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Transcript

Chatham House Prize 2010: Award Ceremony

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Robin Niblett:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take the opportunity in this, our ninetieth anniversary year, to also express the institute's gratitude to Her Majesty the Queen for her work as our patron; to thank all members of The Royal Family for their support of the institute, and to acknowledge the central role that Her Majesty plays in our nation's good standing in the world.

Your Majesty's patronage is of immense value to the institute; to be associated with your international reputation confers a vital endorsement which we strive constantly to merit through our work. The evolution of the Chatham House Prize since its inauguration in 2005 stands as a perfect example, the participation of Her Majesty and members of The Royal Family is as deeply appreciated by the recipients of the Prize as it is by all who have attended these events.

Indeed a pattern has emerged whereby leading political figures, diplomats and business leaders travel to London with the Prize winner for meetings with their UK counterparts. The award has therefore become part of the fabric of the UK's deepening relations with the nations whose leaders have won the Prize.

Building deeper levels of trust and recognition of mutual interest between states, as well as improving public and political understanding of the changing dynamics of international affairs, have been central objectives of the institute ever since its founding in 1920 and the granting of the Royal Charter in 1926.

And so to acknowledge this long standing connection between the institute and the patronage we have been so fortunate to receive from The Royal Family, we have compiled a book containing a short history of the parallel lives in an international context at least, of the Royal Institute of International Affairs and The Royal Family.

The book describes the early discussions of the Versailles Peace Treaty negotiations in Paris in 1919 that led to the founding of the British Institute of International Affairs, the granting of the Royal Charter by King George V in 1926, and the war time bravery of the staff who followed the examples set by King George V and his family, who stayed in London throughout the Blitz to keep the institute running, and contribute to the war effort.

It also charts how Her Majesty, along with the institute, confronted significant international developments in the latter half of the 20th century and the first half of the twenty first, including the move to independence by the former

colonies of the British Empire, the emergence of the Commonwealth, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the rise of new threats following the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001, and the struggle to build a better future following the global financial crisis of 2008, 2009.

The book also notes those special occasions where Her Majesty and other members of The Royal Family have addressed members of the institute or participated in our events.

Your Majesty, we are deeply grateful for your patronage of the institute, we hope you will accept this small token of our appreciation from the members of staff, from the Council, and from all the members of Chatham House.