

Cross Party Group on China

Scottish Parliament

***DRAFT* Minutes of the Meeting of 28 November 2013**

Present

MSPs

Graeme Pearson MSP, Convener

Claudia Beamish MSP

Speakers

John Somers, First Secretary, Scottish Affairs, UK Embassy Beijing, Scottish Government

Mark Boyce, Head of China and Americas Team, Scottish Government

Professor Tariq Durrani, University of Strathclyde

Mr Li Ruiyou, Consul General of the People's Republic of China

Guests

The Rt Hon Lord Wilson of Tillyorn KT KCMG FRSE

Mr Zhang Huazhong, Deputy Consul General of the People's Republic of China

Mr Wan Degang, Consul of the People's Republic of China

Mr Zhu Ge, Consular Attaché of the People's Republic of China

Members

Eric Balish, Director, Barclays Trade and Working Capital

James Brodie, CBBC, Manager Scotland

Sharon Cheung, Investment Director, Clyde Blowers Capital

Dr Roger Collins, University of Edinburgh

Carole Couper, China + International Business PhD Researcher, Glasgow University

Robert Dalzell, Quality Improvement Officer, North Lanarkshire Council

Robin Dyet, Office of Graeme Pearson MSP, Scottish Parliament

Feyrouz Djabali, Policy Analyst, Director's Office, British Council Scotland

Sheila Forbes, SIPRA Co-ordinator, University of Strathclyde

Yuwen Fortune, The Edinburgh Academy

Helen Ford, former teacher in China

Professor Natascha Gentz, Director, Confucius Institute for Scotland, Edinburgh Univ.

Hannah Graham, Senior Policy Adviser, China, China and Americas Team, SG

Guo Chunju, Xinhua News Agency

Dr Isabel Hui Liu, Deputy Director, Confucius Institute, Heriot-Watt University

Dr Meryl James, SDO, SCILT and Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools

Janette Kelso, SCILT and CISS, University of Strathclyde

Peter Kwok, Co-Director, Young Chinese Professionals

Xiang Li, Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), Lecturer and China Manager

Lv Aofei, PhD researcher, Chinese Public Health Policy, University of Glasgow

Ye (Orchid) Liu, free-lance writer on Scotland/China tourism

Brian McLeish, Scottish Enterprise, Co-ordinator of CPG engagement

Susie McCosh, Project Manager and Surveyor, Willowbrae Consulting

Christine Moinard, Business Manager, SRUC (Scotland's Rural College)

Fiona Pate HMI, Education Scotland

Neil Phillips, Positive Solutions (Glasgow)

Lindsay Rinning, Summer placement with China Team; great interest in China

Jim Scott, Consultant, PhD researcher University of Dundee, SCEN Executive Committee

Rory Swinson Reid, Transition Institute

Graham Thompson, the Blackford Trust

Anna Tomlinson, Deputy Head, Boarding and International, St George's School

James Trolland, Ridrum International, Spae Consulting, Maritime Security Management

Alan Wallace, CEO Apple Green Homes

Wang Anjing, Scottish Affairs Business Manager, British Embassy, Beijing

Jean J. Ye, J.J.Y. International

Jennifer Young, PT Curriculum – Social Studies, Armadale Academy

Dr. Juan Zou, University of Edinburgh

From Loretto School:

- Ellen Williamson
- Lucinda Shaw
- Ella Paul
- Barry Cooper, Academic Registrar

Dr Judith McClure CBE, Secretary

1 Welcome from the Convener

The Convener of the Cross Party Group on China, Graham Pearson MSP, welcomed those present. He gave particular thanks to Claudia Beamish MSP. He said that he was very glad to see school visitors, in this case from Loretto School. He also saw new faces, and hoped that everyone would circulate widely. As chair, the Convener said that he very much wanted the meeting to be worthwhile: all contributions would be valued.

2 Apologies

The Secretary, Judith McClure, said quite a number of apologies had been received and some members were particularly worthy of forgiveness, as they were in China!

