps, films and other marketing material
- Visit Britain
  - UK-wide tourism benefits of London 2012, ‘destination Britain’
  - Cultural Olympiad, torch relay
  - London 2012 toolkit, Pre-games Training Camps, other PD opportunities, images and marketing material
- BBC World Service
  - 180 million people over 32 countries
  - Promote international values
  - London 2012 as an important news story around the world

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Ministers, FCO Board and SRO
- Protocol

Communication Directorate
- Digital Diplomacy Group
- Corporate Communications
- Press Office

Public Diplomacy and Strategic Campaigns Group
- Olympic Coordination Unit
- London 2012 Public Diplomacy

Departmental Priority Owners in other directorates
- FCO Posts

Other Olympic Partners
- LOCOG
  - London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games
  - Olympic Games, ‘Keep the Games Alive’, countdown events, ambassadors
- Mayor of London’s Office
  - Overseeing the legacy aims of the Games for London
  - Coordinating the City operations Programme & ensuring the smooth, safe & efficient organisation to support the games
  - Delivering cultural Olympiad activity
- Government Olympic Executive (GOE)
  - Oversees entire London 2012 project
  - Liaison with LOCOG and cross-Whitehall
- UK Sport
  - Continuous development of resources/coaching
  - Overseas sporting events offering social & regional benefits regionally for the UK
  - Enriching the lives of disadvantaged children overseas as through International Inspirations

Annex F
## London 2012 PD MILESTONES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCOG Events</strong></td>
<td>2 Years to go until Olympic Games</td>
<td>Feb 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Year to go until the opening of the Olympic Games</td>
<td>Feb 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>500 Days to go until the start of the London 2012 Olympic Games</td>
<td>Jan 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>164 Days to go until the start of the London 2012 Paralympic Games</td>
<td>Mar 2012</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Young Games Makers for under 16s launched</td>
<td>Jun 2012</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Olympic Torch Relay</td>
<td>Sep 2012</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Opening Ceremonies of London 2012 Olympic Games</td>
<td>Jul 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening Ceremonies of the Paralympic Games</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>General Sport</strong></td>
<td>Asian Games, Guangzhou, China</td>
<td>Jul 2010</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2011 Cebu World Cup, Cebu, Philippines</td>
<td>Oct 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>World Cup, Hong Kong</td>
<td>Oct 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>European Youth Olympic Festival</td>
<td>Oct 2011</td>
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<td>South Pacific Games</td>
<td>Oct-Nov 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pan-American Games, Guadalajara, Mexico</td>
<td>Dec 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Indoor Athletics World Championships, Berlin</td>
<td>Dec 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Swimming World Championships, Delhi</td>
<td>Sep-Oct 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Opening Ceremonies of the Paralympic Games</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural</strong></td>
<td>Edinburgh Festival Fringe</td>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Venice Film Festival</td>
<td>Oct 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Tavern: 1800% 20% Film Project</td>
<td>Sat 10/02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Thu 10/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Thu 10/08</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>G20 Summit, Seoul, South Korea</td>
<td>Thu 10/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>International Day of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations)</td>
<td>Fri 10/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Wed 10/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>China - London Trade Mission to Shanghai, the world's largest EXPO, and Hangzhou (Nanjing voters)</td>
<td>Fri 10/23</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Political**: United Nations Day of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations)
- **Trade**: China - London Trade Mission to Shanghai, the world's largest EXPO, and Hangzhou (Nanjing voters)
Written evidence from Dr Patrick Spaven OBE

The Summer Olympics focus world public attention on the host city—and to some extent the country—more than any other staged event. The only other event with similar global potential is the FIFA World Cup. These mega events are opportunities for communication with billions and for direct engagement with smaller numbers. There is potential in and around the events for public diplomacy to reinforce or change perceptions which in turn can influence attitudes and behaviour.

But the Olympics are a double-edged sword. The focus can lead to negative change as well as positive. The balance depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of the management of the events, infrastructure, security etc. But public diplomacy has a role to play and the extent to which that role is leveraged positively depends on the quality of its strategy and how it is implemented.

Germany 2006

In 2006 I was able to track with statistically reliable research data the changes to Germany’s reputation in around their hosting of the FIFA World Cup. Germany improved its standing in the Anholt Nation Brands Index significantly in the six months leading up to the events and beyond. It maintained this advantage throughout the following year.

I was not able to identify any other factors that could have significantly influenced this change. No other country with a mature reputation improved its status significantly in the Index from its origins in 2005 until President Obama took office and dramatically lifted the results for the USA. The other dramatic changes were all negative.

Germany’s public diplomacy effort was researched-informed, highly coordinated and began long before the event. It involved detailed segmentation of target audiences. For example, one strand was aimed at mass younger audience—in particular the breaking of outdated stereotypes of Germany as a nation of humourless, conventional people. On its own this might have undermined Germany’s reputation for reliable, high-quality engineered products. But another part of the strategy aimed to protect this market.

Strategy

Whether and how reputation change occurs around the Olympics is principally governed by the interplay between people’s prior perceptions about the city and country, and the impressions and, for a minority, the direct experiences of the city or country generated by the Olympics and the media activity around it.

For cities and countries with a relatively simple story to tell—like Barcelona in 1992, Beijing in 2008 and South Africa earlier this year—public diplomacy strategy should not have been difficult to design and implement. In contrast, where prior perceptions about a place are relatively complex and deep-rooted—as is likely to be the case with well-known cities like London, it will be more difficult to bring about positive change through communications alone. People will take more persuading to change their views and behaviour.

