



British Embassy
Brussels



BELGO-BRITISH CONFERENCE 2013 – COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

“HISTORY AND RECONCILIATION: ENGAGING A NEW GENERATION”



HEADLINE COMMS:

Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders and UK Minister for Europe David Lidington gave media interviews in Lancaster House, with mentions of the Belgo-British Conference and comments on the First World War Centenary carried in news outlets reaching an audience of over 1 million readers. On digital engagement, in the week of the Conference, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague and Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders tweeted to each other for congratulations on the UK-Belgium shared Nobel Physics Prize. Tweets about the Conference by the Embassy @UKinBelgium, @BelgiumMFA, @be_British (Council), UK Minister for Europe, Belgian Foreign Minister, and PM's Special Rep on First World War Commemorations and #BelgoBrit participants reached external audiences of over 60,000 Twitter followers. The Conference was also highlighted on the British and Belgian Embassy facebook pages, as well as on the UK Government website.

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COMMS ACTION TAKEN :

BEFORE

- British Ambassador to Belgium **wrote article on the Belgo-British Conference** which was published as the Ambassador's monthly column for *The Bulletin* at the start of October;
- British Embassy, British Council and Belgian MFA **tweeted ahead of Conference** – UKinBelgium tweeted to all participants as well as promoting the UK Ambassador's "scene-setter" article published in The Bulletin;
- Ahead of bilateral meeting, UK Foreign Secretary **@WilliamJHague** tweeted to Belgian Foreign Minister **@DReynders** to congratulate on Nobel Physics Prize for the UK's Peter Higgs and Belgium's François Englert;
- British Embassy Brussels **published Conference programme** on Embassy website with hashtag **#BelgoBrit** and **updated Wikipedia entry**;

DURING

- **Belgian Foreign Minister** Didier Reynders and **UK Minister for Europe** David Lidington gave **media interviews** in Lancaster House, with mentions of the Belgo-British Conference and comments on the First World War Centenary carried in news outlets with an audience of **over 1 million readers**;
- On Twitter, **@UKinBelgium engaged with UK Minister for Europe, Belgian Foreign Minister,** and the **Prime Minister's Special Representative** for First World War Centenary Commemorations, amplifying messages in the digital sphere;
- The **three Ministers** tweeted about the Conference and retweeted messages and photos from @UKinBelgium reaching audiences of **over 60,000 Twitter followers**
- Foreign Minister **Didier Reynders highlighted digital diplomacy and Twitter engagement in his welcome speech**;
- Participants with twitter accounts **tweeted about the Conference with #BelgoBrit**, in line with the Chatham House Rule;
- **Top tweets** from **@DLidington @DReynders @MurrisonMP @DanielFiott @DaveSinardet @LordMcConnell @NatashaLipman @be_British (Council) @UKinBelgium @DeHavillandEU @CentenaryNews @BritishFuture**
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office Photographer **took photos of the Conference** which were **promoted via UK Foreign Office, British Embassy and Belgian Embassy digital channels**;
- Conference **issued a question on First World War history and reconciliation for the BBC Telenet Speaking Awards**.

AFTER

- **Uploaded photos of the Conference** on the British Embassy and Belgian Embassy facebook pages and British Embassy published an **article about the Conference on the UK Government website**;
- **Finalised Belgo-British Conference 2013 report** for publication on Embassy website, with cross-promotion via digital channels.

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