

**Scottish Parliament  
Cross Party Group on China**

**Wednesday 20 January 2016  
Committee Room 3, Scottish Parliament**

***DRAFT* MINUTES**

**Convener**

**Graeme Pearson MSP**

**MSPs**

**Chic Brodie MSP**

**Mary Fee MSP**

**Margaret McDougall MSP**

**Hanzala Malik MSP**

**Guests from the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China**

**Deputy Consul General Zhang Limin**

**Consul Lyu Yanxia**

**Speakers**

**Sir John Elvidge, Chairman, Edinburgh Airport Limited**

**Ross Martin, CEO, Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI)**

**Guests from the Scotland China Association (SCA): Office Holders**

**Janice Dickson, SCA National Chairman *Speaker***

**Peter Lindow, SCA Edinburgh Branch Chairman**

**Tom Nisbet, SCA National and Edinburgh Branch Secretary**

**Dale Finlayson, Editor of the SCA Publication *Sine***

**Mike Nelson, SCA Web Editor**

**Guests from the SCA**

**Tony Kirkland**

**Maggie Kirkland**

**Millie Bowie**

**David Lord**

**Kevin McLoughlin**

**Julia Rayer-Rolfe**

**Ilka Lewington**

**Secretary**

**Dr Judith McClure CBE**

**Members**

**Nigel Archdale, Anthony Millard Consulting**  
**François Bourienne, Commercial Director, Glasgow Airport Ltd**  
**Catherine Cairns, Head of Stakeholder Relations, Scottish Development International**  
**Sharon Cheng, Investment Director, Clyde Blowers Capital**  
**Vincent Chung, Trainee Solicitor, Thorntons Law LLP**  
**Janis Claxton, Artistic Director, Janis Claxton Dance**  
**Dr Roger Collins, Honorary Fellow, University of Edinburgh**  
**Dr Carole Couper, Director, inCouperated Limited**  
**Jean Jijun Ye, MBA candidate, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh**  
**Professor Tariq Durrani OBE FREng FRSE, Research Professor, University of Strathclyde,**  
**Member, Scottish Funding Council; Professor of Signal Processing,**  
**University of Strathclyde, Vice President of The Royal Society of Edinburgh**  
**Dr Olivia Feng, CEO at ICAN Future Star Ltd**  
**Adrien von Ferscht, Honorary Research Fellow, Scottish Centre for China Research,**  
**University of Glasgow**  
  
**Sheila Forbes, University of Strathclyde**  
**Helen Ford, former teacher in China**  
**Linda Fu, International Client Relations Director, HBJ Gateley LLP**  
**Gary Gillon, PhD student, School of Business and Enterprise, University of the West of**  
**Scotland**  
  
**Roddy Gow OBE, Canongate Partners, Chairman, Asia Scotland Institute**  
**Luna Chao Guo, Managing Director, Fusion Cultural Development Ltd**  
**Jessica Hartshorn, contact of Jim McColm**  
**Dr Graham Hawley, Head, Loretto School**  
**Josephine Jay, Student of Chinese, University of Edinburgh**  
**Jamie Kerr, Partner, Thorntons Law LLP**  
**Dr Jin Ri (Richard), Co-Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland, University of**  
**Edinburgh**  
  
**Ju Li, Business Development Director China, Holmes Miller Limited**  
**Catriona Llanwarne, Associate, Burness Paull LLP**  
**Simon Macaulay, University of Aberdeen and Deputy Chair of SCEN**  
**Jim McColm, Vintage Estates**  
**Judith McKerrecher, Professional Development Officer, SCILT and CISS**  
**Nick Mackie, Strategic Partnerships Manager, University of Edinburgh's Usher Institute**  
**(Research Institute of Edinburgh Medical School), reporting to Professor**  
**Andrew Morris, Vice Principal Data Science and Scottish Government Chief**  
**Scientist Health**  
  
**Dr Petra McLay, Development Officer: 1+2 Language Learning, Fife Council**  
**Brian McLean, Head of Communications and Public Affairs, Glasgow Airport Ltd**  
**Emma Meredith, International Director, Edinburgh College**  
**Colin Mitchell, Depute Headteacher, Lasswade High School, Midlothian Confucius Hub**  
**Rosemary Mitchell, Friend of Lasswade High School and former Depute Headteacher**  
**Iain Nicol, Compensation Lawyers (Scotland) Ltd**  
**Jonathan Rayner, Head of Aviation, Edinburgh Airport Limited**  
**Maya Rousen, Senior Executive and Aviation Lead, Scottish Development International**  
**Alan Salonika, China Project Officer, Royal Society of Edinburgh**  
**Victor Spence, Honorary President, Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association**  
**Sean Sproull, PGDE Mandarin, Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh**  
**Edward Tsang, Chairman, Asian Association, Culture, Commerce and Education in Europe**  
**James Trolland, Ridrum International**