Martin Bell, Deputy Director Asia Pacific, Scotch Whisky Association

Robert Brennan, Howden

Richard Clason, Operations Manager, g7 Consultants

Professor Jane Duckett, Director of Confucius Institute, University of Glasgow

Professor Barbara Fennell, Director of Confucius Institute University of Aberdeen

Fhiona Fisher, Acting Director, Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools

Cathy Gu, EY; Co-Director, Young Chinese Professionals

Fan Lin, Manager, Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools

Tom Longdon, Desk Officer China, India, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Project Trust

Lindesay Low, Legal Adviser, Scotch Whisky Association

Eoghann MacColl, Councillor, East Ayrshire

Judith McKerrecher, PT Languages, Craigmount High School, Edinburgh

Dr David McMurtry, School of Education, University of Aberdeen

Ed Payne, Head of Strategy, Scottish Development International

Siobhan Paterson. International Affairs, Scotch Whisky Association

John Peebles, CEO Administrate

Ken Robinson, Howden

Angus Tulloch, First State Investments

Bella Wang, St George's School, Edinburgh

Professor Ya Ping Wang, University of Glasgow

William Wilson, WFWilson Consultancy Ltd

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 25 September 2013

The Minutes of the Meeting of 25 September 2013, especially memorable for the Convener as it had taken place on his Wedding Anniversary, were accepted.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes that did not appear on the Agenda.

5 Presentations by Mark Boyce, Head of the China and Americas Team at the Scottish Government and by John Somers, First Secretary, Scottish Affairs, at the British Embassy in Beijing

The Convener introduced the first speakers, John Somers and Mark Boyce. He said that their presence was particularly appropriate in the light of the First Minister's visit to China.

Mark Boyce said that he had spoken several times to the Cross Party Group on China over the years of its existence, which he hoped he could regard as proof that his presentations were liked! He said that he would begin by discussing the work of his team and their interactions. The China and Americas Team is made up of 4.5 people, of which 2.25 work on China. He introduced Hannah Graham, the Senior Policy Adviser, China, and welcomed, on her behalf, any contact that stakeholders would find helpful. The China and Americas Team work in partnership with the Scottish Affairs Office, Beijing, on bilateral matters, correspondence from stakeholders and the public, and management of the relationship with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The China and Americas Team leads on the planning of Ministerial visits to China, in partnership with the Scottish Affairs Office, such as the recent visits by the First Minister and Mr Yousaf, the Minister for External Affairs and International Development, and also with SDI, VisitScotland and other key stakeholders and partners.

Mark Boyce continued that the China and Americas Team sets and co-ordinates overall strategy, founded upon **Working with China: A Five Year Strategy for Engagement between Scotland and the People's Republic of China**, which was published in December 2012. This high level strategy sets out the Scottish Government's ambitions in developing Scotland's relationship with China over the next five years. The strategy is intended for all Scotland and was developed after extensive engagement with key stakeholders. It provides a framework for any Scottish organisation that wishes to work with China. The strategy is subject to an internal Scottish Government review and updated annually (where appropriate) to ensure the targets remain relevant. The current internal review demonstrated:

Priority Area 1: To increase trade opportunities for Scottish business in China and encourage more Chinese investment in Scottish industry and infrastructure.

- Target 1.1: Double the number of Scottish companies (based on 2010 levels) supported to access Chinese markets by 2017
Companies assisted by SDI increased from 117 to 208 (+78%).
- Target 1.2: Increase direct exports to China above the Scottish Government's export target of 50% by 2017 and to exceed this for China based on 2010 export levels.
Using HMRC data direct exports have increased from £360m in 2010 to £498m in 2012, increase of 38%.

Priority Area 2: To expand and deepen Scotland's education links with China.

- Target 2.1: Increase the number of Chinese and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region students studying in Scotland from the current 8.5%

share (2010/11) to a 10% share of the total UK Chinese and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region student population.

