



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 16 JUNE 2010
DIANE ABBOTT HEADS UP NEW CROSS-PARTY RACE EQUALITY GROUP

Diane Abbott was today elected chair of the newly re-established All Party Parliamentary Group on Race and Community – Westminster's only dedicated cross-party group focused on issues of race equality.

Deputy Lib Dem leader Simon Hughes and Conservative peer Lord Sheikh also attended the first meeting of the group today in the House of Commons, as well as former ministers David Lammy, Jim Fitzpatrick and Meg Hillier. Thirteen parliamentarians attended in total.

The group – which has until now been inactive since 2005 – expressed its commitment to drawing attention to race inequalities in the UK and highlighted right-wing extremism, islamophobia, education and implementation of the Equality Act as possible areas of focus over the coming year.

Runnymede – the UK's leading race equality think tank – will act as the secretariat of the group and has been working to re-establish the group since the start of the year.

Commenting, the group's chair Diane Abbott said: "I'm delighted that the All Party Parliamentary Group on Race and Community has been successfully re-established. Too often the topic of race falls to the bottom of the political agenda, so going forward as a group we will work together to draw attention to race equality issues in the UK"

Other attendees to today's AGM included Conservative MPs Peter Bottomley, Richard Fuller and Gavin Barwell, and the former Chief Executive of the Commission for Race Equality Lord Ouseley. Runnymede founder Lord Lester also attended, along with new MP Kate Green and Labour peers Baroness Howells and Lord Dubs.

Notes to editors

1) For further information please email Vicki Butler at vicki@runnymedetrust.org or call 07534 929275

2) The purpose of the APPG on Race and Community is

“To increase the coverage of race equality issues in parliament; to update members on race equality issues and up-to date research; and to connect the group with race equality organizations”.

3) Runnymede is acting as the group’s secretariat. Runnymede is a social policy research organisation focused on race equality and race relations. We work by:

- Investigating challenges to race equality and good race relations
- Enabling effective action for social change
- Influencing policy at all levels through providing thought leadership and robust evidence

Further information is available on our website: <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/>

4) Members of the APPG on Race and Community are as follows:

Group Officers

- Chair: Diane Abbott MP (Labour)
- Vice Chair: Lord Lester (Liberal Democrat)
- Vice Chair: Lord Sheikh (Conservative)
- Vice Chair: David Lammy MP (Labour)
- Vice Chair: Lord Adebawale (Cross-bench)

Group Members

- Lord Avebury (Liberal Democrat)
- Gavin Barwell MP (Conservative)
- Luciana Berger MP (Labour)
- Peter Bottomley MP (Conservative)
- Baroness Coussins (Cross-bench)
- Lord Dholakia (Liberal Democrat)
- Lord Dubs (Labour)
- Jim Fitzpatrick MP (Labour)
- Richard Fuller MP (Conservative)
- Kate Green MP (Labour)
- Meg Hillier MP (Labour)
- Baroness Howells of St Davids (Labour)
- Simon Hughes MP (Liberal Democrat)
- Lord Hunt of Wirral (Conservative)
- Lord Ouseley (Cross-bench)
- Lord Parekh (Labour)
- Baroness Prashar (Cross-bench)
- Jonathan Reynolds MP (Labour)
- Gary Streeter MP (Conservative)
- Paul Uppal MP (Conservative)
- Keith Vaz MP (Labour)