This shouldn’t matter if perceptions are generally positive. But while complex and deep-rooted perceptions can be a bulwark against negative change, it is easier for perceptions to change negatively than positively especially where communications are the only mediator. Part of any strategy must be about guarding against reputational damage.

Perception is not monolithic. Research such as the annual surveys for the Anholt Nation and City Brands Indexes which I analysed for about three years, shows that there are wide variations between different aspects of a city or country’s identity, such as its environment, its people or the way it is run. These are more than nuances and it is in analysis of these layers of the perception cake that opportunities for influence can be found.

Traction is possible if there are mismatches between perceptions and reality. One person’s reality can of course be different from another’s, and many public diplomacy campaigns are based on assumptions about a country’s assets that do not stand up to scrutiny. Public diplomacy must be based on realities that are not just evidenced but also can be demonstrated tangibly. The UK’s standing in Paralympic sport is a good story, but it must be underpinned with a consistently positive picture of its approach to disability generally.

These mismatches often are the result of out-of-date perceptions. It is unlikely that many people still believe London is susceptible to the smog attacks of the first half of the last century, but it still has a weak reputation for its environment; and people think that its climate is much worse than Brussels’ for example. An important question however is how much these mismatches matter to UK interests.

UK public diplomacy around the Olympics needs to:

1. Be clear about groups of people whose behaviours matter most to the UK (eg opinion formers, decision-makers, potential tourists, investors, business partners, inward students, and professional immigrants).
2. Through research, identify perceptions among these groups that are negatively out of line with demonstrable realities.
3. Decide whether these mismatches are important in influencing desirable behaviours.
4. Design strategies to extend impressions and experiences to these people that stand a reasonable chance of eliminating these important mismatches in a sustainable way.

5. To gain traction, create relevant storyboards—relevant both to the Olympics and to the target group in question. Otherwise they will dissipate in the general media fog.


7. Gather momentum months before the Olympics begin.

Sustainability is a key word in public diplomacy. There is little or no value in quick, superficial reputational wins if they are undermined by perceptions and experiences in the months and years to come. Creating expectations that cannot be sustained is not just a waste of resources, it erodes trust. Any promotional activity around the Olympics—such as the “greening of the games” must stand up to future scrutiny. Legacy is particularly vulnerable. White elephants make good media content.

The following paragraphs raise or revisit a few issues that may be relevant to public diplomacy around the London Olympics

**London’s Games or the UK’s?**

Most cities are so closely identified with their countries that perception changes as a result of the Olympics will be shared by both. This is likely to have been the case with Beijing, Athens and Sydney.

There is evidence that London may be different. For example, factor analysis of the City Brand Index survey results suggest that London and New York are perceived as “world cities”, somewhat detached from their hinterlands. London’s widely-appreciated openness to international influences and change are in juxtaposition to persistent popular perceptions of the UK as having insular and backward-looking tendencies (albeit in a complex mix with more “modern” identity elements).

In my view it would be wrong to assume that perception outcomes—particularly positive ones—for London will be directly transferred to the wider UK. If this is the intention, the relevance of the messaging about London to the wider UK needs to be explicit and demonstrable.

**Focus is a Double-Edged Sword**

In some domains it may be true that there is no such thing as bad news. This is generally not so in nation and city identity. There are cities and countries—such as some in Africa—that might benefit from neutral or even mildly negative media exposure. This is because less is known about them among broad international publics, and they are lumped in with other, more negatively perceived, cities and countries. Media exposure—such as that directed at Lagos recently in the UK television—may help to create more nuanced perceptions rather than a blanket rejection.

This is different for London and the UK which are perceived relatively positively by the world taken as a whole. More is at stake.

There are the obvious threats such as terrorist incidents, transport or crowd control problems, the “Heathrow experience”, doping scandals, Games infrastructure shortfalls. The risk of these types of threats can be reduced if not entirely eliminated.

There is also the less controllable risk of more dispersed negative phenomena like crime or rudeness to visitors which elements of the media are fond of highlighting. The captive presence of the world’s media in and around the Olympics is indeed a double-edged sword. Many of them have time on their hands and are not averse to making mischief. Effective management of the media—without the heavy hand which can be destructive—is very important. Sydney is said to have handled this well in 2000 through its media strategy.

South Africa probably gained overall from its successful handling of the FIFA World Cup, simply because it confounded pessimists by pulling off a relatively incident-free series of events.

Even if incidents take place, the impact on reputation need not be serious. Effective recovery from a disaster can lead to reputational success—witness Chile’s San Jose mine rescue.

Perhaps the worst that can happen is that the event undermines recent reputational improvements by nourishing old stereotypes. India must be grateful that Delhi was hosting the limited exposure Commonwealth Games and not the Olympics.

**The Opening Ceremony**

Some people see the opening ceremony as the apotheosis of Olympics public diplomacy. It does of course have a guaranteed mass audience, and is always assessed in comparison with previous Olympic ceremonies. Expectations around opening ceremonies have been progressively raised with successive Olympics. There is a risk in the ceremony of reputational damage, albeit short term.

Probably the best a new host can hope for is to meet those expectations, confirming its status as a worthy Olympic host. Beijing’s ceremony had shades of triumphalism which could have offended and disturbed some
audiences. It would be wholly inappropriate for London to try to emulate Beijing in scale and expense. London will not make that mistake, but it must guard against too much self-irony which might appeal to some western audiences but which could be misinterpreted by others. It must strike the right balance and tone.

