

**The Scottish Parliament
Cross Party Group on Cuba
7th June 2018
5.15pm in TG20/21**

MINUTES

1. Welcome

Elaine Smith MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting explaining that there had to be an earlier start time to accommodate MPS's, whilst noting this meant that some regular attenders weren't able to get here at the earlier time.

She extended a warm welcome to Arnold August who was in Scotland for the first time as part of a UK tour and advised that he would also be speaking at SCSC AGM on Sunday 10th June.

Elaine acknowledged the increased number of new faces/attendees to the meeting and commented on how she hoped they would continue to come to future meetings and invited everyone in attendance to introduce themselves.

Attendees

Elaine Smith MSP
Neil Finlay MSP
Kath Campbell
Aled Owen
Joan Cutting
Sean McLaughlan
Shahnoor Minhas Admin
Frances Hoole
James Robertson
Elspeth Parsons
Janet Bungener
Sue Mansfield
Hillery Williams
Dave Powell
Ian McLaughlan
Lesley Dobbin
Suzanne Murning
Pol de Vos

2. Apologies were given by;

Sandra White MSP, Pauline Boyle, Pauline Bryan, Marlyn Glen, Frieda Park, Arthur West, Dougie Kerr, Margaret Cameron, Zaki El Sahali, Liz Elkind, Kath Bateman, Kevin Carroll, Paul Harding, Ian Parsons, Matthew Crighton.

3. Minutes of last meeting – (28 Mar 2018)

These were distributed and the group was advised they had previously been approved by email.

4. Update on Cuba Solidarity Campaign – Kath Campbell

Kath Campbell updated the group on current issues and events organised by Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign, noting that next year is the 60th Anniversary of the Revolution.

5. Update from the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign on matters of interest in the region – Matthew Crighton.

Due to the earlier start of the meeting, Matthew was unable to attend to give his usual report.

6. Speaker: Arnold August: Author, Journalist and Lecturer:

Arnold gave an extremely interesting and insightful account of his views on the current political and economic situation in Cuba and answered questions from the group.

7. A.O.C.B.

Elaine explained to new members that meetings are mainly arranged around the availability of speakers, however, noting that they also had to fit in with parliamentary duties.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Elaine advised that the next meeting would be arranged after recess – speakers would include Sean McLaughlan who was part of a group of young Trade Union delegates who recently visited Cuba and was in attendance.

Elaine closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.