In 2011-12 there were 8,075 students from China (including Hong Kong, and Macau) studying at Higher Education Institutions and Colleges in Scotland (a 22% increase from 2010-11).

- **Target 2.2:** Double the number of teachers of Mandarin working in local authority schools in Scotland, based on 2011/12 levels.
The data for the period 11/12 is 12 (using the GTCS 2011 data). This is the baseline.
The data for the period 13/14 is 14 (using the GTCS 2013 data). These figures refer to teachers of Chinese whose qualifications are recognised by GTCS and are employed in local authority schools. 29 teachers of Chinese are registered overall. These registered teachers may be working elsewhere, in independent schools, on maternity or paternity leave or otherwise not working.
- **Target 2.3:** Double the number of school students attaining recognised qualifications in Chinese language, based on 2011/12 levels.
There were 224 presentations for National Qualifications in Chinese Languages in 2012/13, compared with 200 in 2011/12. This data refers only to publicly funded schools and includes those who have entered and resulted or certificated at a certain level of award. Therefore this data excludes adult learners, independent schools and any who may have presented but did not gain a result or certificate for the award. More work to provide the data for all schools, but excluding adult education centres, is being done.

Priority Area 3: To increase collaboration in research and development between China and Scotland.

- **Target 3.1:** Increase the percentage of internationally co-authored papers between Scottish and Chinese researchers from the 4.75% baseline of 2008.
The Scottish Government is commissioning work over next few months to look at this across all countries and expect that this will report in the second half of next year.

Priority Area 4: To promote an innovative and creative Scotland through deeper cultural exchanges and sporting links with China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; and promoting Scotland as a destination of choice for Chinese tourists.

- **Target 4.1:** Increase Scotland's share of the value of Chinese visitors to Scotland, as a proportion of the UK spend to 6% (increased from 3.5% on Scotland's share of Chinese spend between 2009 and 2011).
For the period 2010-2012 this had increased to 4.0%
- **Target 4.2:** Monitor progress of the objectives within the Cultural Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China and ensure that all 4 key elements within the MoU are actively delivered.
Scottish Government continuing to monitor this and a lot of activity is happening including:
 - *Scottish Ballet touring their production of 'Highland Fling' in Hong Kong from 21-24 February.*

- *Scottish composer David Paul James invited to work with National Theatre of China in 2014 on a new production.*
- *Recent production of 'Dragon' which was a co-production between Vox Motus, the National theatre of Scotland and Tianjin Children's Arts Theatre.*

Mark Boyce concluded by saying that he believed that good progress was being made, one year into the five-year strategic plan *Working with China*. This was the result of hard work by stakeholders, which was massively valued by Ministers, the China and Americas Team and the Scottish Affairs Office. *Working with China*, he said, is a strategy for Scotland.

John Somers said that he had attended the Cross Party Group on China a year ago, after his appointment. He had felt overwhelmed, bewildered and anxious, but excited! He introduced Wang Anjing, Business Manager for the Scottish Affairs Office that is based in the British Embassy in Beijing, who manages so much there. He thanked Judith McClure, Convener of SCEN, for the Second SCEN China Youth Summit at the Gleneagles Hotel, which he had attended the previous day. With 300 delegates, it celebrated Scotland in China and China in Scotland and enabled him to see the next general of teachers and leaders who would take the China agenda forward; he had been impressed by their enthusiasm and innovation and by the three-course Gleneagles lunch. He had also attended a very useful networking dinner organised by the City of Edinburgh Council that week. It was an important time, as the outcomes of the Third Plenum in Beijing become known. The First Minister had visited China just before it had taken place and had been hosted by State Counsellor Yang Jie Chi: usually a very hard meeting to obtain.

The First Secretary mentioned some statistics, to illustrate the speed of China's growth and importance in the world:

- In 1978, during the period of economic reform led by Deng Xiao Ping, China represented 1% of World GDP; in 2011, that had risen to 10.4%.
- In 2013, there are 555M daily users of Weibo.
- By 2200, there will be 100,000km of motorways, 244 airports and 13K miles of high-speed rail in China.
- In the last 30 years, the number of Chinese people living below the poverty line has decreased by 600M.