**The Home Market Effect**

The best public diplomacy consists of ordinary people engaging with others. Even better if there are millions of them. It helps if people are positive about the place in which they live or come from.

I lived in Barcelona for six years which spanned the 1992 Olympics. I experienced firsthand the delight of so many of the people of the city and surrounding area in the dramatic improvements that the Games ushered in. Without a doubt it generated a higher level of civic pride which in turn encouraged continuing improvement which has transformed Barcelona’s locus in the world.

The Beijing Olympics, accompanied as they were by a media assault on China over its handling of the disturbances in Tibet, produced a wave of nationalist feeling. This may have been comfortable for China’s ruling elites, but it worried some outside observers. It is probably too early to assess the overall balance.

We know that Londoners have mixed feelings about the Olympics, especially at a time of austerity. This will probably swing towards a more positive balance as the Games approach. It will be very important to encourage this momentum not least through effective management of volunteers.

Patrick Spaven
2 November 2010

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**Written evidence from Professor Nick Cull**

1. The author of this evidence is Nicholas J. Cull, Professor of Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and director of the Master’s Program in Public Diplomacy. I am a British-born historian who has specialized in the role of communication in international relations. I have been a pioneer of contemporary public diplomacy studies and published widely on public diplomacy including two major monographs. I have worked with a number of government agencies including the FCO and British Council, US Department of Defense, Swiss Foreign Ministry and Netherlands Embassy (Washington DC) and am presently developing training with the governments of India and Mexico.

2. International relations have changed. As Simon Anholt has observed: “There is now only one super power on the planet and its name is public opinion.” This state of affairs places unprecedented emphasis on issues of international communication, reputation management and has transformed public diplomacy—the pursuit of foreign policy by engaging a foreign public—into an essential tool of statecraft.

3. In such a world, mega events such as the Olympic Games have become unique opportunities for host nations to reach out to global audiences. This was done particularly effectively by Spain with the Barcelona Olympics of 1992, Australia with the Sydney Olympics of 2000 and by China with the Beijing Olympics of 2008. In order to make the most from such an opportunity it makes sense to use the tools of public diplomacy to extend and shape the international impact of the mega events. Successful recent examples of this include the German public diplomacy around the FIFA World Cup of 2006.

4. I am impressed by the FCO’s plan though as will be seen I see scope for refinement in a couple of places and have some suggestions for themes related to London’s identity as the only three-time Olympic host.

**The FCO’s plan**

5. The FCO plan for public diplomacy around the London Olympics strikes me as being well conceived to deliver helpful results towards appropriate policy objectives. The whole of government approach and attention to partnerships are especially welcome.

6. The UK enjoys an enviable reputation around the world but will benefit from being associated with the positive themes inherent to the Olympic movement. Specifically the Olympic movement is associated with ideas of internationalism (symbolized by the ancient concept of the Olympic truce) and a respect for honest competition and fairness. Fairness is a quality already perceived in Britain and will doubtless be evident in the British public and media response to the games with support for under-dogs and appreciation for sportsmanship.

7. I am particularly impressed by the prominence being given to the Paralympics within the 2012 plan (paragraph 32). There are many countries around the world in which differently-abled people do not have the opportunities they enjoy in Britain, and by increasing international exposure to the Paralympics emphasis on what people can do the FCO is performing a significant act of ethical leadership and associating the UK with some truly inspirational people.

8. I think that the strategy of avoiding a “one-size fits all” approach and targeting Olympic Public Diplomacy along bi-lateral lines (paragraph 16) with programs such as the Host2Host work (paragraph 10), and the
emphasis on targeting leaders and influentials through visits to the Olympic Park (paragraph 13) and the documentary (paragraph 31) makes sound sense.

9. Of the existing work I am impressed by the See Britain Through My Eyes concept (paragraph 21), and the idea of emphasizing the experience of particular credible individuals with target audiences (paragraph 23). Research is now fairly consistent in showing that the most credible voice to any audience is “someone like me”, and often the job of public diplomacy is to seek out such a person and empower them to carry the message to the audience rather than attempting to do so one’s self. This underscores the value of working with the Diaspora communities (paragraph 8) and Britain’s network of friends (paragraph 35).

10. I am impressed with the aspects of the plan which tie the UK to people’s lives around the world in practical ways. International reputations often turn on an individual’s perception of “what country X means to me.” The International Inspirations program was an essential part of the bid and should be emphasized throughout the 2012 plan. It is of value in both practical and symbolic ways, and credit should flow to the UK from this. Perhaps representatives of those involved in that program could be built into 2012 ceremonial in some way.

11. I was genuinely moved to read of the symbolic actions (paragraph 24) and specifically the run in Guangzhou raising enough money to build a facility for children with learning difficulties. As a parent of a son with Down Syndrome, I am only too aware of the international needs in this area and feel that this is exactly this sort of work which will make Britain relevant to people’s lives.

Caveats

12. I like the idea of seeking out non-traditional partners to amplify the UK’s message (paragraph 27) and welcome the idea of streaming UK sport, the Edinburgh festival and National Theatre to previous Olympic cities like Mexico City and Athens or the future venue, Rio. However, it would be even more impressive to me if these events could be two-way or even multi-lateral, with events from fellow Olympic cities and elsewhere being somehow made available in the UK. The UK’s interest in and commitment to the world is also part of the message, and helping the world to speak to the UK is consistent with Britain’s image of fair play.

