

**Scottish Parliament**  
**Cross Party Group on China**  
*Draft Minutes of the Meeting of 27 March 2014*  
**Scottish Parliament**

**PRESENT**

**Convener**

**Graham Pearson MSP**

**Speakers**

**Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development**

Hannah Graham, Senior China Policy Adviser, China and the Americas Team, supporting official  
 Ed Payne, Director, Strategy, Scottish Development International, supporting official

**MSPs**

**Claudia Beamish MSP, speaker**

**Mary Fee MSP, speaker**

**Colin Kerr MSP**

**Secretary**

Dr Judith McClure, Convener of the Scotland China Education Network

**Members**

Margaret Alcorn, Convener of SELMAS

James Brodie, General Manager and Business Adviser, CBBC Scotland

Sharon Cheng, Investment Director, Clyde Blowers Capital

Carole Couper, China + International Business PhD researcher, University of Glasgow

Councillor Jim Dixon, West Lothian Council and Cultural Interchange Scotland

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

Professor Barbara Fennell, Professor of Language and Linguistics and Director of the Confucius  
 Institute of the University of Aberdeen

Loki Holbourn, Edinburgh College, Sighthill

Dr Meryl James, Senior Development Officer, CISS and SCILT

Dr Richard Jin (Jin Ri), Co-Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland,  
 University of Edinburgh

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

Peter Kwok, Co-Director, Young Chinese Professionals

Ye Liu (Orchid), Contributing Correspondent, Scottish affairs, UK Chinese Times

Simon Macaulay, SCEN Field Worker, University of Aberdeen Teaching Fellow

Judith McKerrecher, Curriculum Leader, Languages, Craigmount High School, Edinburgh

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

Dr Samantha May, School of Social Science, University of Aberdeen

Dr. Martin A. Mills, Head of Anthropology, School of Social Science, Director, Scottish  
Centre for Himalayan Research, University of Aberdeen

Wing-Sie Ng, Individual Interpreter

Wing-Yan Ng, Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (Edinburgh Central)

Ruairidh Nicolson, East Lothian Council

Gordon Ogilvie, Development Officer - Economic Development, Angus Council

Fiona Pate HMI, Education Scotland

Neil Phillips, Positive Solutions (Glasgow)

Professor Bob Rees, Head of SRUC Carbon Management Centre and Professor in  
Agriculture and Climate Change

Ken Robinson, Global Sales Director, Howden Group

Jim Scott, SCEN Executive Committee, University of Aberdeen School of Education Lecturer

Graham Thompson, Chairman, The Blackford Trust

Iain Valentine, Director of Strategic Innovations, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

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

Nancy Zhang, Head of External Affairs, Repsol Nuevas Energias UK Limited

### **In Attendance**

Lindsay Rinning, China and Americas Team, Scottish Government

Susan Waugh, Curriculum Unit (Languages), Learning Directorate, Scottish Government

## **1 Welcome from the Convener, Graeme Pearson MSP**

The Convener welcomed Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development, Claudia Beamish MSP, Mary Fee MSP, Colin Kerr MSP, all members of the Cross Party Group on China and those in attendance. He said that he would take item 5 on the Agenda, Mr Yousaf's presentation, first.

## **2 Apologies**

The Secretary said that all apologies had been noted:

Jackie Baillie MSP

Eric Balish, Convener of China Scotland Business Forum, Barclays

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

Helena Brown, Senior Associate, Burness Paul LLP

Robert Brennan, Howden

Richard Clason, Operations Manager, g7 Consultants

Jackie Baillie MSP

Eric Balish, Convener of China Scotland Business Forum, Barclays

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

Helena Brown, Senior Associate, Burness Paul LLP

Robert Brennan, Howden

Richard Clason, Operations Manager, g7 Consultants

Dr Roger Collins, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh

Robert Dalziell, North Lanarkshire Council

Professor Tariq Durrani OBE FRSE FREng, Vice President (International) Royal Society of  
Edinburgh, Research Professor Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering,  
University of Strathclyde