When he took up his post, he had been glad to see that the strength of Scottish culture was recognised in China and he had been helped by the resemblance of his name to a famous movie star! The Scottish Affairs Office works closely with the China and Americas Team at the Scottish Government, using the 5-year *Working with China* Strategy with its guiding principles. As First Secretary, he represents Scotland on all devolved areas, such as education and health. He had been very satisfied with the outcomes of the First Minister's visit. When Mr Salmond had met Madam Xu Lin, Director General of Hanban (the Office of Chinese Language International), the First Minister had said that he hoped for one more deal, to bring the total number of trade deals and collaborations witnessed during his visit to eight: a very auspicious number in China. In response, Madam Xu Lin authorised the establishment of a Confucius Institute for Business and Communication at Heriot-Watt University, giving Scotland more Confucius Institutes per capita than any other country in the world.

John Somers continued that he was able to challenge constructively the work of the Embassy in devolved matters: for instance, in the area of great concern to the Cross Party Group, that of the issuing of Visas, especially Tier 5. The Scottish Affairs Office

supports all Scottish Government ministerial delegations working in partnership with colleagues in SDI. Exports from Scotland to China have now increased by 88% in the past five years. The Scottish Affairs Office also works closely with the seven representatives of Scotland's Universities, as well as supporting the work of local authorities in China. In this context he mentioned a recent Memorandum of Understanding signed between Edinburgh City Council and Shenzhen concerning Creative Industries. He regarded this as a good model for Scotland and promised to share its details.

The First Secretary concluded by saying that he believed that Scotland is seen positively in China. It is in the top three of desired destinations, after Antarctica and Brazil. He had visited Tianjin as part of the Expo for Tourism. Scotland had received a great deal of press attention and he had been interviewed on television: his words being much improved by Anjing in her translation!

The Convener thanked John Somers and opened the questioning. He asked for updates on two issues: that of Visas, a constant irritation, and on direct flights. The First Secretary noted that there is a new programme by which Schengen data could be used to obtain a UK Visa, eliminating the need for a separate application. The number of UK visas issued to Chinese nationals continues to rise. 96% of Chinese customers who apply for a UK visa now obtain one and there were almost 300,000 Visa applications in 2012. Businesses are able to obtain VIP mobile Visa service and eligible applicants can use the optional 3-5 day priority service. The Embassy in Beijing had also conducted a workshop for universities, to help them with the application forms. He recognised the difficulties with Tier 5 regulations, which meant that teachers and Co-Directors of Confucius Institutes coming to Scotland from China were able to stay only for one year. The First Minister had made the views of the Scottish Government clear on this matter during his visit and had written to the Prime Minister to request a change in policy. The Scottish Government will continue to engage with the Home Office and the Cross Party Group will be kept updated on progress. On the matter of direct flights, the First Secretary confirmed that the development of a direct route between Scotland and China has been a key focus in the Scottish Government's engagement with the Chinese Government. The Scottish Government will continue to work closely with the Chinese Government on potential incentives that could be offered to secure a direct service as well as directly with Chinese airlines, providing market intelligence/data on the case for a direct route. The Cross Party Group will be kept informed of progress.

Neil Phillips of Positive Solutions (Glasgow) said that it was good to hear of the increase in Chinese students studying in Scotland and the attention being paid to their Visas. But it had been possible in the past for students to remain in Scotland for two years after graduation, thereby enabling them to work and to create new links with China. Now the very negative step had been taken of allowing such students to remain only for the period of their education. Mark Boyce agreed: the scheme had been of great benefit to Scotland. The Scottish Government had opposed the change and continues to lobby the UK Government on the matter.

Carole Couper, China + International Business PhD Researcher at Glasgow University, said that SMEs in Scotland often had to deal with state-owned enterprises in China. She asked whether they were charged for any support they sought and received. John Somers said that SDI did not charge, a statement confirmed by Brian McLeish of SE. John Somers noted that there are now four SDI offices across China who can provide expert advice and support to Scottish businesses.