13. While it makes sense to take full advantage of the coincidence of the Olympics with the Diamond Jubilee year care should be taken to avoid undercutting the image of British modernity with a heritage and tradition message tied to the jubilee. While this dimension is probably inherent to the jubilee, perhaps planning around that event be mix the message in some way.

14. While I am glad to see the attention to new technology and digital “Public Diplomacy 2.0” within the plan, these aspects seem under developed. I agree that the digital diplomacy offers unique prospects for dialogue and the generation of trust (paragraph 38), but am unclear who will be interacting with the global public in this scenario. FCO personnel? UK citizens? Is there scope for on-line equivalents of the wonderful volunteers who were such a feature of the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

15. We may anticipate that much coverage of the 2012 games will be transmitted across peer-to-peer networks. FCO interests would be served by making as much coverage as possible easily pass-able, re-tweetable, and even mash-able into forms that appeal to the local audience. This may be at odds with the needs/rights of official Olympic broadcasters. Perhaps exceptions to rigid image control can be made for the markets which are particular political/security priorities.

16. Media consumption is a behavior strongly influenced by habit, and Olympic coverage provides an opportunity to inspire new habits in the global audience, or rekindle old habits such as attention to the broadcasts and web sites of the BBC World Service. It makes sense to seek out ways to retain that audience after the Olympics have ended. Online plans should look to the long term as well as the immediate Olympic period.

Missing Dimension: Remembering 1908 and 1948?

17. One missing dimension in the plan is the reference to London’s identity as the only city to have hosted the games more than twice, in 1908 and 1948, both times in response to emergency situations (the eruption of Vesuvius in the first instance and the war in the second). The 1948 games were marked by the austerity of the era (with the US government famously having the fly extra food to sustain the athletes). It is possible that both 1908 and 1948 might provide stories that could serve the general and bi-lateral public diplomacy goals of 2012. Looking back to 1908 and 1948 stresses the role of the UK as a nation with a profound commitment to sport and ethics of fair play.

18. Positive stories from the 1908 games include the coining of the phrase: “the most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part.” The games saw the first gold medal won by an African-American (John Taylor—800 meter relay) and the famous incident of the marathon winner, Dorando Pietri (Italy), being disqualified because officials helped him across the line and then receiving a special prize from Queen Alexandra.

19. The athletes of 1948 were significantly older than their modern counterparts at the time of the competition and sadly few are still alive to be honored in London in 2012, though such honour would be a valuable counter to the impression that the west is not respectful of its elders. Surviving stars of 1948 whose stories might help
include the gold medal weightlifter Rodney Wilkes of Trinidad known as “the Mighty Midget” or the Indian men’s hockey team who won first gold medals since their country’s independence the previous year. It would make sense to honour the survivors of 1948 at receptions at FCO posts with some representation in London also. Given the food problems of 1948 the UK owes them a good dinner at least! Athletes worthy of posthumous honour from 1948 include Fanny Blanker-Koen of the Netherlands who was a pioneer in women’s track and field, winning four gold medals “despite” being a mother.

**Final Thoughts**

20. Every plan has a risk. Just as hosting the Olympics can deliver a dividend to the host’s international image so there is a risk that a problem with the games could reflect negatively on the host. The negative press associated with India’s hosting of the 2010 Commonwealth Games is an example of what can go wrong. The Olympic plan requires that the British public live up to their role as hosts and “live the Olympic brand.” The stars of the Sydney Games of 2000 were the 120,000 local volunteers who did so much to help the games run smoothly. One hopes that London will be able to match this. Partiality and parochialism can strike an unfortunate note at a games as was the case at Atlanta in 1996, conversely the support of local audiences for international athletes has also provided an important boost to the games as was the case in Beijing games. The FCO might wish to endorse and encourage the efforts of the Mayor and LOCOC to prepare the British public for their starring role.

21. In the era of drastic budget cuts I am heartened to see that the Olympics have thus far been spared, though the PD budget has taken a hit (paragraph 46). The public diplomacy campaign is one way of adding a “multiplier” to the Olympic effort and I sincerely hope that the select committee will be able to advocate on behalf of this work in the event of further challenges to the budget.

10 November 2010

**Supplementary written evidence from Mr Jeremy Browne MP**

Thank you for the invitation to give evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee on the FCO’s work around the London Olympics on 10 November. I am pleased that the Committee is interested in this aspect of our work and am writing to provide information on areas of activity where you said you would like more detail.

**Trade And Investment**

The Foreign Secretary explained in a speech to business leaders at the City Week Conference on Monday 20 September that “the Foreign and Commonwealth Office … will place a greater emphasis on supporting business and commercial diplomacy internationally. ... Our Embassies will be more focussed going forward on working to achieve demonstrable benefits for British business and the British economy. We are serious and ambitious about our business engagement with the rest of the world and about enabling business to thrive in the UK. We know that this is where the future lies.”

Trade and commercial opportunities will be a major focus for all of our Posts in the run up to 2012 and beyond.

Responsibility for international marketing of the UK’s capability and economy lies with UK Trade & Investment (UKTI). They, in close partnership with BIS and the FCO, are working to deliver a strong economic legacy from the UK’s hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Key activity already underway includes:

- **Host2Host.** A flagship programme developed to forge relationships with other nations hosting major events before and after London 2012. The purpose is to showcase UK expertise to our partner hosts in delivering major projects on time and on budget. The scope of opportunity is vast, with countries such as Russia and Brazil estimating approximately £90bn spends on Olympic and related infrastructure projects. The Host2Host programme provides a conduit for UK companies to international buyers, influencers and event organisations/procurement officials with the goal of increasing economic legacy from the respective events each country is hosting. So far UKTI has signed MOUs with Singapore (Youth Olympics 2010); South Africa (Hosts of 2010 World Cup); Russia (Hosts of Sochi Winter Olympics 2014) and Brazil (Hosts of 2014 World Cup and Rio 2016 Olympic Games).