Sheila Forbes, SIPRA Co-ordinator, University of Strathclyde  
 Helen Ford, former teacher in China  
 Cathy Gu, EY, Co-Director, Young Chinese Professionals  
 Charly Harbord, Teacher of Chinese, Lathallan School  
 Ewan Hastings, Fundraising Manager, Eric Liddell Centre  
 Owen Kelly, CEO Scottish Financial Enterprise  
 Janette Kelso, Professional Development Officer, SCILT  
 Jamie Kerr, Thorntons Law LLP  
 Alick Kitchin, Joint Head of Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University  
 Catriona Llanwarne, Senior Solicitor, Burness Paull LLP  
 Xiang Li, Glasgow Caledonian University  
 Councillor Eoghann MacColl, East Ayrshire Council  
 Councillor Maureen McKay, East Ayrshire Council  
 Donna Malone, Global HR Director of Howden  
 Fiona Pate HMI, Education Scotland  
 Julia Preston, Doon Academy  
 Rory Swinson Reid, Transition Unit  
 James Trolland, Ridrum International  
 Kate Walker, Head of Education, British Council Scotland  
 Bella Wang, SCEN Youth Committee, St George's School, Edinburgh  
 Jennifer Young, Principal Teacher Curriculum - Social Studies, Armadale Academy

### **3 Minutes of the Meeting of 29 January 2014**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 29 January 2014 were agreed.

### **4 Matters arising**

There were no matters arising that would not be addressed later in the Agenda.

### **5 Mr Humza Yousaf, Minister for External Affairs and International Development**

*Note: Mr Yousaf had invited questions in advance from members, to be answered after his presentation. The full questions can be found in the Appendix to these minutes.*

The Convener introduced Mr Yousaf to the meeting. He said that he was most grateful for his willingness to update members and to respond to questions.

#### **(a) The Minister's Presentation**

The Minister said that he was very pleased to attend the meeting; he received regular updates on the issues raised at the Cross Party Group on China. He had worked in the Scottish Parliament for seven years, four as a researcher and three as an MSP. He had rarely seen a Cross Party Group as busy as this one.

Mr Yousaf said that there had been two Ministerial visits to China last year, one by the First Minister and the second his own visit as Minister for

External Affairs and International Development. Government to government contact was key and produced an immediate impact, which was measured against the Scottish Government's China Strategy. There was much to celebrate, he said, in trade and investment; there had been an 88% increase in exports to China. He reminded members that 8 was a very lucky number in China! The figure for 2012 was £560M: an increase since 2011. The targets in Scotland's China Strategy were ambitious and included food, drink and energy. The First Minister had also encouraged a deal for the showing of Scottish Football in China, worth £20M. Overall China ranked highly in terms of future markets for Scottish business: second, in fact, overall. This would be a long-term game, but there were also clear short-term goals. The Minister said that he welcomed the formation of the China Scotland Business Forum (CSBF), which was seeking to co-ordinate China business activities and led by the private sector.

Mr Yousaf referred to the question about progress on direct flights to China from Angus Tulloch, Joint Managing Partner, Asia Pacific and Global Emerging Markets Equity Team, First State Investments. The Minister agreed wholeheartedly on the importance of developing direct air links with China and said that they were a huge priority and frequently discussed. Work was being carried out with partners to find the best financial package for the airlines: the market was very competitive. He had met the Vice President of the Chinese Aviation Authority. Discussion was also continuing about summer charter flights. **The Minister promised that he would keep the Cross Party Group on China informed.**

#### **Action: SDI and China and Americas Team**

The Minister went on to consider the very important area of educational links, reminding members that the first Chinese student studied Medicine at the University of Edinburgh in 1850 and that the first English translation of Confucius's *Analects* was published by a Scot, James Legge, in 1861. 8,000 Chinese students were studying in Scotland in the session 2012-2013; Hanban (the Office for Chinese Language International) had agreed to the opening of Scotland's fifth Confucius Institute at Heriot-Watt University, and there was an increase in studying Mandarin as a result of Scotland's network of thirteen Confucius Classroom Hubs. There were also more teacher and student exchanges. Much was happening but much more was to be done.

Mr Yousaf went on to speak about the Visa issue, frequently raised at the Cross Party Group. He said it was clear that in Scotland we wished for more flexibility, but this ran counter to UK policy. The First Minister had written to the UK Government because five teachers from China, part of the staffing of a Confucius Institute, had been refused visas for a second year. This refusal had been reversed and now all teachers at Scotland's Confucius Institutes could stay for 24 months.

