

## **CROSS PARTY GROUP: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**24 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 3, SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT**

**5.30PM – 7PM**

### **Attendees:**

Sarah Boyack MSP, Alison Johnstone MSP, Jamie McGrigor MSP, John Mason MSP, Suzanne Fustukian, Fiona Trafton, Shabnum Sarfraz, Fatima Bujina, Rachel Hamada, Eloise Nutbrown, Allison Cosgrove, Cathy Crawford, Fred O'Tieno, Paul Tana, John Kroli, Willis Atie, Chisimphaika Mphande, Colin Pritchard, David Kenvyn, David Stevenson, Jenny Sirens, Pat Bryden, Mark Odnowitz, Esther Wangombe, Liz Bowes, Helen Packwood, Iona McDonald, Daniella Kellerova, Anthony Olowoyeye, Philippa Bonella, Fiona Talcot.

### **Apologies:**

Bruce Crowth MSP, Rt Rev Brian Smith, Carol Finlay, Kevin Simpson, John Francis, Alan Dixon, Elaine Mullan, Callum Henderson, James Trolland, Carol Morton, Murray Tyrrell, Agnes Holmes, Fiona Forsyth, Erin Sheridan, Robert Kallin

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Sarah Boyack MSP opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming to the first cross party group meeting of the 2013/14 session.

Alison Johnstone MSP led a tribute following the sudden death of John Blair-Fish, who was actively involved in and a registered member of the cross party group. Alison spoke of his sheer commitment to international development and his tireless campaigning activities, particularly his involvement in the World Development Movement, the Green Party and other charities. Sarah also expressed her condolences on behalf of her group, acknowledging his activism, hard work and passion.

### **Gillian Wilson, NIDOS Chief Executive**

Gillian also paid tribute to John Blair-Fish and spoke of his achievements as an active campaigner and also for his expertise and involvement in the Edinburgh World Justice Festival.

Gillian provided a short background on the work of NIDOS, network of international development organisations, based in Scotland, and they work toward reducing global poverty and tackling inequality.

NIDOS are actively involved in producing a report which emphasises the importance of shaping a coherent policy on international development in Scotland. The report is timely considering that the Millennium Development Goals are due to expire in 2015 and furthermore, irrespective of whether or not Scotland shall remain within the United Kingdom

following the 2014 referendum, it outlines the importance of Scotland's commitment to tackling global poverty as a priority policy area.

Gillian's presentation outlined the importance of a policy approach being shaped on key values and principles; including equality, coherence, social justice and empowerment.

To view a copy of the presentation in full, please visit - <http://www.sarahboyack.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Scotlands-place-in-a-just-world-presentation-23sep13.ppt>

### **Question and Answer**

A number of questions and comments were made following the presentation to the group. Please note: it is not the intention of the Minutes to be recorded verbatim and only presented as a summary of the discussion.

- Philippa Bonella of SCIAF underlined the importance of policy coherence and the Millennium Development Goals;
- Colin Pritchard made the point that climate change may be low down on the list of priorities for some development countries, with emphasis on education and gender being viewed as more important by some administrations;
- One participant from Malawi stated that there is a lack of understanding by some on how climate changes affects communities and this is one reason why it is not given the importance that it should;
- The point was raised that the message of climate change needs to be communicated simply and that goals need to be 'real' and 'realistic';
- It was also mentioned that there are sometimes instances of political motivation within speeches, such as denying climate change;
- There was consensus from the group that climate change should be viewed as both environmental, developmental and within the realms of sustainability;
- The issue of how goals and how their progress should be monitored should be central to the drafting up stage in the post 2015 development framework era;
- Eloise Nutbrown stated that it is important we also reflect on Scotland's strengths and we should share our experiences with partners abroad.

### **AOCB**

Sarah Boyack closed the meeting and suggested that NIDOS raise the issue in the run up to the European elections as EU decisions set much of the framework for European contributions to the next set of MDGs. Sarah thanked Gillian for a thought provoking and timely discussion.

No amendments were suggested for the Minutes of the last meeting (19 June 2013).

**Next meeting**

19 November 2013 – Committee Room 5, Scottish Parliament.

ImpAcTAIDS are presenting to the group reviewing the MDGs which relate to HIV, and to reviewing how best to proceed, in the post 2015 world.