**Dr William Tuladhar-Douglas, Senior Lecturer, Director, Confucius Institute, University of Aberdeen**

**Angus Tulloch, Stewart Investors**

**Hans Waitl, Borders Chartered Certified Accountants**

## **1 Welcome and Introductions**

The Convener of the Cross Party Group on China, Graeme Pearson MSP, welcomed Speakers, Members and Guests to the Meeting. He expressed his delighted at the large numbers present and gave especial thanks to his fellow MSPs who were present: Chic Brodie MSP, Mary Fee MSP, Margaret McDougall MSP and Hanzala Malik MSP.

The Convener said that he intended to finish the formal agenda at 7.00 pm, to allow time for the Reception in honour of the Scotland China Association at the beginning of its fiftieth year.

## **2 Apologies**

The Secretary had noted the following apologies:

Margaret Alcorn, Convener of SELMAS

Eric Balish, Director, Trade and Working Capital, Barclays

Martin Bell, Deputy Director Global Affairs (including Asia Pacific), Scotch Whisky Association

James Brodie, General Manager and Business Adviser, CBBC Scotland

Richard Clason, Operations Manager, G7 Consultants

Robert Dalzell, North Lanarkshire Council

Councillor Jim Dixon, West Lothian Council

Professor Natascha Gentz, Assistant Principal (China), Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland at the University of Edinburgh

Professor Ian Gow, Centre for China Research and Director of CI, University of Glasgow

Ewan Hastings, Trusts & Corporate Fundraiser, Waverley Care

Edmund Hoffie, Eden English Language School and Eden Investments, Nanning, Guanxi

Dr Meryl James, Senior Professional Development Officer, SCILT and CISS

Revd Patricia Johnston, Secretary of the Management Committee, SCCG

Janette Kelso, SCILT, University of Strathclyde

Elaine Logan, Warden of Glenalmond College

Lindesay Low, Senior Legal Counsel, Scotch Whisky Association

Ng Kam Leung (Tommy), Lifetime Honourable President of the Wu Clan's Association UK

Ng Wing-Yan MSYP, University of Aberdeen, Member of SCEN Youth Committee

Ng Wing-Sie, individual interpreter; Senior SCEN Ambassador

Margie Ogilvie-Stuart, Director at Crown and Stone

Fiona Pate HMI, Education Consultant

Neil Phillips, Positive Solutions (Glasgow)

Councillor Stephanie Primrose, East Ayrshire Council

Charles Prior, Teacher of Chinese, Dollar Academy

Fraser Quin, CEO, Eric Liddell Centre

Sandie Robb, Senior Education Officer, Royal Zoological Society for Scotland  
 Dr David Tann, Assistant Dean (International), School of Engineering & Computing, UWS  
 Ruth Taylor, Stewart Investors  
 Nicol Watt, Bioengineer  
 Dr Angus Yu, Director, Unicoll Ltd

### **3 Minutes of the Meeting of 24 November 2015**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 24 November 2015 had been circulated in draft and no further requests for amendment were made. The Convener sought approval and **the Minute of the Meeting of 24 November 2015 were agreed unanimously.**

### **4 Matters Arising**

#### ***Item 10: Meeting of MSPs at the Consulate General for the PR of China***

The Convener said that he had been delighted by the invitation from Mr Pan Xinchun, Consul General for the PR of China, to MSPs to attend a meeting at the Consulate General. The purpose of the occasion was to demonstrate the commitment of the Consul General to encouraging the relationship of China to public life in Scotland. The Convener said that the meeting had been most useful and a great pleasure; he thanked the Consul General.

### **5 The Issues Surrounding Direct Flights to China and Possible Solutions**

The Convener said that the encouragement of direct flights between China and Scotland was an ongoing issue for the Group. He welcomed Sir John Elvidge, Chairman, Edinburgh Airport Limited and Ross Martin, Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish Council for Development and Industry, who had agreed to report on the Pre-Meeting on China Direct Flights held on 7 January 2016 and to introduce a discussion on possible solutions.

