

Scottish Parliament
Cross Party Group on China Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 13 August 2014, 6.00 – 7.30 pm
Committee Room 1, Scottish Parliament

Draft **MINUTES**

Present

Convener

Graham Pearson MSP, Shadow Justice Secretary, Scottish Labour

MSPs

Claudia Beamish MSP, Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Scottish Labour

Chic Brodie MSP, Scottish National Party

Colin Keir MSP, Scottish National Party

Gil Paterson MSP, Scottish National Party

Speakers

Mr Pan Xinchun, Consul General for the People's Republic of China

Zhu Ge, Consular Attaché

Jim Scott, University of Dundee and SCEN Executive Committee

Secretary

Dr Judith McClure, Convener of the Scotland China Education Network

Members

Margaret Alcorn, Convener, SELMAS

James Brodie, General Manager and Business Adviser, CBBC Scotland

Dr Roger Collins, Honorary Fellow, University of Edinburgh

Carole Couper, PhD Researcher, University of Glasgow

Robert Dalzell, Quality Improvement Officer, North Lanarkshire Council

Professor Tariq Durrani, OBE FRSE FREng, VP (International), Royal Society of Edinburgh

Sheila Forbes, SIPRA Co-ordinator, University of Strathclyde

Betty Gao, MSc Education student, University of Edinburgh

Professor Natascha Gentz, Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland, University of
Edinburgh

Adam Graudus, MSc Student in Chinese Studies, University of Edinburgh

Megan Hammell, University of Hull, SCEN Youth Committee

Matthew Heap, International Opportunities Manager, University of Glasgow
 Katrin Heilmann, Third Year MA Chinese and History, University of Edinburgh
 Dr Meryl James, Senior Development Officer, Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools
 Dr Richard Jin (Jin Ri), Co-Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland, Univ of Edinburgh
 Janette Kelso, Professional Development Officer, Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools
 Jamie Kerr, Thorntons LLP
 Alick Kitchin, Joint Head of Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University
 Lisa Zihan Li, University of Glasgow
 Wei Lin, International Officer and Languages Tutor, University of St Andrews
 Lindesay Low, Legal Advisor, Scotch Whisky Association
 Simon Macaulay, SCEN Field Worker and member of Executive Committee
 Jim McColm, Sounding board at Panda Modium China / Scotland Solutions, Ayr
 Catriona MacDonald, University of Edinburgh, SCEN Youth Committee
 Joe McKeown, Scottish Enterprise
 Brian McLeish, Scottish Enterprise, Co-ordinator of CPG Engagement
 Gordon Ogilvie, Development Officer - Economic Development, Angus Council
 Neil Phillips, Positive Solutions (Glasgow)
 Ken Robinson, Global Sales Director, Howden Group
 Beth Shotton, Director of International Team, University of St Andrews
 Kevin Timlin, SIET award-winner, Tods Murray LLP
 Ye Liu (Orchid), Contributing Correspondent, Scottish affairs, UK Chinese Times
 Professor Ya Ping Wang, Chair in Global City Futures, Head of Urban Studies, School of Social and
 Political Sciences, University of Glasgow
 Caroline Watson, Hua Dan
 Jean J.Ye, J.J.Y. International
 Nancy Zhang, Repsol Nuevas Energias UK Ltd

1 Welcome from the Convener, Graeme Pearson MSP

Graham Pearson MSP welcomed Members to the AGM and Meeting of the Cross Party Group on China. He was especially grateful for the presence of Mr Pan Xinchun, Consul General for the People's Republic of China, and his fellow MSPs.

2 Apologies

Clare Adamson MSP, Scottish National Party

Jackie Baillie MSP, Scottish Labour

Margaret McDougall MSP, Scottish Labour

Dr Richard Simpson MSP, Scottish Labour

Eric Balish, Director of Trade and Working Capital Barclays plc; Convener of CSBF

Martin Bell, Deputy Director Asia Pacific and WTO International Affairs, Scotch Whisky Association