Professor Natascha Gentz, Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland at the University of Edinburgh, thanked John Somers and Mark Boyce for their excellent presentations. She asked whether the targets for the number of Teachers of Chinese in Scotland related to GTCS registered teachers, or included those coming annually from China to support the teaching and learning of Chinese, sent by Hanban. Mark Boyce said that he would look at the figures and update them for the Minutes. *The figures given in these Minutes, target 2.2 above, refer to GTCS registered teachers.*

Neil Phillips pointed out that UKTI did charge for advice: in 2011 this had amounted to £888. James Brodie, Manager Scotland for CBBC, said that CBBC also delivered services in China and could be approached. CBBC worked closely with SDI.

The Convener asked Mark Boyce and John Somers to send any figures they wished to see included in the Minutes to the Secretary. *This has been done.* He said how glad he was that the online China Information Hub had been established: he thanked Mark Boyce for this. He was keen to have feedback on its working and asked for details of joining the Hub to be added to the Minutes. *See Appendix to these Minutes*

The Convener said that he would invite Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development, to attend and to address a Meeting of the Cross Party Group on China early in 2014. He thanked John Somers and Mark Boyce for their presentations and the Cross Party Group applauded: a rare mark of appreciation.

The Convener welcomed Mr Zhang Huazhong, Deputy Consul General of the People's Republic of China, to the meeting.

6 Presentation by Professor Tariq Durrani, University of Strathclyde, Convener of the China-Scotland Research Academy on Signal and Image Processing (SIPRA)

The Convener introduced Professor Tariq Durrani from the University of Strathclyde, SIPRA Co-ordinator for Scotland, and Sheila Forbes, SIPRA Administrator. Professor Durrani said that he would talk about Single and Image Processing, the work of the China-Scotland Research Academy, and his visit to China with Sir John Arbuthnott, President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

- **Signal and Image Processing**

Professor Durrani explained that signal and image processing represented techniques for the acquisition, analysis, and interpretation of information, and as such denoted the glue that binds together the information and knowledge society. Key components of signal and image processing include algorithms for analysing information and architectures for implementing algorithms, driven by applications in a variety of disciplines that range from aerospace systems, biomedical engineering, communications, control, geophysical data, and many more. He introduced Sheila Forbes, who is the Administrator for the China – Scotland Signal Image Processing Research Academy (SIPRA).

- **SIPRA: the China-Scotland Signal and Image Processing Research Academy**

Professor Durrani said that research in the area of signal and image processing is of universal interest. Strong and flourishing groups exist in China and Scotland, conducting world-class research. The Research Academy has been established to benefit from

collaboration, by bringing together keynote experts and leading researchers, as well as students, from Chinese and Scottish Universities, to work on areas of mutual interest and to address problems of current importance. The key objectives of SIPRA are:

- To stimulate and support collaborative research programmes.
- To encourage PhD student and staff exchanges.
- To promote joint publications.
- To organise workshops and training programmes.
- To seek joint funding for collaboration.
- To develop close co-operation and partnership with industry in China and Scotland.

Nine Universities are involved across China; the five Scottish partners, with complementary research interests, are the Universities of Heriot-Watt, Dundee, Edinburgh, Strathclyde and Stirling.

Professor Durrani went on to describe key events for SIPRA:

- **2008:** Inauguration in Beijing, sponsored by SDI.
- **2009:** Workshop in Beijing, bringing together university and business partners, as platform for collaboration, sponsored by the Research Councils UK (RCUK).
- **2011:** Second Workshop on Emerging Directions in Image Processing and Understanding, in Beijing, sponsored by the Royal Society of Edinburgh.
- **2012:** Third Workshop in Nanjing, sponsored by the Chinese Government.
- **2013:** Fourth workshop in Stirling, sponsored by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the University of Stirling.