The Minister said that Culture and Tourism also played a very important part in Scotland's China Strategy, with the aim of making Scotland more attractive to Chinese visitors. This was particularly important in 2014, the Year of the Homecoming, with its high-profile events such as the Ryder Cup and the Commonwealth Games. He noted that Scotland was named one of the top countries in the world to visit in 2014 by travel guide *Lonely Planet*. It was voted third best country, behind Brazil, which took the top spot, and Antarctica that came second. Mr Yousaf applauded Scotland's rich history and culture and the way in which cultural diplomacy feeds into other links, such as those created by the Scottish Ballet, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Scottish Opera.

The Minister concluded by re-iterating the strength of the Scottish Government's commitment to its China Strategy. He apologised for his inability to stay for the presentation by Claudia Beamish MSP and Mary Fee MSP; he agreed that the rule of law was very important and that it was essential to work with businesses here.

The Minister's presentation was greeted with applause.

#### **(b) Questions for the Minister and Further Discussion**

The Convener moved on to the four questions that had been sent to the Minister in advance from members. The first, from Angus Tulloch on direct flights, had already been addressed. He referred Mr Yousaf to the second question, from Neil Phillips of Positive Solutions, on the need for the Scottish Government to make efforts to promote and expose Scottish companies and culture to the regional cities of China, where there are greater opportunities for Scottish SMEs to do business.

Mr Yousaf expressed his pleasure at seeing Neil Phillips at the meeting. He said that the Scottish Government did in fact try to spread its focus beyond Beijing and Shanghai, though obviously it was extremely important to work here. He mentioned work in Hong Kong and Tianjin, the First Minister's visit to Shandong and his own to Shenzhen. Fundamentally, wherever an opportunity presented itself, Scottish Ministers and SDI would explore it. However, it was important to remember that activity was limited by both financial and human resources and had to be co-ordinated with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. SDI had twelve staff in China and the Scottish Affairs Office in the British Embassy in Beijing had three; there were approximately five hundred staff employed by the British Embassy overall and approximately three hundred by the British Council. Every effort was made to work with the British Embassy. SDI attended a good range of trade fairs: about fifteen or sixteen outside Beijing and Shanghai. Events had to be properly targeted. He noted that Nanning had been mentioned and he would explore that.

Neil Phillips said that Nanning was to be the host of the World Artistic Gymnastics Competition in 2014 and that Glasgow would be the host city in 2015. Yet there was no Scottish presence in Nanning to forge links; he believed that we should use the opportunity to promote Scotland by an active presence.

***Note: Neil Phillips has been in touch with the Minister and given him the links, provided by Ed Hoffie (Eden Investments Consultancy Co Ltd / Eden English Language School, Nanning, Guangxi, PRC), to the World Artistic Gymnastics competitions in 2014 and 2015:***

<http://www.nanning2014gymnastics.com/a/2013/11/21/1385001398861.shtml>

<http://www.2015worldgymnastics.com/>

***The Minister has thanked him and has asked his officials to speak to Scottish Gymnastics and to see if plans exist to engage with Nanning. He has promised to bring the information to the Cross Party Group in due course.***

***Action: SDI and China and Americas Team***

The Convener referred to the third question sent to the Minister from Carol Borthwick (Dean of Elmwood Campus/Academic Development Manager Further Education, SRUC), asking him to identify the key objectives around developing education links with China, especially at a College level rather than University.

Mr Yousaf said that he was in China when SRUC signed its agreement, approved by the Ministry of Education, to work with two Colleges on the FT HND programmes. Carol Borthwick had said that she still felt more direct intervention and support of the College sector was needed to maximise these opportunities, and the Minister said that this was fair comment. One of the difficulties, he believed, was that China recognised Universities but not the College structure. Colleges had faced the challenge of mergers and had to cope with the vast size of China. A one-to-one model could work, though it was not easy for Universities and even more difficult for Colleges. He said that Scotland needed a consortium of Colleges with particular areas of expertise. A sector-wide strategy was required to identify the right mechanism, with SDI, SFC and BC working with Colleges.

James Brodie, General Manager and Business Adviser, CBBC Scotland, said that there was a great deal of focus on Further Education and vocational education in China. CBBC would be holding a workshop for FE Colleges in London, before taking out a mission: he would flag this up with Colleges Scotland.

**Action: James Brodie, CBBC Scotland**

The Convener moved to the final question sent in advance to the Minister, from Judith McClure (Secretary of the Cross Party Group on China and Convener of SCEN), concerning the small number (fourteen) qualified and GTCS registered teachers of Chinese currently working in Scotland's secondary schools. He said that the input of teachers was clearly crucial, as a wider knowledge of Chinese was essential in our plan to become a partner of choice for China.

