

Cross-Party Group on International Development

Tuesday 11th March 2025, 6:00pm, Queensberry House

Minute

Present

MSPs

Sarah Boyack MSP (in person)
Maggie Chapman MSP (online)

Invited guests

Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS), Blantyre, Malawi
Professor Sosten Chiotha, Chairperson of KUHeS Council; Prof. Macpherson Mallewa, Vice Chancellor; Dr Belinda Gombachika - Deputy Vice Chancellor; Mr Christopher Namagowa, Registrar; Dr Benjamin Kumwenda, Director of Student Affairs (Scottish Government Projects' Lead)
Malawi Government:
Justice Thokozani Agnes Patemba, Malawi Deputy High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

Non-MSP Group Members

In person:

Malena Allen-Bernad; Attie Black; Stuart Brown; Georgina Cairns; Moira Dunworth; Samadhi Fernando; Patrick Grady; Barry Klaassen; Ross Macnab; Ian Mitchell; Samuel Molyneux; Chad Morse; Christopher Namagowa; Dorothea Nelson; Elaine Pritchard; Hannah Raymond; Elise Reed; Morven Ross; Nasim Vadalia; Andy Waters

Online:

Aron Cronin; Linda Dembo; Paul Garside; Chrissie Gausi; Frances Guy; Chrissie Hirst; Patrick Jeremy Likongwe; Gemma Love; Alexandra Mackay; Alastair Murray; Maria Mwale; Vivenne Wallace; Emma Wood

Apologies

None

Agenda:

- 1) Opening remarks by the Chair Sarah Boyack, MSP

The Chair welcomed all those attending and covered some housekeeping points. The meeting had been arranged as a joint meeting between the Cross-Party Group on Malawi, of which Sarah is a vice-chair, and the CPG on International Development, which she chairs.

- 2) Remarks by Professor Sosten Chiotha, Chairperson of Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS) Council

Prof Chiotha thanked the CPG and other stakeholders in Scotland for their warm welcome. He has recently been appointed to his role as Chairperson of the KUHeS Council.

- 3) Introduction of KUHeS delegation by Professor. Macpherson Mallewa, Vice Chancellor.

Prof Mallwella introduced the delegation.

- 4) Historical background presentation by Professor. Macpherson Mallewa, Vice Chancellor.

Prof Mallwella's presentation covered the historical background of KUHeS and its predecessor institutions and their relationship with Scotland, which stretches back beyond the current partnership arrangements; previous projects supported by the Scottish Government; the current Strategic Partnership Grant; and key achievements of the partnership.

- 5) Strategic Partnership Grant presentation by Dr Benjamin Kumwenda, Director of Student Affairs (Scottish Government Projects' Lead)

Dr Kumwenda spoke in more detail about the Scottish Government's Strategic Partnership Grant, which aims to "enhance[e] KUHeS' capacity to effectively deliver its mandate through improved governance, academic excellence, and research capabilities, ultimately leading to better health outcomes in Malawi and Zambia." The grant is worth £500,000 per year for five years from 1st April 2024, and will continue to support MalDent, Governance, the Blantyre-Blantyre Lab and Monitoring Evaluation Research and Learning (MERL).

The full presentation by the delegation can be found at [Scottish-Strategic-Partnership-11-March-2025.pdf](#)

- 6) Q & A session

Questions on the gender balance of the student/graduate dentist cohort, and efforts to retain graduates within Malawi to work and for further studies. There was also discussion about the impact of the Blantyre-Blantyre lab beyond Malawi's borders.

7) Remarks by Justice Thokozani Agnes Patemba, Malawi Deputy High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

Justice Patemba reflected on a valuable discussion and thanked all those who participated.

8) Closing remarks by Chair Sarah Boyack, MSP

Sarah Boyack formally closed the meeting and invited those present in-person to enjoy some refreshments.