Professor Durrani said that there had also been a large number of student exchanges and academic visits, with the aim of sharing information, which had led to action and partnerships. Some spin offs had not been envisaged initially: for instance, he had organised a workshop with Professor Gong KE, President of Tianjin University, in Tianjin in 2010, to discuss the reform of engineering education in China. Delegates, including Presidents and Vice Presidents, came from fifteen leading Universities in China. The University of Dundee's seminar on its work in medical analysis in 2013 was leading to partnerships on medical image processing. In addition, there had been a large number of research awards and a significant number of publications: a selection of these can be found in the SIPRA Report of 2013 *obtainable from SIPRA Administrator Sheila Forbes: sheila.forbes@strath.ac.uk* Professor Durrani said that the merits of collaboration through SIPRA were now clearly demonstrated. Now more universities would be encouraged to join: the momentum was strong, encouraged by the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

- **Royal Society of Edinburgh Visit to China 2013**

Professor Durrani said that in his capacity of Vice President for the Royal Society of Edinburgh, he had accompanied the President, Sir John Arbuthnott, on a visit to Beijing. They had met members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and others. In China, a committee of ten members decides on future policy and funding for Science: Sir John Arbuthnott and he had met some of the key members.

The key message from China was that there was an intention of collaborating with Scotland at a significant level. Building on all that had been achieved by Lord Wilson of Tillyorn during his tenure as President, the RSE could open doors with individual universities to facilitate collaboration. A week after this visit, Sir Paul Nurse, President of

the Royal Society in London, had met the same individuals in Beijing. He had contacted David Willets MP, Minister of State for Universities and Science, with a view to putting together a major funding package. It was crucial that Scotland is able to participate. Sir John Arbuthnott had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the China Academy of Social Sciences: there is enthusiasm to develop links here too. The legacy of Adam Smith is still strong and Scotland must act.

The Convener asked Professor Durrani for his advice on the developments of these relationships: which points were crucial to success, and what were the hurdles. Professor Durrani responded that time was necessary: there must be meetings and international conferences. There had to be recognition of the right moment to link and it must be founded upon a genuine collaboration. A critical mass of participants was essential: sustainable relationships would be achieved by teams rather than by individual academics. The major hurdle was the need for funding; hence the importance of support from the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

The Convener asked about the protection of ideas. Professor Durrani said that the research conducted was open; Memoranda of Understanding established an understanding of the outcomes by both parties. Trust was essential.

Neil Phillips said that in the energy field there was recognition of the need for advanced methods of data collection and analysis; projects were being sought. Professor Durrani was grateful for this advice.

James Brodie asked whether there were outcomes other than research: commercial spin outs, for instance. Professor Durrani said that such programmes had been discussed with the Chinese Academy of Sciences by the Royal Society of Edinburgh, with a view to mutual visits to learn how to do business with China.

The Convener thanked Professor Durrani for his fascinating presentation and was supported by very warm applause from the Cross Party Group.

7 Lord Wilson of Tillyorn

The Convener welcomed Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, former Governor of Hong Kong and former President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and asked him to reflect on his experience and give his advice to the Cross Party Group.

Lord Wilson said that he had listened to the three speakers with enormous interest. The vivid account of John Somers made him think how long it has been since he worked in the same building in Beijing in the 1960s. Contacts were then very different, though he did remember that it had been easier to understand political development from reading the *People's Daily* than the *Washington Post*! He was struck now by the great changes that have taken place. Clearly this is a time of great opportunity and we must make the most of it: we need speakers of Chinese. High-level meetings were of great importance and demonstrated good relations, but in the longer term we need many more of our people – our students, our academics, our business representatives – in China. He supported the excellent work of SIPRA.

Lord Wilson said it was also very important to welcome Chinese students here. Real relationships built on affection were created in this way. He believed that the Fresh Talent scheme had been enormously beneficial and it would be good to see it in place again. We also needed many visitors from China. It was distressing to hear of the visa

problems, and issues such as the restriction of one year for teachers in our Confucius Institutes. It was important that we keep working to improve the situation.