The Minister said that this was a very important question, frequently appearing in discussions at the Cross Party Group on China. He said that the twenty-two visiting teachers from Tianjin, working in the Confucius Classroom Hubs, would help to increase the uptake of Chinese. Languages in general would benefit from the development of Curriculum for Excellence and the national 1 + 2 Languages plan. However, the Scottish Government was not in a position to push local authorities on the choice of languages they made available in their schools: Mandarin was an important and useful language, but so, for instance, were German and Spanish. He was in no doubt that the Confucius Classroom Hubs would continue to develop interest in Chinese and there would be some further news about their growth soon.

Judith McClure said that the systematic learning of Chinese required teachers trained and qualified in Scottish education. Parents, when engaged with this, were very keen. Judith McKerrecher (Curriculum Leader, Languages, Craigmount HS Edinburgh) said that a good initiative was that of local authorities which are subsidising teachers of languages to participate in an immersion course in Mandarin, which should support learning for the SQA qualification in Languages for Life and Work. Jim Scott (University of Aberdeen School of Education Lecturer and SCEN Executive Committee) offered a point of information. He agreed that the Confucius Classrooms helped: he had been the Headteacher of one of the very first in Scotland, as had the Secretary. But to justify the employment costs of a qualified teacher of Chinese in a school, it was necessary to have a body of pupils who opted to study the language. There would always be a gap when the language was introduced and the appropriate numbers reached. This was in fact a short-term problem.

Professor Barbara Fennell (Professor of Language and Linguistics, Dean of International Affairs and Director of the Confucius Institute of the University of Aberdeen) said that we talk about the teaching and learning of Chinese in primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, but we do not have a strategy to develop this learning from the bottom up. She agreed strongly that it was necessary to have GTCS registered teachers. She argued too for joined-up thinking and an overall strategy, linking education at all levels.

The Convener said that he would be in touch with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Mr Michael Russell MSP, about the points that had been raised. Mr Yousaf agreed. He pleased to see the benefits from the constructive relationship with Hanban, but clearly it was necessary to engage the interest of parents and pupils. He would also speak to the Cabinet Secretary on the issues raised by group members.

**Action: Minister and Convener**

Neil Phillips added that in joining-up thinking in the role of Chinese and China in education at all levels, it would be important to develop better links between universities, schools and colleges with industry and commerce.

The Convener thanked the Minister for his presentation, his response to questions and his engaging in discussion. Members joined the Convener in warm appreciation.

**6 Discussion on Human Rights, led by Claudia Beamish MSP and Mary Fee MSP**

The Convener thanked Claudia Beamish MSP, Mary Fee MSP and Colin Kerr MSP for their presence at the meeting of the Cross Party Group on China. He invited Claudia Beamish MSP and Mary Fee MSP to make their presentations and to lead the ensuing discussion.

Claudia Beamish MSP thanked the Cross Party Group on China for its presence and for the responses she had already received, and thank the Convener. She said that her starting point, as our business and educational links with China grow, was the thoughts of members. In the West, we tend to emphasise individualism, whereas China tends to emphasise collectivism. Scotland is clear about the rights of men and women and of workers. She reminded members of the Procurement Bill and the range of questions it had stimulated, and the need to comply with European competition Law. These were difficult matters. She was not overly critical of the Chinese Government: she had had good relations with the former Consul General for the PR of China, Mr Li Ruiyou, and she looked forward to getting to know his successor.

Claudia Beamish said that the speed of development in China was very fast and that there was now more emphasis on the rights of workers. She referred, for instance, to the action plan *Good Business: Implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (September 2013)*:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/236901/BHR Action Plan - final online version 1 .pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236901/BHR_Action_Plan_-_final_online_version_1_.pdf)

The fundamental question, she said, was how do businesses from Scotland engaging in China ensure that the rights of workers and migrant



workers are respected? She had asked the Scottish Government about this, which said that it was looking at ways in which SG and SDI could give support to NGOs and companies concerning respect for Chinese workers. It was good to see that the principles concerning human rights and transnational and corporations and other business enterprises, adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2011, apply to Scottish companies:

<http://www.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/un-human-rights-council-resolution-re-human-rights-transnational-corps-eng-6-jul-2011.pdf>