- **Directly showcasing UK capability.** In delivering major events, through bid consultancy, design, architecture, construction, fit-out and ticketing solutions. UKTI is working with regional organisations to produce a ‘Supplier Directory’ of UK expertise in these areas. It will be launched at SportAccord in April 2011—a conference attended by IOC officials, Host and Bidding Cities Nations. The Directory will be supplied to Posts around the world.

- The international interest shown in direct 2012 contract opportunities (through CompeteFor—the on-line procurement mechanism for London 2012 supply chains) is being converted into foreign direct investment. Posts around the world are in contact with international companies bidding for 2012 contracts, encouraging them to partner with UK companies or to look at setting up a base in the UK.
— The hosting of Pre-Games Training Camps prior to the 2012 Games is an opportunity to highlight regional investment opportunities and develop trade links with the country based in each camp. Recently UKTI’s East Midlands team (in conjunction with the British Embassy in Tokyo and the Japanese Embassy in London) held ‘Japan Day’ at Loughborough University, where the Japanese Team will be based. The event was designed to exploit the trade relationship between the UK and Japan. It has proved a successful model of best practice which UKTI and the FCO are encouraging our network to adopt as more training camps are announced. Our Post in Tokyo also hosted a trade delegation from the Loughborough region in July as part of their work to mark two years to London 2012.

— The Olympic Games is not only the greatest sporting event but also the biggest corporate networking event in the world. To take best advantage of this opportunity plans are being developed for ‘The British Business Embassy’ during Games time. The Embassy will provide a prestigious and cohesively branded platform to promote UK business. There will be a series of sector events—including the annual Global Investment Conference—designed to promote UK capability and attract high value inward investment, generating 300 investment leads and involving outreach to over 3,000 UK companies. We are developing a digital exhibition of UK innovation, along with plans for a physical exhibition of UK excellence in engineering and manufacture. The Embassy itself will become a legacy project; we plan to set it up at future global events such as Sochi 2014, the Brazil World Cup 2014 and the Rio 2016 Olympics.

Mark Prisk has indicated that he would also be very happy to discuss these and other plans with the Committee if you wish.

I attach a brief note which sets out FCO plans as they stand to engage in the run up to London 2012, and a grid highlighting some examples of events, including proposals with a commercial focus planned in our priority countries. This grid will be further updated and expanded over the coming weeks. We will be very happy to share the final version with you.

The Green Agenda

Frank Roy asked if there had been a change of emphasis on the green agenda under the new Government, and whether we had scaled down plans to use London 2012 to highlight green issues. I can reassure the Committee that this is not the case. We are very proud that British expertise has made 2012 what will undoubtedly be the greenest Olympics ever. We discussed during the evidence session the ‘Going for Green’ film. It will be shown worldwide to an audience which may be as high as 300 million. Our grid of planned activity at Posts includes a number of events aimed at making use of this film. I will launch it this week when I visit Mexico.

The film not only describes the incredible work already completed, but points to what is still to come. For example, it tells the story of how after Games time the Park will be the largest new area of urban parkland in Europe for one hundred years, and it highlights plans to convert athlete accommodation to affordable housing.

Our ‘See Britain’ short films, currently being promoted on the web and shown at our Posts around the world have a significant ‘green’ element. One already released features Brazilian architect Lucelia Rodrigues, who talks passionately about sustainable building practices in the UK; while another has South African environmental campaigner Polly Courtice describing the UK as at the forefront of action to combat climate change. Our Posts are also lobbying hard for a successful outcome at Cancun and regularly promote green issues at their events and receptions. Again, I will be doing this myself in Mexico this week.

I look forward to continued close contact with you as the excitement and opportunity of the Games draw closer.

23 November 2010


The FCO has identified 32 priority posts with the potential to deliver major gains in key policy areas, namely
— Security (including counter-terrorism, MEPP and Af-Pak).
— Prosperity (included are the 12 posts identified by HMG as commercial priority posts).
— National Interest (democracy, human rights, international law and other British values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commercial Priority posts</th>
<th>Other priority posts</th>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
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<td>India</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>Chile</td>
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These Posts will receive the lion’s share of support. They have been selected based on the following factors:

- UKTI priority markets.
- New FCO priorities (Global Economics Group analyses, Foreign Secretary speeches); top ally / United Nations Security Council member/BRICS.
- Countries that form part of the British Council’s 2012-related *International Inspiration* programme.
- Low perception of the UK on the Gallup poll and ‘Anholt’ Nation Brand Index.
- Priority country for other FCO campaigns (climate change, Middle East, Prevent/CT).
- Upcoming hosts for major sporting events.
- Top 10 in terms of tourist numbers and inward investment to the UK.

**Ensuring Posts Deliver**

**Strategy Development**

Our Posts’ strategies are well developed, but not yet finalised in all cases. We expect to have a full 18-month plan by the New Year and will share it with the FAC then if required. Meanwhile, we attach a grid showing firm plans for activity in our priority Posts for the next nine months.

**Cross Government Co-ordination**

We are working closely with other government departments to co-ordinate our resources, channels and assets and ensure joined up activity on the ground. On 10 November, Number 10 is chaired a meeting for FCO and partners to agree a more defined strategy.

