



## Parliamentary Seminar on the Western Balkans 10 – 12 September 2018 UK Parliament

### PROGRAMME

#### Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September

11.30 – 12.30      **Tour of Parliament**

12.30 – 13.45      **Welcome Lunch**

14.00 – 14.30      **Registration of Seminar Delegates**

14.30 – 15.00      **Keynote Address**

15.00 – 16.30      **SESSION 1:      Parliamentary Perspectives on the Summit**

This session will allow for an overview of the 2018 Western Balkans Summit in London, hearing from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office on the main outcomes from the Summit as well as areas for follow-up. This will be followed by a discussion amongst parliamentarians on their own perceptions and views on the Summit.

16.30 – 18.00      **SESSION 2: Parliamentary Engagement with the Berlin Process**

This session will look at the role which can be played by parliamentarians in engaging with the Berlin Process and the annual Western Balkans Summits. This will include an overview of the UK's extensive committee work on the region and move on to a discussion of participating parliaments' engagement to date. Ways forward for an increased parliamentary role will be considered, alongside the main challenges to effective engagement.

18.30 – 20.00      **Welcome Reception**

*End of Day One*



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Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September

09.30 – 11.00

### **SESSION 3: Democratisation in the Western Balkans**

This session will focus on the shared challenges and priorities facing the Western Balkans with regards to democratic processes and what the 'missing gaps' are in each parliament's path towards EU accession. Participants will reflect upon their own role as parliamentarians and consider how parliaments - as democratic institutions – can be a driving force for change. This will include a consideration of legislative gaps, policy direction and effective scrutiny of the Executive, and ways forward to ensure that reforms are sustainable and deep-rooted within society.

11.00 – 11.30

*Tea & Coffee Break*

11.30 – 13.00

### **SESSION 4: Strengthening Rule of Law & Anti-Corruption Measures**

This session will focus on what has been noted by the EU Commission as one of the largest obstacles to EU accession for the region. Parliamentarians will be asked to share their experiences on this and note what their respective parliaments are doing to ensure that their governments follow through with commitments made during the London Summit. Legislative gaps and the role of parliamentary scrutiny will be highlighted, as well as a sharing of good practice on how reforms and attitudinal changes become entrenched within societies and are not merely tokenistic.

13.00 – 14.30

**Lunch Reception**

14.30 – 16.00

### **SESSION 5: Parliament & Inclusive Politics**

This session will focus on the need for inclusive politics and inclusive parliaments, with a particular focus on women and young people. Good practice and experiences will be shared by parliamentarians on ensuring access to political processes for all and that parliamentarians themselves reflect the make-up of the societies they represent. This will lead on to a discussion on the need for inclusion not just at the political level, but also at the economic and social level, with a focus on anti-discrimination measures and the necessary legislation.



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16.00 – 16.30

*Tea & Coffee Break*

16.30 – 18.00

**SESSION 6: Parliament & Civil Society**

This session will look at the vital role played by civil society and how parliamentary engagement with civil society can be mutually beneficial to push reform and strengthen democratic institutions. Through the use of case studies from civil society actors within the region, the role of advocacy, research and cooperation will be highlighted to show how civil society can and should fit in within democratic structures.

*End of Day Two*



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Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September

09.30 – 11.00

### **SESSION 7: Regional Economic Cooperation**

This session will consider the main outcomes from the London Summit with regards to economic cooperation, both within the region and with the region and the rest of Europe. There will be a consideration of what role parliaments can play in promoting and nurturing economic links, as well as a discussion on current challenges faced, especially with regards to the digital economy and mobilising young people to counter youth unemployment and youth migration. This will build upon the previous session on the rule of law and anti-corruption.

11.00 – 11.30

*Tea & Coffee Break*

11.30 – 13.00

### **SESSION 8: Regional Security Cooperation**

This session will look at the main commitments made during the London Summit with regards to security cooperation and the fight against organised crime and people trafficking. The role of parliamentarians in facilitating information sharing will be highlighted, as well as gaps in legislation which could strengthen parliamentary oversight on this from a national and regional context.

13.00 – 14.00

**Lunch Break**

14.00 – 15.00

### **SESSION 9: Regional Cooperation to Promote Fair & Humane Migration**

This session will consider the impact of the refugee crisis and migration flows coming into the Western Balkans and the need for a coordinated response, both from the region and also from other European countries. Challenges and solutions will be discussed, with importance being placed on the human impact of the crisis and the role of parliamentarians to shape a positive narrative.



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### **SESSION 10: Maintaining Political Will for Legacy Issues and Ways Forwards**

This session will focus on the need for sustained political will and political action to deal with legacy issues, such as missing persons, and also with the various reforms needed on the path to EU accession. This will also allow for a discussion on what parliamentarians intend to do to ensure that pressure is applied on their governments to carry through with commitments made during the London Summit and also for areas of cooperation and collaboration to be discussed amongst parliamentarians.

16.30 – 17.30

### **SESSION 11: Capitalising on Soft Power**

This session will explore the impact soft power can have both from a domestic and global perspective. How parliamentarians can promote cultural and economic successes will be looked at, as well as how best to engage positively with the media and how these successes can be built upon to positively impact investment, tourism and influence on the global scene.

*End of Seminar*