But she was worried that the regulation of practices was not consistent across China: *China Labour Bulletin* argued that foreign companies were held to labour laws, but not indigenous companies, thus potentially facing workers with exploitative management:

<http://www.clb.org.hk/en/>

Claudia Beamish MSP referred to anecdotal evidence from her partner Michael Derrington. In general, companies that follow the law in China are able to provide good working conditions, but corruption is an issue, though not so much a problem with Joint Ventures. She herself had met Chinese Government officials as part of her responsibilities as Shadow Minister for the Environment and Climate Change. She wondered whether the new CSBF (China Scotland Business Forum) might assist in these areas:

**Action: Eric Balish, Convener of CSBF**

Claudia Beamish MSP concluded by referring to the Questionnaire relating to workers' rights in China and the experience of Scottish companies, which had been circulated by the Secretary. With Mary Fee MSP, she was very eager to hear examples of good practice in China engagement, which could be taken forward. She had already received two responses to the Questionnaire, and she asked that members return their responses to the Secretary so that they can be collated.

**Action: All Members of the Cross Party Group on China;  
Questionnaires to be sent to the Secretary:  
[judithmclure12a@aol.com](mailto:judithmclure12a@aol.com)**

Mary Fee MSP thanked the Convener for the opportunity to speak to the Cross Party Group on China. She told members that she had left out hard copies of two papers that she had written:

- *Promoting Human Rights in China through Education*
- *Whisky Exports in China*

She believed very strongly in the vital role of education in promoting human rights globally; if this could happen in China, with 20% of the world's population, there would be a great impact. The Human Rights Action Plan contains promises by the UK Government to enhance human rights: these needed to be translated into action, and that was the problem. There was inequality of opportunity in terms of education in China, particularly with regard to ethnic minorities; the relocation policy could also make access to education difficult. In 1997, the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights had established a China Programme, which aimed to develop guidelines, learn from visiting scholars and support students and scholars, in co-operation with Chinese advisers and with Denmark and Sweden. Scotland first published its China Strategy in 2008: could we now do similar work in Scotland to work with educators here and in China?

Mary Fee MSP went on to consider exports of Scotch whisky. In 2010, whisky exports to China were valued at £80M, though SWA estimates that this figure was closer to £100M; the profits were expected to increase 100% by 2015. These could be damaged by anti-corruption measures. She believed that SWA had a role to play in the work to be done in China. Before she had become an MSP, she had worked for a large retailer that exported into Eastern Europe. The company gave workers in its East European operation enhanced employment rights, greater than those of workers in that country; employees from overseas were given greater support. She would like to know what employers in China are doing now? There were huge opportunities, through good practice, to spread the benefits of good employee relations.

Mary Fee MSP responded by saying that she would respond to the questionnaires submitted by members and that she would happily do further work for the Cross Party Group on China.

The Convener thanked both speakers and encouraged members who had not already done so to send their questionnaire responses to the Secretary, who would forward them. He then invited Ken Robinson (Global Sales Director, the Howden Group) to begin the discussion.

Ken Robinson said that Howden had been active in the Chinese market for almost forty years, and that HHEL (Howden Hua Engineering Limited) had operated in China for twenty years, designing, manufacturing and selling the full range of Howden fans, heat exchangers and compressor packages to customers there. Its sales/proposal, marketing, engineering, project management, aftermarket and site service office is based in Beijing and its manufacturing plant is located in Weihai, Shandong Province. Howden Hua has sales/service offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Wuhan, Xi'an, and Weihai. It employs in the region of 1,000 workers and covers six factories. Remarkably Howden Hua on one day operated for 477 days or 2.35 million hours with Zero LTIs (Lost Time Incidents).

Ken Robinson said that Howden Hua regarded itself essentially as Howden in China. Its salaries and benefits were higher than local requirements; its anti-bullying policies were imposed globally. Its business prospered. He went on to say that Howden Hua had strong health and safety standards and, in terms of the conduct of its business, anti-corruption measures; it was one of the best of Howden's companies.

The Convener asked why Howden Hua had decided to set benchmarks for its employees? Ken Robinson responded with another question: why should Chinese workers be different from Scots? Competitors in Shanghai might produce a great volume of products, but their quality was poor. Howden Hua's prices may be higher, but quality would be found there.