Sir John Elvidge, Chairman of Edinburgh Airport Limited, said that this was not a new issue. There had for some years been a widely-held view that the depth and quality of Scotland's relationship with China needed the important step of direct flights. Overall we had made substantial progress in terms of educational, cultural and economic links, but we needed to improve connectivity.

Interested stakeholders had met on 7 January 2016 for a Pre-Meeting on China Direct Flights, as preparation for this meeting of the Group in the Scottish Parliament. The vital question was: what *additional* actions can we take to pursue our agreed goal? Both Edinburgh and Glasgow Airports are active in commercial discussions with Chinese airlines. Both cities recognised the

importance for their development of airport strategy. At a national level, key agencies such as Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International are committed and involved for the benefit of the whole of Scotland.

Sir John Elvidge concluded that there was no vacuum in this vital area of pursuing China Direct Flights. All players recognised their own roles in bringing this about. The question of how we can add value remained. Edinburgh and Glasgow Airports expected that if their present negotiations simply continue, then a positive outcome could take three to five years. But it was very clear that both airports and all stakeholders wanted a faster outcome.

Sir John stressed that the question being put to the Group after the meeting of stakeholders was ***could we work collectively to close the gap?*** Participants at the meeting had agreed to put forward their subsequent thoughts: Professor Tariq Durrani had sent out a questionnaire, and James Brodie had prepared a paper on development packages. Ross Martin, Chief Executive Office of the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) had received these thoughts and understood the shape of thinking. Ross Martin said that the responses and the note would be circulated to the Group.

**The responses to the questionnaire put together by Professor Tariq Durrani will be circulated once permissions have been given.**

**The Paper by James Brodie on Development Packages is circulated with these Minutes.**

Ross Martin said that the breadth and depth of intent of stakeholders were absolutely clear. There was commonality in terms of a desired outcome, while inevitably there were different drivers and commercial sensitivities. Everyone appreciated that this was not simply a point-to-point exercise. *Wrap-around* was essential: investment packages must be developed to sell to China to bring forward the timetable for the flights to follow the investment. He believed that we have the ability to do this.

Ross Martin said that this approach to attracting investment was already underway. For example, Scottish Development International and the Scottish Cities Alliance were working to evaluate market possibilities and construct specific investment opportunities aimed at the Chinese Investment Market.

There was now a need for absolute, primary focus, recognising that some discussions might work, while others may not. There would always be the need to be aware of commercial sensitivities, and although a 'one Scotland' approach is essential at this time, we must recognise and leave space for the commercial competition to land the flight, once the principle has been established. Progress would come through a delicate balancing act, but the commonality of cause was agreed.

Ross Martin asked the question: *do stakeholders need new input?* He would welcome the thoughts and comments of the Cross Party Group on China.

Judith McClure said that so much aviation activity seemed to focus on Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong. But it was clear that China was looking at the Silk Roads project as the foundation for the next phase of its economic plan. She asked whether the China Direct Flights development would take account of this. Sir John Elvidge said that airports did take a wider perspective and looked at China's own intent; however they had to ensure that direct flights actually worked. So far China's One Belt One Road strategy had not provided a game changer.

Hans Waitl asked whether companies trading with China had been canvassed to give support. Ross Martin said that this was beginning to happen. He believed that open discussion, reflecting existing economic activity, was essential. The Convener agreed on the need to reach out to this constituency. Professor Tariq Durrani stressed the need to accelerate the process. He asked whether Scotland would put its case across at the forthcoming World Economic Forum in China.

Hanzala Malik MSP recommended a feasibility study, recognising the substantial size of the Chinese diaspora in Scotland. This had happened in Glasgow in relation to Glasgow Airport and flights to Pakistan. He believed that this could happen with China too. The Convener said that a copy of this study should be sent to the Scottish Government. He asked Members to share their own views and intentions with the Group. The provision of a direct flight meant a direct relationship.

Deputy Consul General Zhang Limin said he was very happy to be present at this meeting and this discussion, which reflected issues that had been raised at the Group from the first. Personally, he wanted direct flights too! Overall, he believed that co-operation between China and Scotland would be promoted in this way. The Consul General would be glad to talk to partners.

Edward Tsang gave the example of the benefits of direct flights to trade in Scottish seafood. Helen Ford suggested a concerted effort should be made to finding out the total number of students flying to Scotland from China each year for their studies.