**Funding**

Work on the Olympics has been subject to the marketing and advertising freeze. We are confident that Olympics related activity will be seen as critical to delivering the coalition’s international objectives for the Olympics and that the freeze will be relaxed in some way when it is reviewed in April. We have already secured a partial unfreezing to allow the production of branded ‘toolkit’ material. The emphasis will continue to be on no or low cost ways of working, however.

**Going Forward**

More parts of our activity will come into alignment in the next few months. We have two new initiatives in which Posts—priority and non-priority—will be able to get involved: an international photo-competition and touring ‘innovations exhibition’ showing British high-tech gadgetry.

This month staff will receive an ‘Olympics toolkit’—a series of images and slogans that they can use on posters, websites, t- shirts, badges etc.

In December we will launch an internal communication drive to push 2012 to the top of senior managers’ minds across the network.

By the end of the year we will produce a travel plan for our See Britain Ambassadors so that every one of our 32 priority posts hosts a visit in 2011.

**Priority Posts—planned activity for London 2012 public diplomacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November 2010</th>
<th>December 2010</th>
<th>January 2011</th>
<th>February 2011</th>
<th>March 2011—500 days to go</th>
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<tr>
<td>New See Britain Film launched.</td>
<td>New See Britain Film launched.</td>
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<td>New See Britain Film launched. Posted on all post websites.</td>
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<td>Posted on all post websites.</td>
<td>Posted on all post websites.</td>
<td>Posted on all post websites.</td>
<td>Posted on all post websites.</td>
<td>All priority posts are arranging some kind of event: switching on of countdown clocks, receptions, locally placed press articles.</td>
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<td>Launch of Going for Green film.</td>
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<td>Month</td>
<td>November 2010</td>
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<td><strong>Prosperity</strong></td>
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<td>Pretoria/Jo'burg: Stay on for Sport tourism promotion:—</td>
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<td>Lebanese Parliamentarians’ Evening: theme Paralympics</td>
<td>Lord Mayor’s visit to Turkey (opportunities for trade promotion)</td>
<td>Lebanese HMA shows Going for Green film at the British Lebanese Business Group monthly followed by Q&amp;A session.</td>
<td>Moscow: hosting with UKTI “Ecological Urbanism” conference with presentations from British innovators. Audience is Russian developers, construction companies and senior government officials.</td>
<td>Johannesberg: CEO Sainsbury’s visit. (on the board of LOCOG and Sainsbury’s is one of the main sponsors of the Paralympics.)</td>
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<td>Beirut Marathon—Press and Conference with Edward Maalouf (Lebanese Paralympist taking part in London 2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Security</strong></td>
<td>Lebanon—Beirut Marathon—Press and Conference with Edward Maalouf (Lebanese Paralympist taking part in London 2012)</td>
<td>Lebanon “International Day for Disabled Persons” event in cooperation with Lebanese Paralympic Committee.</td>
<td>Indonesia: Football match with the Indonesian Sports and Youth Ministry.</td>
<td>Brasilia: “The UK and Brazil—Partnership through Sport”: Sports conference led by Foreign Secretary or Prime Minister Launch of Paralympic Exhibition at side-event during UK-Brazil high level sports conference. Exhibition then to go on a roadshow to 5 Brazilian regional capitals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Interest</strong></td>
<td>Buenos Aires—First Green Endurance Racing Car tours South America. Platform for promoting “Green Olympics”. Moscow: show See Britain films at UK Film Festival in Moscow and 5th International Disability Film Festival. New York: Navy destroyer HMS Daring in port. Consulate event highlighting UK-US links in the arts to audience of entertainment business executives/stars.</td>
<td>Canada—EU Film Festival. Will showcase See Britain short films</td>
<td>Mexico: “Going for Green” screening at the Cancun Climate Change Summit at the business pavilion. Moscow: Press tour to UK demonstrating how London is preparing for the Olympics.</td>
<td>Canada First anniversary of Vancouver Winter Games February 2011—using this high profile event to showcase the London 2012, the next Olympic event.</td>
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**December 2010**

- Berlin: "Parliamentarians’ Evening: theme Paralympics"
- Lebanon: “International Day for Disabled Persons” event in cooperation with Lebanese Paralympic Committee.
- Indonesia: Football match with the Indonesian Sports and Youth Ministry.
- Canada—EU Film Festival. Will showcase See Britain short films.
- Mexico: “Going for Green” screening at the Cancun Climate Change Summit at the business pavilion.
- Moscow: Press tour to UK demonstrating how London is preparing for the Olympics.

**January 2011**

- Lord Mayor’s visit to Turkey (opportunities for trade promotion).
- Lebanese HMA shows Going for Green film at the British Lebanese Business Group monthly followed by Q&A session.
- Moscow: hosting with UKTI “Ecological Urbanism” conference with presentations from British innovators. Audience is Russian developers, construction companies and senior government officials.
- Johannesberg: CEO Sainsbury’s visit. (on the board of LOCOG and Sainsbury’s is one of the main sponsors of the Paralympics.)