Mary Fee MSP commented that there was just one union in China, and asked whether Howden worked with other businesses to promote its ethical approach? Ken Robinson said that Howden just aimed to make money! But it did win local awards.

Neill Phillips commented that he saw China as resembling the UK at the time of the Industrial Revolution and moving from a rural to an urban society. Its government wanted to see two hundred new cities by 2020 and transient workers did not get social security. Dr Martin Mills (Head of Anthropology, School of Social Science, Director, Scottish Centre for Himalayan Research, University of Aberdeen), said that the single Trade Union in China was federated and broken up territorially; another member, who had experience in Shanghai, said that she had knowledge of a company which followed quality standards and produced strong products, but was less concerned with employment and health and safety rights.

James Brodie (Manager and Business Adviser, CBBC Scotland) said that the British Chamber of Commerce in Beijing had an active forum on corporate and social responsibility. He also referred to a Report, published by the EU SME Centre, entitled

***Corporate Social Responsibility for EU SMEs in China 2014***

***Note: James Brodie has sent this Report to the Secretary, who has circulated it to members.***

The Convener said that the Bribery Act included UK businesses operating abroad: infringements could lead to prosecution. Neil Phillips reminded members of the pressures on cities in China and the size of their budget deficits: he wondered whether these pressures had an impact on the recognition of the rights of workers. The Convener referred to the series of articles in *The Economist* on the economic challenges facing China.

The Convener invited Claudia Beamish MSP to comment on the questionnaire circulated to members. Claudia Beamish said that she was keen to know if the Scottish or UK Governments had given guidance to companies operating in Mainland China and the Hong Kong SAR. She was intent on sharing ideas when the responses to the questionnaire were collated. Mary Fee MSP agreed: it was important to know what support was received by companies in their contacts with the Chinese Government at all levels in relating to workers' rights and health and safety.

Professor Barbara Fennell suggested that support could be offered through University alumni associations. She said it was important to remember that the Chinese Government expected change.

Graeme Pearson MSP asked if any progress had been made concerning invitations to alumni from China to a Homecoming event. The Secretary responded that the Scotland China Education Network had now arranged its Third China Youth Summit at the Gleneagles Hotel on Monday 10 November 2014, with the theme *China and Scotland At Home*. Alumni from China, international students from China and members of the Chinese community in Scotland would be made welcome.

Peter Kwok said that Scottish Chinese Alumni International had been set up in 2013 to foster a sense of belonging; the Summit would be supported on Weibo.

Iain Valentine (Director of Strategic Innovations and the Giant Panda Project, RZSS) described what he believes to be a more effective type of approach in working with China than what he saw as preaching on human rights. He said that as things stand, a global agreement on climate change and emissions seems impossible. So, after Copenhagen, legislators realised that a different path was needed, even if it took longer to reach the ultimate goal. So top legislators decided to work at national, regional, provincial and city levels, with officials and legislators in individual countries introducing legislation which would bring about the results needed, but from the ground up and country by country. One of the countries which these legislators have been working with very effectively has been China; in fact as things now stand, one of the countries which has made the greatest advances in embedding climate change legislation is now China.

The Convener asked if this approach was working practically on the ground; Iain Valentine responded that it was and that pollution was going down. The Convener asked him to send any relevant information to the Secretary for circulation.

**Action: Iain Valentine**

**Note: Iain Valentine has indicated that the following web sites provide useful information:**

<http://www.globeinternational.org/policy-initiatives/china-eu>

<http://www.globeinternational.org/policy-initiatives/climate-change-initiative>

<http://www.globeinternational.org/world-summit>

<http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/SDN/GLOBE-Press-Release.pdf>

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/feb/27/report-progress-climate-change-laws>

Ken Robinson said that the Howden Group had been engaged 2003-2008 in supporting projects in China for carbon capture and are involved on the ground.

Dr Martin Mills (Head of Anthropology, School of Social Science, Director, Scottish Centre for Himalayan Research, University of Aberdeen) said that strike action in China was increasing until 2008, and then dipped. This was interpreted as the result of the Government's actions to strengthen social stability; low-level provincial legislation seems to be used and effective.

The Convener recommended to members the EU Report mentioned by James Brodie (**now circulated to members**); he knew the author. He also mentioned the information to be had from Chambers of Commerce in China. He also referred to the specialists in Corporate Social Responsibility in the offices of DLA Piper.