The Group recognised that incentives must be present in each negotiation, and the benefit must be clear to both sides. The Convener urged Members to continue to share their interests and ideas, with a view to bringing forward the time frame as Sir John Elvidge, Ross Martin and all stakeholders wished.

## **6 The Scotland China Association and its Activities in its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year**

The Convener introduced Janice Dickson, the National Chairman of the Scotland China Association (SCA).

Janice Dickson thanked the Convener for the invitation to the Scotland China Association to be present and to make a presentation at this meeting of the Group. She also thanked the Scotland China Education Network for providing the Reception after the formal meeting, to allow for networking and the beginning of the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary year of the SCA.

### **(a) The Britain-China Friendship Association**

She said that she could no better than to start with a brief history of the SCA drafted by its late President Dr John Chinnery, with contributions from its first Secretary Elsie Collier, at the time of its thirtieth anniversary. The forerunner of the SCA was the Britain-China Friendship Association, which was established in London in 1949. Its inaugural meeting was addressed by, among others, the celebrated American journalist Agnes Smedley, who had been resident in China since the 1930s and was acquainted with many of the leaders of the new government.

The People's Republic of China was formally recognised by Britain shortly after its foundation, but this recognition was not followed by the exchange of Ambassadors, since Britain at the same time agreed to permit the representatives of Taiwan to retain their occupation of China's seat in the United Nations. Therefore, right from the start the BCFA was a campaigning organisation, rallying support for restoring China's seat at the United Nations and opposing the American policy of stationing its Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Straits, thus frustrating the PRC's attempt to complete the unification of China. The BCFA also tried to expand friendly exchanges with China at many levels, including the exchange of delegations and individual visits, and ran its own programmes of meetings, conferences, lectures and language classes. It was able to maintain its own premises until it disbanded in the 1960s; it had members in Scotland too; the SCA has some archival material from the Glasgow branch secretary dating back to the 1950s.

Janice Dickson continued that the disbanding of the BCFA was a result of the Sino-Soviet split of that period. Although its policy was to welcome all who shared its aim of developing friendship with China, no matter what their political persuasion, its leadership was still strongly under the influence of the Communist Party of Great Britain. When the Chinese Government expected it to side with China against Russia, the BCFA refused. This decision split the organisation, and those who disagreed with it decided to set up their own organisation: the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU). Some Scottish members of the BCFA had long desired to establish their own links with China and, perhaps goaded by the use of the adjective *Anglo* in SACU's name, a decision was taken to start a society to promote direct people-to-people links between Scotland and China.

### **(b) The Origins of the Scotland China Association**

Janice Dickson said that the SCA was formally established at a meeting held in the University of Edinburgh in May 1966. It was attended by people from all over Scotland, and was addressed, among others, by the eminent scientist Dr Joseph Needham, a long-time friend of China and the Honorary President of SACU, and by the Chinese author Han Suyin. The aim of the SCA was declared to be ***to foster friendship and understanding between the people of Scotland and China, both through its own efforts and by co-operation with other organisations and individuals at home and abroad who share the same aim.*** Janice Dickson said that this was still the aim of the SCA today. SCA, she said, is a voluntary organisation depending on members' subscriptions, donations and some advertising. Although SCA is now non-political and non-sectarian, in the early days it was perceived as very political: the journalist and writer Isabel Hilton was once refused a job with the BBC because she was once a member and Secretary of the SCA.

During the first few years of its existence, the SCA continued the campaign for China's representation at the UN and for strengthened links between Scotland and China. In addition to the regular SCA branch meetings in Edinburgh and Glasgow, film shows, conferences and other events were held throughout Scotland, usually in co-operation with University extra-mural departments and local authorities. These included table-tennis tournaments, concerts by visiting Chinese musicians and an exhibition of graphic art from China, which was held in the City Art Centre, then situated in the old Royal High School. In 1986, the year of the twinning of Edinburgh and Xi'an, a very successful China Week was held in the Assembly Rooms, attended by the Cultural Counsellor from the Chinese Embassy. The twinning was proposed by Tom Nisbet, the current SCA National Secretary, who was then a local City Councillor. In 1985, John Chinnery accompanied the Lord Provost to Xi'an to sign the agreement; the following year a delegation from Xi'an visited Edinburgh. In 1987, Janice Dickson herself joined the Delegation of Edinburgh Ladies, led by the Lady Provost; friendship links between member of the Delegation and their Chinese hosts continue today.

