

# Cross-Party Group on Nuclear Disarmament

15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 1-2pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Bill Kidd  
Paul McLennan  
Mercedes Villalba

Non-MSP Group Members

Janet Fenton, CPG Secretary  
Carol Acutt, SGI  
John Cairns, SCND  
Guy Johnson, DBOTB  
Judith MacDonald, MEDACT  
Emilie McSwiggan, SCND and MEDACT  
David Mackenzie, Nukewatch and TP  
Bill Ramsay, SNP CND  
Richard Outram, NFLA

## Agenda item 1

Bill Kidd welcomed John Cairns, the new Campaign Coordinator for Scottish CND (SCND) to the Cross Party Group.

## Agenda item 2

Minutes from the 21st of September were accepted. (Moved by Carol Acutt, seconded by David Mackenzie.)

## Agenda item 3

3.1 Update on First Meeting of State Parties (1<sup>st</sup> MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in Vienna, 22-24<sup>th</sup> March 2022, including on the Global Parliamentarian's event. Update on ICAN Parliamentarian's Pledge. Bill Kidd plans to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> MSP and will encourage other MSPs to do likewise.

3.2 Update on NPT Review Conference New York, 4-28 January 2022. Bill Kidd will attend and lead a delegation from PNND at the conference. SCND will have a presence. Consideration is to be given to ensuring the UK's illegitimate behaviour in warhead increases and lack of disarmament progress. SCND will be encouraging people to highlight the anniversary of the TPNW during the proceedings at the United Nations.

3.3 Parliamentary motion and Members' Business debate planned for the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January in the Scottish Parliament. This would be during the NPT and would mark the Entry into Force of the TPNW. SCND will be supporting CND UK on their petition on the illegal position of the UK Government.

## Agenda item 4

4.1 CND and Acronym Report on UK Government obligations and opportunities through the TPNW was tabled. This report will be circulated. It provides an opportunity for comment and action on the TPNW. It is also an excellent resource for parliamentarians and civil society.

4.2 CND report to the NPT President about UK non-compliance with NPT obligations, including the tabled petition previously referenced. Emilie reported on the SCND mailout on the 1<sup>st</sup> MSP, encouraging new MSPs to join the CPG and the UN House report on the 1<sup>st</sup> MSP POP.

## Agenda item 5

5.1 Action on divestment and diversification. Update on parliamentary pension funds. Guy reported that Don't Bank on the Bomb (DBOTB) in Scotland is focussed on the Nat West bank with support from 40 civil society groups. Pax Christie Scotland has approached the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) and there is some movement on the parliamentary pension scheme, but it is limited. Baillie Gifford manage the MSP pension scheme. Jenny Olson offered information that Baillie Gifford investment portfolios are not passive and, therefore, invest in companies that meet specific criteria. She is looking further into this detail. Bill Ramsay offered a view that Baillie Gifford are scrutinising investments.

5.2 There is new a Ministry of Defence (MoD) Local Authority and Emergency Services Information (LAESI) document (Edition 12), which re-affirms Scottish responsibilities for off-site responses in regard to nuclear weapon transport. David Mackenzie reported on LAESI, stating that advice given to local authorities about action in the event of a convoys accident from MoD is routinely updated. Nukewatch is still assessing the recently updated advice but can confirm it appears the pattern for Scotland remains the same. For an emergency in Scotland, MoD has responsibility for the reserved aspects of the response, whereas the Scottish Government is responsible for the devolved off-site consequence management response. This would be coordinated by the Scottish Government Resilience Room (SGoRR). The MoD and SG have agreed to work closely in the event of a nuclear weapon convoy emergency. 'Off site consequence' would likely mean plutonium scattered in a five-mile radius of any serious accident. This would be a very

dangerous situation, as we know from the experiences of Australia during their testing regime. Nukewatch is fearful that the Scottish Government does not have a handle on this and that they are hoping it doesn't happen, instead of taking a strong position. Richard Outram reported on the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) webinar. It was agreed that details of the webinar will be circulated to nuclear disarmament CPG members.

5.3 Bill Kidd raised the matter of Brian Larkin (Peace and Justice Scotland) having health issues. The CPG members agreed to send their best wishes to him and his partner Jane Tallents.