As President of the Scotland China Education Network, Lord Wilson had been present at the Second SCEN China Youth Summit at the Gleneagles Hotel the previous day. It had been so good to see the enthusiasm among many young people for learning Chinese and about China. We need more, he argued: more students of Chinese and China in Scotland. We need to study more about China's role in the world, not simply in terms of economics. China is becoming increasingly involved in world issues. This trend would grow. We should be open to adjust ourselves, so China can play its new part.

The Convener thanked Lord Wilson warmly for his remarks and said that he would invite him back to address the Cross Party Group. He said that the Cross Party Group had also been concerned by these issues, and recommended more twinning between schools in China and in Scotland, including digital links, to develop cultural understanding and common respect, and continued development of the learning of Chinese by Scottish pupils. Fiona Pate HMI, Education Scotland, said that she hoped that the new 1+ 2 Languages policy would help the promotion of Chinese learning.

8 Future Work Plan

The Convener invited thoughts on future discussions not so far mentioned, and the following points were raised:

- Progress being made by Scottish cities with a twin in China;
- Agricultural links;
- Food and Drink;
- Opportunities in regional cities of China, especially in the West;
- Sustainability in Scotland's links to China.

The Convener said he would bear these issues in mind. He would also invite Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development to address the Cross Party Group.

9 Mr Li Ruiyou, Consul General of the People's Republic of China

The Convener welcomed Mr Li Ruiyou, Consul General of the People's Republic of China, with the new Deputy Consul General, Mr Zhang Huazhong, Mr Wan Degang, Consul and Mr Zhu Ge, Consular Attaché. He invited Mr Li to address the meeting.

Mr Li said it was a great pleasure for him and his colleagues to host a Reception especially in hour of the Cross Party Group on China and its members. He believed that the Cross Party Group was undoubtedly one of the most broad-based platforms in Scotland for promoting the relationship between Scotland and China. He said that on this vibrant platform, people from different sectors often gathered together and exchanged views and experiences about China, in order to promote better understanding between our two peoples.

Mr Li continued that the efforts and contributions of the Cross Party Group had helped to build up a solid foundation for boosting co-operation with mutual benefits. Looking back on the last eleven months of 2013, he saw so many exchanges and examples of collaboration in education, culture, science and technology, business and trade between

Scotland and China. Scotland had clearly become a good source of expertise and high-quality goods for China, and China a vast and growing market for Scotland. All these achievements, Mr Li said, were closely related to the wonderful work of the Cross Party Group. He wished to thank the Cross Party Group on China, on behalf of the Chinese Consulate, and to extend heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to its members and friends for their good will, passion, determination and contribution in promoting the valuable relationship between Scotland and China.

Mr Li said that the Cross Party Group would be aware that China had started work preparatory to carrying out a new round of reforms, officially entitled ***The Decision on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms***, approved by the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee just over two weeks previously. The Decision had attracted huge attention throughout the world and Mr Li said that he would like to share with the Cross Party Group some of its highlights.

According to the Decision, the core issue of the reforms was to ***better handle the relationship between government and the market***; the key part of the reforms was to ***upgrade the economic system***. Therefore, the reforms would focus on the following areas:

1. **Modernising the *governance system* to improve *governance capability*.**
2. **Allowing the market to play a *decisive* role in allocating resources.**
3. **Promoting diversity of ownership to encourage and boost the private sector.**
4. **Lowering the investment threshold and setting up free trade zones.**
5. **Putting powers under supervision to make sure they are exercised transparently, or in colloquial Chinese, *to have the powers locked in a cage, meaning, to prevent their becoming out of control*.**
6. **Building a comprehensive system for protecting and improving the environment.**

Mr Li said that the CPC central leadership was very determined to speed up the transformation of China's economic growth model and to promote innovation, to facilitate more efficient, more equitable and more sustainable development. So, in the next five to ten years, the world would witness profound changes and new progress in China. Based on China's thirty five years of reforming and development experience, Mr Li said that he was confident that it would succeed in its new round of reforms, and that the new reforms would unleash new growth dynamics not only for China, but also for the rest of the world, as previous reforms had contributed a great deal to the development of the world economy.