Robert Brennan, Howden
 Richard Clason, Operations Manager, g7 Consultants
 Jane Davidson, Head of Education, Scottish Opera
 Councillor Jim Dixon, West Lothian Council and Cultural Interchange Scotland
 Professor Barbara Fennell, Director of the Confucius Institute of the University of Aberdeen
 Helen Ford, former teacher in China
 Cathy Gu, Young Chinese Professionals
 Ewan Hastings, Fundraising Manager, Eric Liddell Centre
 Ruth Higginson, Lasswade HS, SCEN Youth Committee
 Peter Kwok, Young Chinese Professionals
 Catriona Llanwarne, Senior Solicitor, Burness Paull LLP
 Councillor Eoghann MacColl, East Ayrshire Council
 Susie McCosh, Willowbrae Consulting
 Councillor Maureen MacKay, East Ayrshire Council
 Judith McKerrecher, Curriculum Leader Languages, Craigmount High School, Edinburgh
 Iseabail Mactaggart, Non-Executive Director, OFCOM'S Content Board, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Christine Moinard, Business Manager, SRUC (Scotland's Rural College)
 Kam Leung Ng (Tommy), Life Time Honourable President of the Wu Clan's Association UK
 Wing-Sie Ng, Individual Interpreter
 Wing-Yan Ng, Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (Edinburgh Central)
 Ed Payne, Head of Strategy, Scottish Development International
 Ruth Taylor, First State Investments
 Ed Thomson, Programme Director, Asia Scotland Institute
 James Trolland, Ridrum International
 Kate Walker, Head of Education, British Council Scotland
 James Wolffe QC, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates
 Dr Zhu Zhu, University of Edinburgh

3 Annual General Meeting

- i** Claudia Beamish MSP took the chair for the election of the Convener. Graeme Pearson MSP was nominated by Gil Paterson MSP, seconded by Colin Keir MSP. There were no other nominations. Graeme Pearson MSP was re-elected to applause and was thanked by Claudia Beamish MSP for his enlightened and valuable leadership and guidance of the Cross Party Group.
- ii** Graeme Pearson MSP took the chair and thanked the Group. He nominated Colin Keir MSP as Vice Convener. The

nomination was seconded by Gil Paterson MSP. There were no other nominations and Colin Keir MSP was elected as Vice Convener unanimously.

- iii Graeme Pearson MSP nominated Judith McClure as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Neil Phillips. There were no other nominations and Judith McClure was re-elected as Secretary unanimously.

4 Annual Return Form and the Group's Activities 2013-2014

i Secretary's Meeting concerning Revised Standards

The Secretary informed the Cross Party Group that the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee of the Scottish Parliament had issued revised guidance for the Code of Conduct that governed the Cross Party Groups of the Scottish Parliament, numbering over eighty. She had had an individual meeting with Roz Thomson, Senior Assistant Clerk. The Secretary assured the Group that she had scrutinised the revised guidance and that the Group complied with best practice in every respect. She said that the Senior Assistant Clerk had advised that the Group could consider: (a) using Skype for presentations; (b) posting appropriate website links relating to its activities; (c) considering relevant travel of a delegation representing the Group; (d) holding events in the Scottish Parliament.

ii Annual Return August 2014

The Group received the Annual Return Form August 2014. The Secretary invited members to be in touch with her over any inaccuracies concerning the meetings and activities described and the membership of the Group. *The financial support declaration was completed after the meeting, after costs for the two Receptions for the Group had been ascertained.*

5 Minutes of the Meeting of 14 May 2014

The Minutes of the Meeting of 14 May 2014 were accepted without amendment.

6 Matters arising

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

7 **Presentation by Mr Pan Xinchun**

Consul General for the PR of China in Edinburgh: *China and the World*

The Convener welcomed the new Consul General most warmly. He said that he had met Mr Pan before this meeting, and had told him that we would be visiting friends when he spoke at the Cross Party Group on China.

Mr Pan Xinchun, the new Consul General of the PR of China, addressed the Group. He was accompanied by Mr Ge Zhu, Consular Attaché. Mr Pan raised the questions of who China is, how China sees the world and what China is going to do on the world stage. He emphasised the importance of China's history and philosophy in the minds of its people and pointed to its contemporary fast economic growth, while it remained a developing country. He said that by 2020, China hoped to double its GDP *per capita* and that by 2049 it intended to become a modern, democratic, wealthy and harmonious country. China intended to be an anchor of world peace, stressing the settlement of all disputes by peaceful means, through consultation and dialogue and to making a contribution to the world. He regarded China's development as an opportunity for the world and summarised China's foreign policy as peace, development, co-operation and common prosperity.

Mr Pan kindly agreed that his Speaking Note should be circulated to the Group. It appears in Appendix 1 of these Minutes.