**February 2011**

- Moscow: 24 page colour supplement magazine with the Moscow Times celebrating the “special relationship” born of the London 2012 Summer Games/ Sochi 2014 Winter Games.
- Brasilia: “The UK and Brazil—Partnership through Sport”: Sports conference led by Foreign Secretary or Prime Minister Launch of Paralympic Exhibition at side-event during UK-Brazil high level sports conference. Exhibition then to go on a roadshow to 5 Brazilian regional capitals.
- Tehran: Sports Relief Charity Run in cooperation with an Iranian charity and aimed at highlighting Iranian Paralympians in the Iranian press.
- Lebanon: Sport Relief Run for the disabled. Event with Lebanese Olympians and Paralympians athletes and 1–2 schools.
- Dubai: Charity run hosted jointly with Arab satellite TV giant Al-Arabiya.
- Germany—Visit Britain London 2012 promotion at Berlin International Trade Fair.
- France: 3rd March: Women’s day—“Empowering women”. Embassy and the Chamber of Commerce will hold an event at the Residence. Dame Ellen MacArthur should be present.
- Japan: “London 2012—beyond 2012 to a sustainable future” an event to highlight the sustainable nature of the Olympic site.
- Seoul: HMA hosted reception with Dr Moon Dae-Sung (an IOC member and a former Taekwondo star).
Ev 42  Foreign Affairs Committee: Evidence

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<td>New See Britain Film launched. Posted on all post websites.</td>
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<td>New See Britain Film launched. Posted on all post websites.</td>
<td>Continuation of See Britain Film launches.</td>
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Prosperity
VIP to visit Riyadh. May meet Saudi athletes preparing for games.

Security
Amman: The Road from Jordan to London—highlighting the personal stories of Jordanian athletes who are preparing for London 2012.
Tehran—Short film evening—utilising See Britain footage and Going for Green. Riyadh—British Muslim athletes perform pilgrimage and train with their Saudi counterparts.

National Interest
Buenos Aires: Green Film Festival featuring Going for Green documentary. Also will send delegation of journalists to London.
New York: 1 year to go—High level function. CG to host an event at the New York Armory to coincide with the Royal Shakespeare Company.
Sydney/Canberra: One year to go—Participation/speech by High Commissioner at the Australian Olympic Committee fundraising event. A British-themed dinner for several hundred hosted by AOC.
Seoul: Embassy, Visit Britain and SBS will launch a TV campaign. Film will be made by SBS film crews visiting London and Olympic sites.
Jo’burg: The race to London—staff and contacts to complete the distance to London. Participants to log their gym time/distances (be in the pool, on the treadmill, exercise bike or similar). Message linked to the legacy ambition to get more people active, even if only a little each day.

Written evidence from Lord Bates of Langbaurgh

I was delighted to note that the Foreign Affairs Committee had launched a timely review of Foreign & Commonwealth Office Public Diplomacy surrounding the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The FCO’s web-site right states that London 2012 is a “Once in a generation opportunity” and that the “London Olympic Games will focus the world’s attention on Britain.” This is true, but the evidence presented suggested that there are currently some serious oversights on aspects of the public diplomacy preparations for the Games. Your oral evidence session on 10 November highlighted many of these as did the written submission of the FCO, however I want to focus my evidence to the committee on one particular aspect of the Olympic Games which was not mentioned—The Olympic Truce.

Next year, Lord Coe, as Chairman of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom and the International Olympic Committee will move the formal adoption of the Olympic Truce for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games before the United Nations General Assembly.
The wording of the Truce will be based on the first UN Olympic Truce Resolution (A/RES/48/11) and urges: “all Member States to take the initiative to abide by the Truce, individually and collectively, and to pursue in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations the peaceful settlement of all international conflicts.”

If past experience is to be repeated then the London 2012—Olympic Truce Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly will be immediately signed by all 193 member states of the United Nations and the universally ignored. Leaving aside the ethical questions as to whether the UK Government should be proposing or signing a UN Resolution which it has absolutely no intention, as it stand, of abiding by I am more concerned about the missed opportunity this represents to challenge negative aspects of the UK’s reputation abroad emanating from some recent military engagements.

By being the first Host Government of the Olympic Games in the modern era of the Games to take the Truce seriously, I believe that there is an opportunity to:

1. Enhance Britain’s reputation and standing in the international community;
2. Pursue the aims of the National Security Strategy to “Tackle the causes of conflict” and to focus resources on conflict prevention as stated by the prime minister in his statement to the House of Commons on the national Security & Defence Review when he said on 19 October col 798 of the official report:
   “We must get better at treating the causes of instability, not just dealing with the consequences, When we fail to prevent conflict and have to resort to military intervention the costs, are always far higher.”
3. Enhance security surrounding the Games: whilst in no way lowering our guard, it would seem logical that if the UK Government declares its intention to ensure that the London 2012 Games are the first in which the Truce will be taken seriously and that this will be accompanied by humanitarian rather than military interventions in the most conflict affected parts of the world, then even if it reduces the extreme threat level by just one or two degrees then that would seem an initiative worth taking.

The wording of the London 2012 Olympic Truce is currently been worked on jointly by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Department of Culture Media and Sport with the International Team at the FCO taking the lead—as I understand it. Given that this is the case I found the fact that in the 49 points offered to the Committee by the FCO on preparations for London 2012 not one referred to the Olympic Truce. Nor was this mentioned by Jeremy Browne in his evidence. I believe that this is a significant missed opportunity.

When I initiated a debate on the Olympic Truce in the House of Lords on 11 October, 2010 the minister, Baroness Rawlings said in response:

“The Government take the truce very seriously and will be taking measures to make sure it is properly observed and promoted in relation to the 2012 London Olympic & Paralympic Games.” (Hansard col. 368)

By way of background: Today the Olympic Truce is seen as symbolic act accompanied by a flag outside the Olympic Stadium and a peace wall inside the Olympic village, but that was not always the case. At the outset of the Ancient Olympic Games the Truce was not symbolic but scared.