### **(c) Officers of the Scotland China Association**

Janice Dickson said that the first National Chairman of the SCA was the Revd Ralph Morton, Deputy Head of the Iona Community, who had worked for many years in North East China and had written and lectured extensively on China. Two Vice-Chairmen were appointed, both from the Universities: John Chinnery of the University of Edinburgh and Jack Gray, the historian of modern China who had recently been appointed to the University of Glasgow. Lord Boyd Orr, who led the 1953 48 Group *Icebreakers* to China was Honorary President. Vice-Presidents included Compton Mackenzie, Lord Birsay and the sculptor Benno Schotz; Tam Dalyell became a Vice-President in 1972.

Janice said that John Chinnery was the second Chairman and became President when he retired in 1991 and she herself took over as Chairman. John Chinnery died in 2010; there is still a vacancy for the President and there are two Vice-Presidents: Colin Chinnery, John's son, who lives and works in Beijing, and the

composer Eddie McGuire, who participated in the first musical exchange between his own group, the Whistlebinkies, and the Goodwill Music Group.

The first SCA Secretary, Elsie Collier, was invited to go with her husband Johnny to teach in Guangzhou in the late 1960s during the Cultural Revolution. Since then there have been a number of Secretaries: John Barr and his daughter Betty, who grew up in Shanghai and was interned there during World War II, Valerie Waggot, who now lectures at Newcastle University, the writer Isabel Hilton, and Dale Finlayson and Tom Nisbet, both present at the meeting. Euan Petrie, Secretary from 1994 until his retirement in 2013, brought the SCA into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with computerisation and established the SCA website in 2001 to reach out beyond the membership. The SCA has produced its own journal since 1972 called *Sine* (Gaelic for China), now edited by Dale Finlayson. The Group was very appreciative of the back copies of *Sine*, **which** were available at the end of the meeting.

#### **(d) Membership of the Scotland China Association and China Links**

Janice Dickson said that although membership of the SCA had never exceeded a few hundred, its influence was far wider; it has always been broadly representative of all sections of Scottish society, thanks largely to its strong links with China. These links have been maintained through the SCA's relationship with the **Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC)**, which now hosts the visits by the First Minister of Scotland and delegations from the Scottish Government. From 1978 to 2015, the SCA has hosted visits by CPAFFC Presidents, notably President Han Xu in 1991 and President Chen Haosu in 1997, as well as delegations from many provincial Friendship Associations. The SCA hoped to welcome delegations from Beijing and Shanghai in this fiftieth anniversary year. Since 1972, the SCA has sent delegations to China at the invitation of CPAFFC and has organised study tours for members, to promote people-to-people relations.

The most recent activities of the SCA have included film festivals, language corners and regular monthly dinners in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The SCA has always maintained strong links with Chinese studying and working in Scotland; in the early days it arranged a welcome party for new arrivals, but increasing numbers mean that the Chinese community leads on this. The SCA still holds regular Scottish country dancing sessions with the **Edinburgh Chinese Association of Professionals (ECAP)**.

Janice continued that since the establishment of the **China Britain Business Council (CBBC)** in 1994 and of the Consulate General of the PR of China in 1997, the SCA has had more interaction with other organisations as a result of Scotland's growing interest in China. In June 1997, the SCA held a party for over 120 in Glasgow with speeches and karaoke, to mark the Handover of Hong Kong: known as the *Hangover Party!*

The establishment of the devolved Scottish Government in 1999 led to visits by First Ministers to China; the first Scotland China Strategy was drawn up on 2006,

the year of the founding of the **Scotland China Education Network (SCEN)**. The SCA Competition for Primary Schools began in 1986 and was re-launched in 2000, following the 1999 Report by the Higher Education Funding Council, which recommended the development of courses on Chinese studies. Now the SCA is delighted to co-operate with SCEN and, more recently, the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools, to promote the teaching and learning of Chinese and about China throughout Scotland. The SCA continues to develop its teaching pack on China as an educational website resource for use in secondary schools, based on the work of its own team of teachers and China expert.

