



Dear Colleague,

We're making good progress in preparing the DSA conference for 2004. As you know, this is a one-day conference, to be held on Saturday 6 November, at Central Hall, Westminster, a magnificent venue across the road from Westminster Abbey. The theme is **Bridging Research and Policy**, reflecting the special vocation of the two organisers, DFID and ODI. There will be two plenary sessions and as many as 21 workshops, along with a market-place of publishers' and other stalls, including, we hope, handicrafts and fair trade products. We intend this to be, and it will be, an exciting 'gathering of the clan', from all around the UK. On past experience, at the LSE and at the University of Greenwich, the DSA one-day conferences are a sell-out, attracting many postgraduates, as well as a diverse audience of researchers and policy-makers. Attendance this year will be limited to 400.

The two plenaries will feature speakers with experience across the research and policy spectrum: Masood Ahmed, currently the Director-General of DFID, formerly with both the World Bank and the IMF, and one of the key instigators of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers; Matthew Taylor, formerly Director of the Institute of Public Policy Research, and now with the Prime Minister's policy team in Downing Street; N.C. Saxena, a well-known academic and former Secretary of the Planning Commission in the Government of India; and (to be confirmed) Frances Cairncross, Chair of the Economic and Social Research Council and a senior editor on the Economist.

The workshops will be prepared over the coming months and will be policy-focused. We hope that each will feature speakers from the different DSA communities - researchers, NGOs and practitioners.

More details about the conference can be found on our web site at: www.devstud.org.uk/events/annual_conf.htm. Further information, registration forms and flyers will be sent shortly, but in the meantime please see the enclosed letter from Julius Court inviting proposals to coordinate workshop sessions.

Finally, I really want to emphasise that this is not intended as a London-only event. Last time, a number of universities brought coachloads down for the day. There are details of accommodation options on the website, for those who would like to stay overnight on Friday or Saturday; and we're hoping to be able to put out of town visitors in touch with people in London who might be able to offer accommodation.

I really hope you will come.

With best wishes

Simon Maxwell
DSA President