In 776 BC the Greek King Iphitos frustrated at the perpetual state of war consulted the Oracle at Delphi who proposed a sporting competition every four years which would have as its aim the bringing together the military and political leaders in one place where they could seek to resolve their differences peacefully and athletes competed together as Olympians rather than citizens of a city state.

The Sacred Truce was remarkably successful: The ancient Olympics ran for 1168 years until they were ended by the Romans in AD394. During that time violations of the Truce were extremely rare.

By contrast In the 116 years of the Modern Olympiad the Games have had to be cancelled three times due to war, have experienced major boycotts five times and been the focal point of terrorist attacks twice.

In ancient Greece they stopped fighting to take part in the Games, in the Modern era we stop the Games in order to keep fighting. What is it that we have lost in 3,000 years of civilisation that makes even today the notion that combatants may exercise restraint during a period of Truce such a distant dream?

Of course, there are major differences and these should be acknowledged:

The ancient Games the athletes competed together as “Olympians” rather than as representatives’ of any city or nation state. This ideal is reflected in the opening and closing ceremonies of the modern Games where athletes enter the stadium in their national teams at the start of the Games, but enter together as “Olympians” for the closing ceremony.

Many of the conflicts happening around the world today are civil conflicts and involve non-state actors. Given that the non-state actors are by definition not members of the United Nations and as such not signatories to the UN Resolution.

In the ancient Games the Truce was sacred because the Games were held on neutral and sacred ground at the Temple of Zeus, Olympia, which was like a combination between Wembly Stadium and Westminster...
Abbey and athletes assumed an appropriate reverence in their conduct. Today the Games are invariably awarded to political nation States and far from being a unifying force, diverse religious beliefs can be a barrier.

Given these substantial differences between the Modern and Ancient Games it is understandable that the Olympic Truce has been found to be politically too hot to handle and therefore downgrade to a symbolic gesture to our ancient forebears, my question is simply to ask, could it be something more than that. Not sacred, not symbolic but perhaps serious.

What does a serious Truce look like in the modern context?

The first change which would be required for the Olympic Truce to be taken seriously would be for the responsibility for its implementation to be taken by governments and the United Nations rather than athletes and organisers. In the past governments have willingly put their names to the Olympic Truce Resolution but then take two rather large steps forward and insisted that it is the responsibility of the Organising Committee and the Olympic Committee to acknowledge the Truce. LOCOG have a huge responsibility to deliver a world-class sporting event and the athletes are focussed on making sure that they are at the peak of their performance. Only governments have access to the full range of political and diplomatic levers which will need to be pulled in order to move from a symbolic to a serious Truce.

The second change which is necessary for the Truce to be taken seriously would be for the diplomatic planning of the Truce to be commenced at least two years in advance of the Games rather than a few months, which has recently been the norm. These are highly complex negotiations, the equal of an inter-governmental conference, and need to be given an equivalent time and resource. That is why there is, in my view, a narrow window of opportunity to convince the government of the merits of the case for Truce. If Lord Coe’s proposition of the Truce at the UN General Assembly next year is not accompanied by a public and tangible declaration of the support by the UK government then the prospects for success are all but eliminated.

Third, the attention needs to be shifted beyond the Truce as an institution to the Truce as an instrument. When the guns fall silent then the voices of reason can be heard above the bomb and the bullet and when the guns stop then the delivery of vital humanitarian aid can start. Here we have an inspirational and topical example to draw upon:

Jeremy Gilley, a British documentary producer who began a campaign in 1997 to get the international community through the United Nations to advance a one day of global peace—the campaign is called “Peace One Day” www.peaceoneday.org. In 2001 that campaign was endorsed unanimously by the United Nations, like the Olympic Truce and was proposed by the British Government. In 2007–08 and 2009 Peace One Day brokered a one day truce in Afghanistan between warring factions including the Taliban and the result was to allow health workers from UNICEF, WHO, UNAMA and other agencies to move into hitherto unreachable areas due to violent conflict and immunize 4.5 million children against polio—it is an utterly inspiring story and it shows what can be possible through a period of Truce.

Some may look upon the Truce as dangerous and naïve, but I would counter that the opposite is actually the case. The Truce obliges the signatory only to “pursue initiatives for peace and reconciliation,” if other parties, state or non-state do not accept the offer then we are under no obligation to hold to it ourselves. A Truce is an agreement between two or more warring parties—no agreement, no Truce.

Finally, I believe there are some reasons why London as Host City for the Games would be ideally placed to be the first to embrace the Truce in the modern era of the Olympics:

First, London is without doubt the most ethnically diverse city ever to host the Games, a true crossroads of the world, and is also one which bears the scars of the aerial bombardments in WWI and WWII, and terrorist attacks in the name of Irish Republicanism and Muslim fundamentalism—most recently and most deadly being the July 7th bombings of 2005 claiming 52 lives and injuring 700 which came the day after it was announced that London had been awarded the Games. It is the only city to have hosted the Games three times and it was the place of the first Paralympic Games (then called the International Wheelchair Games) in 1946. It is also the place where the world came together in 1946 for the First General Assembly of the United Nations in Methodist Central Hall and the first meeting of the United Nations Security Council. It is the place of the Downing Street Declaration. It has played host to the Live Aid Concert which drew an international response to the famine in Ethiopia and to the Live 8 concert and the jubilee campaign for debt forgiveness.

I believe that the Olympic Truce, as originally intended, could be a powerful force in the public diplomacy efforts of the FCO.

25 November 2010