**(e) Plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Scotland China Association**

Janice Dickson said that this Meeting of the Cross Party Group on China and the following Reception marked the first commemorative event of the SCA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year. Others would follow:

- **16 February 2016: Chinese New Year Dinner for the Year of the Monkey.**
- **7 May 2016: The Edinburgh Branch AGM, when Emeritus Professor Kenneth King will speak about his recent book on China's aid and soft power in Africa.**
- **27 May 2016: The SCA Competition for Primary Schools will have its Prizegiving at Edinburgh Zoo. Peter Lindow, present at the meeting of the Group, was in charge of this project and pleased to work with the Confucius Institute for Scotland at the University of Edinburgh, which was receiving the entries and where the judging would take place.**
- **11 June 2016: The SCA would hold its AGM at the Confucius Institute for Scotland. It would look back over fifty years and to the future. There would be speakers, entertainment by the Edinburgh Chinese Choir and Eddie McGuire, some calligraphy, and, with the support of the weather, Tai Chi on the lawn.**
- **Fiftieth Anniversary Tours are planned, one in co-operation with SACU to Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai, and another to follow both the old and the new Silk Roads in China, with the co-operation of CPAFFC.**

Janice Dickson concluded her presentation by saying that the SCA was also planning special event with other organisations with a China focus, such as the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, emphasising the importance of working together to promote people-to-people exchanges and continued mutual development and understanding in the years to come.

**Members of the Group applauded the presentation by the National Chairman of the Scotland China Association. The Convener expressed their**

warm thanks and encouraged Members to make contact with the special guests from the SCA during the forthcoming Reception.

**7 Proposal concerning Publication of Profiles of Members of the Cross Party Group on China**

Iain Nicol, Compensation Lawyers (Scotland) Ltd, said that last year he had been involved in training Chinese lawyers in peer review and quality assurance: they had been most receptive. He noted that the Cross Party Group on China attracted a diverse range of talents; it would be so helpful to know more about the interests of individual members and their aspirations. He proposed finding some way of including profiles of those members who wished on a website, to enable them to create a network and to share opportunities. The Convener asked if he were ready to help with this; Iain Nicol said he would be happy to work with the Secretary to bring this about. Hans Waitl suggested the use of LinkedIn; the Convener suggested that further exploration should be made first.

**Action: Iain Nicol and Secretary**

**8 Updates from Members**

**Incorporation of the Scotland China Education Network (SCEN) as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) SCO46171**

Simon Macaulay, Deputy Chair of SCEN, informed the Group that in its tenth anniversary year SCEN had been incorporated as a charity: SCIO SCO46171. The next stage of its development would be discussed by the Trustees.

**9 Information from the Secretary concerning the Re-registration of the Cross Party Group on China after the Election on May 2016**

The Secretary reminded the Group that all Cross Party Groups would cease to exist at the end of the present Scottish Parliament. There were procedures to be followed for re-registration in the new Parliament. The Convener said that he was confident that it would continue.

**10 Any Other Business**

**(a) January 2016 announcement by Scottish Secretary on Post-Study Work Visas**

Following recent press statements by the Scottish Secretary on Post-Study Work Visas, long an issue for the Group, the Convener asked for the Group's agreement to his writing a letter to the Scottish Secretary. **This was agreed unanimously**

**Action: Convener**

**(b) Presentation by the Head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office China Team on the UK-China Relationship, Friday 29 January 2016, 2.30 – 4.00 pm, Royal Scots Club**

The Secretary informed the Group of the forthcoming meeting of the Asia Connections Scotland Network and said Members would be most welcome to attend

*Please email [judithmcclure12a@aol.com](mailto:judithmcclure12a@aol.com) if you would like to come*

**(c) Edinburgh International Asia Conference, 5 February 2016**

The Secretary reminded Members of the forthcoming student-led Edinburgh International Asia Conference, whose Co-Chairs had spoken at the last meeting.

[www.eiac.net](http://www.eiac.net)

**(d) Celebrations of the Chinese New Year**

The Convener reminded the Group of imminent celebrations of the Chinese New Year to be held in **Edinburgh on 6 February 2016 and in Glasgow (George Square) on 7 February 2016.**

**11 Date of Next Meeting**

**The next Meeting of the Cross Party Group on China will take place in Committee Room 3 of the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday 8 March 2016, 6.00 – 7.30 pm.**

**This Meeting will be the last of the current Session of Parliament before the Dissolution on 24 March 2016. It will be the last time in which its present Convener, Graeme Pearson MSP, who is not standing for re-election, will chair the Cross Party Group on China.**

***The Meeting will conclude with a Wine Reception in his honour, to mark his outstanding leadership of the Group.***