The Convener concluded the discussion by saying that Claudia Beamish MSP and Mary Fee MSP would value responses to the questionnaire that had been circulated, even if they were negative. Business and educational experiences would be very helpful. The responses would not be made public. Claudia Beamish MSP said that when the responses had been collated, they would bring them back to the Cross Party Group on China and would ask permission before attributing any examples or comments.

The Convener thanked Claudia Beamish MSP and Mary Fee MSP for their work, presentation and participation in the discussion. Members expressed their thanks in applause.

## **7 Updates from the Convener and from Members**

### **(a) Free Trade Zones in China**

Ken Robinson mentioned the development of free trade zones in China. It was important that SMEs take advantage of these, through partnerships or joint ventures. The Convener suggested that anyone who could give some insights into possibilities here should let the Secretary know and be included in the agenda of a coming meeting. Neil Phillips thought that there would be considerable challenges for SMEs.

**Action: Members with Knowledge of Free Trade Zones in China**

**(b) WASEC**

Peter Kwok, Co-Director of Young Chinese Professionals, said that he was establishing a new network: WASEC: The World Association of Socially Entrepreneurial Chinese. Its overall aim was to develop new generations of Chinese who believe that the solutions to social problems are in their hands. Initially he wants to offer Chinese students a programme of practical opportunities to listen, to see and to understand the work of social enterprises while they are studying in Scotland. The Convener asked him to inform the Cross Party Group on China of the structures and contact details of the new network when these were available.

**Action: Peter Kwok**

**(c) Network of Confucius Classroom Hubs**

Dr Meryl James (Senior Development Officer, SCILT and CISS) said that the number of Hubs would be increased. CISS was very aware of their limited reach; parents were now making it clear that they wanted more opportunities for their children. Partnership working was crucial.

Jim Scott (University of Dundee) said that at the last meeting of the Board of SCEN on 7 March 2014, early SQA statistics for the take-up of Mandarin qualifications in 2014 had been circulated. The number of young people engaged in SCQF levels 4 and 5 were down by 33.3%, probably the result of the reduction to six choices of subject in many schools in S4. Chinese was down and other languages even more so.

Ruairidh Nicolson (East Lothian Council) spoke on behalf of Teachers of Modern Studies in East Lothian. He said that the focus on education in schools tended to be on languages, but those studying the China component in Modern Studies was also falling. He wondered about the possibility of stimulating interest by inviting Chinese university students into schools. The Secretary spoke of the SCEN project on the Early Learning of Chinese Project in East Lothian, where Chinese students at the University of Edinburgh were supporting primary class teachers in the introduction of the learning of Chinese, in a cultural context, to primary pupils as part of the 1 + 2 languages plan. Professor Barbara Fennell spoke of the outreach work of the Chinese students at the University of Aberdeen. Dr Meryl James referred to the work of Project

Trust, where returned volunteers visit classrooms. Professor Fennell said that the University of Aberdeen was hosting a SCEN Conference on 20 June 2014 and that on 27 September 2014, Confucius Institutes worldwide would be celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the programme.

The Convener suggested that SCEN should write to Directors of Education, describing these partnerships.

**Action: Judith McClure, Convener of SCEN**

The Convener also referred to the excellent and stimulating relationships enjoyed by a number of Scottish schools with partner schools in China, such as that of Armadale Academy with its partner school in Tianjin. He thought a presentation to the Cross Party Group could be most interesting.

**Action: Secretary**

## 8 Date and Theme of Next Meeting

- (a) The Convener drew the attention of members to the Draft Work Plan for 2014, with proposed themes for 2015.
- (b) The Secretary informed members that the new Consul General for the PR of China in Edinburgh was **Mr Pan Xinchun**. Mr Pan would be arriving in Edinburgh with his family the following day.

The Convener said that he would be in touch Mr Pan and that he would invite him to meet the Cross Party Group on China when he is ready.

**Action: Convener**

*Note: the Consul Wan Degang (Iain) has moved to his next post. The new Consul is **Ms Lyu Yanxia**, who studied at Edinburgh Napier University.*

- (c) **The next meeting of the Cross Party Group on China will take place in the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 14 May 2014, 6.00 – 7.30 pm.** There will be a presentation by Dr Martin Mills, Head of Anthropology, and Dr Samantha May, School of Social Sciences, University of Aberdeen, on the theme of *Protest and Communal Action in China: the impact of social and economic change*.