Mr Li encouraged everyone to continue to work together in order comprehensively to deepen our friendship and mutually beneficial co-operation. He thanked the Cross Party Group once more for the work it had done for promoting the ties between Scotland and China.

The Convener thanked Mr Li for sharing this information; it was a privilege, he said, for the Cross Party Group to receive it first hand, reflecting our trust and mutual respect.

You will find an account of Mr Li's talk to the Cross Party Group at:

<http://edinburgh.china-consulate.org/eng/xwdt/t1104232.htm>

Mr Li has also provided more links for those who wish to pursue the issues:

http://www.gov.cn/jrzq/2013-11/15/content_2528179.htm

or

http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-11/15/c_118164235.htm

Highlights of The Decision on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013cpctps/201311/20/content_1119258.htm

The Decision on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms in brief

China Daily November 18, 2013

<http://www.chinausfocus.com/china-news/the-decision-on-major-issues-concerning-comprehensively-deepening-reforms-in-brief/>

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/language_tips/news/2013-11/18/content_17112855.htm

Explanation concerning the “CCP Central Committee Resolution Concerning Some Major Issues in Comprehensively Deepening Reform”

<http://chinacopyrightandmedia.wordpress.com/2013/11/19/explanation-concerning-the-ccp-central-committee-resolution-concerning-some-major-issues-in-comprehensively-deepening-reform/>

The meeting concluded with a Reception, generously hosted by Mr Li Ruiyou.

10 Next Meetings

The next two meetings of the CPG on China at the Scottish Parliament will take place on:

Wednesday 29 January 2014 Theme: The China Scotland Business Forum

Thursday 27 March 2014 TO BE CONFIRMED: Address by Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development

APPENDIX

CHINA STRATEGY – LAUNCH OF ONLINE INFORMATION HUB

The Scottish Government’s China Strategy Working With China outlines a commitment to facilitating more regular sharing of information between stakeholders by developing a central hub for information on Scotland-China links. We are pleased to announce that the hub has gone live today and provide instructions for accessing it below. It is not intended to be a catch-all on China – but provide a space to share the progress, development and opportunities as we move forwards in implementing the China Strategy. Although the Scottish Government will facilitate the site, it will be collectively owned and as strong as its network of users. We encourage you to post and share information and would welcome feedback as the hub continues to develop.

How to join the Scotland China Information Sharing Hub

The Information Hub can be found on LinkedIn. This is a business-based social networking website, accessible in more than 200 countries around the world, including both in Scotland and China.

In order to access the Information Hub, membership to LinkedIn is required. Registration is free and is completed via a very quick and simple process at LinkedIn's homepage – www.linkedin.com. Once signed in to a LinkedIn account, the Hub can be accessed via [this link](#) – a search for “Scotland and China” the search engine at the top of the LinkedIn homepage will also locate the Hub.

The Scotland China Information Sharing Hub

The Hub currently consists of a main content “group” named “**Scotland and China.**” Within this, are four subgroups which are arranged per priority of the China Strategy, namely:

- **Sino-Scottish Trade and Investment**
- **Scottish Education Links with China**
- **Research and Development Links between China and Scotland**
- **Scotland and China's Culture, Sport, and Tourism Links**

There is also a fifth subgroup for members of the “**China Strategy – Implementation and Delivery Forum.**”

These groups provide a platform for members to discuss relevant issues and post informative material. If you wish to upload documents – please forward to the China Team who will do this for you and please let us know if there are any news items that you would like highlighted on the main page. Please note that as this will be facilitated by the Scottish Government, all posts will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Please feel free to forward this message on to relevant contacts.

We would welcome any feedback to this ongoing project at the following email address:

[China Team Mailbox@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:China_Team_Mailbox@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).