The Convener said that there might also be an update from the Minister.

Mr Eric Balish, Director, Barclays Trade and Working Capital, will tell members about the launch and progress of the China Scotland Business Forum, and Mr Chika Inatimi, The Big Social Movement, Dundee, will speak about his project *Beyond the Clouds: working with the Naxi in Yunnan*. There will also be updates from members.

The Convener thanked members for their attendance and their contributions, and said that he was grateful to Howden for their provision of refreshments before the meeting.

## ***APPENDIX***

### **Questions for Mr Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development, sent in advance to the Minister**

#### **1 From Angus Tulloch**

Joint Managing Partner, Asia Pacific and Global Emerging Markets Equity Team, First State Investments

*Please would the Minister provide an update on progress with direct flights to China?*

#### **2 From Neil Phillips**

Chartered Energy Engineer, Positive Solutions (Glasgow)

*Why is the Scottish Government led by the First Minister continuing to ignore the frequently-given advice by Consul General Li Ruiyou, that greater attention should be made to promote and expose Scottish companies and culture to the regional cities, where there are greater opportunities for Scottish SME companies to do business? On his annual visit to China why does the First Minister only go to Beijing and Shanghai? At the end of August/beginning of September every year there is the week long China-ASEAN Expo in Nanning that is attended by all of the Heads of Government of the Pacific Rim Nations. I am sure that John Somers could negotiate an invitation for the First Minister to attend. This Expo would give opportunities to Scottish SMEs not only in China but also in wider Asia.*

*Secondly, at the end of October there is held in Chengdu the week long Western China International Economy & Trade Fair which would give opportunities to the Scottish SMEs in Sichuan, Chongqing, Changsha and other Western China Cities. This is an area that Consul General Li said is*



*desperate for western goods and services and is the fastest economic growth area in China. Again I am sure that John Somers could obtain an invitation from the Sichuan Provincial Government for the First Minister. It is not suggested that the First Minister should ignore Beijing and Shanghai nor go to these other important events every year. But why can he not time his visit to China so that he can attend one Provincial Trade Fair/Expo as well as the two prime cities? It is worth noting that the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra visited Nanning on their self-funded China tour in December 2012/January 2013 and were given a rapturous acclaim with requests that they return and often. David Cameron recently visited Chengdu - is the Scottish Government going to allow English companies gain an advantage in that region?*

### **3 From Carol Borthwick**

Dean of Elmwood Campus/Academic Development Manager Further Education, SRUC

*I think we would like to know what are the key objectives around developing education links with China, especially at a College level rather than University. Colleges are not seen particularly favourably in China, as the name is not protected as it is in the University sector, and many Colleges have much to contribute at the skills level.*

*SRUC Elmwood campus has been lucky, through our representative office in China, to get Ministry of Education approvals to work with two Colleges in China on the FT HND programmes, but I still feel more direct intervention and support of the College sector is needed to maximise these opportunities.*

*Basically I think there is a lot of emphasis at the HE/University level, but what can be done for the FE Colleges?*

### **4 From Judith McClure**

Convener of the Scotland China Education Network (SCEN) and Secretary of the Cross Party Group on China

*Minister, in your eloquent conclusion to the Links with China Debate in the Chamber on 5 September 2013, you said: 'Learning Chinese languages is just one part of learning about China, its history and its growth in the modern world, but it is an extraordinarily important part and we will continue to do what we can to increase the uptake of languages.'*

*Clearly the work of the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools and of the network of Confucius Classroom Hubs is important. But Chinese will only become part of the suite of languages offered in Scottish secondary schools if local authorities are willing to agree to the requests of many active Headteachers and to appoint Teachers of Chinese trained in Scotland and registered with the General Teaching Council Scotland, as part of the Modern Languages Faculty or Team. in as many schools as possible. We are very fortunate in having a national Plan for Scotland's Engagement with China. As you know, Priority Area 2 is to expand and deepen Scotland's education links with China, with Target 2.2 aiming to double the number of teachers of Mandarin working in local authority schools in Scotland, based on 2011/12 levels. At the meeting of the Cross Party Group on 28 November 2013, your officials reported:*

*'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 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.'*

*I am sure you will agree that only 14 qualified and registered teachers of Chinese in Scotland's secondary schools are just not enough. Does the Scottish Government have any influence to bring to bear on local authorities to increase that number?*