Jamie McGrigor MSP asked Mr Pan whether China could do anything to help the Kurds who were being besieged by ISIS fanatics. Mr Pan responded that China was very concerned about the situation in Northern Iraq and opposed the extremists and their atrocities against civilians. China supported the UN Resolution. Mr McGrigor said that in such a crisis, urgent action was required; none had followed the UN Resolution. Mr Pan said that a UN peace-keeping mission would be sent and China would be involved in sending humanitarian aid.

Neil Phillips asked how quickly China could tackle the problem of pollution in its cities, much of it created by coal-fired power stations. Mr Pan said that he was from Beijing, of the most polluted cities. He agreed that this was a great threat to health and to sustainable economic development. The problem had existed for thirty years and could not be solved overnight; the Chinese Government had plans to reduce pollution by 2020 and progress was being made. The new energy sector would create 30 million job opportunities and would provide a new impetus for economic growth.

Claudia Beamish MSP said that she was attending meetings of the Climate Challenge Fund, as Shadow Minister for Climate Change. She asked whether cities in China were given power to regulate their own energy

use and whether China could support other countries. Mr Pan said that pollution was recognised in China as a common challenge and that the majority of the Chinese population were more sensitive to it than ever before. For instance, car users were trying to use their vehicles only at the weekends. In some big cities, the municipal governments have set out rules for car use. Gradually people were appreciating the health benefits of these restrictions.

Chic Brodie MSP asked what China's approach was to the encouragement of direct flights between China and Scotland. Mr Pan responded that this was a good question; it was easier said than done. The Chinese Government was supportive, but the airlines naturally need to make money and need to know profitability. So far, there are not enough Chinese tourists flying to Scotland: they go to London. We (and Mr Pan indicated that he felt part of Scotland here!) need to do more to promote Scotland and its rich history, friendly people and beautiful scenery. Better than London! This was a particularly good year because of all the events taking place in Scotland, including the Ryder Cup: golf was becoming more and more popular in China.

The Convener thanked Mr Pan most warmly for his fascinating talk and for his answers to questions.

8 Presentation by Jim Scott now Dr Jim Scott

Lecturer at the University of Dundee and former Headteacher of Perth High School: *The Introduction of Mandarin in Scotland's Schools*

The Convener welcomed the next speaker, Jim Scott.

Jim Scott, former Headteacher of Perth High School and now affiliated to the University of Dundee, BOCSH, CISS, SCEN and SCSSA, gave a presentation on *Re-introducing the Chinese Language to Scottish Secondary Schools*. He explained the context, the topic of his doctoral thesis: *How have the nature and effectiveness of the politico-educational governance of Modern Foreign Languages in Scottish school-based education developed during the period 1962-2014?* After a detailed and most interesting capture of the data, he concluded that there have been an inconsistent vision and frequent discontinuities of direction and also governance issues in all governance layers: teachers and principal teachers, headteachers, councils, national agencies and the national government. In terms of the introduction of Chinese, he concluded that initial growth has slowed over the last four years, exploring a range of issues inhibiting progress and suggesting that the concept of the Hub needs to be examined.

Dr Scott kindly agreed that his PowerPoint presentation should be circulated to Members, which was done after the meeting.

The Convener, Graeme Pearson MSP, wrote to Michael Russell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, after the meeting. Mr Russell's response has been circulated to members.

Carole Couper thanked Jim Scott for his very useful presentation and said that we should be concerned by the data he had captured. It was clear that more people should be involved in this vital agenda; her own research findings demonstrated the importance of Chinese language acquisition for business dealings. Jim Scott agreed and said that in later parts of his thesis he argued that our attitude was poor and our approach not sufficiently coherent.

Megan Hammell, soon to become an undergraduate at the University of Hull reading Chinese and Film Studies, said that she had been deterred from studying Advanced Higher Chinese after her Higher because it demanded the learning of so many new characters in a very short time; she asked whether its effectiveness was being analysed. She added that only two Universities in Scotland offered Chinese. Neil Phillips suggested that we must not become obsessed with qualifications. Jim Scott suggested to Megan that she talked to a University expert, such as Professor Natascha Gentz, on the approach of Universities. He agreed with Neil Phillips that qualifications were not the only answer; however, they did demonstrate achievement and could be measured. It was good to see Chinese learning in Primary School and the SQA units in Languages for Life and Work. However, qualifications still mattered.

The Convener thanked Jim Scott most warmly for his very helpful presentation. The next meeting of the Group would involve the presentation of progress in the Scottish Government's Strategy for Stronger Engagement with China, and this material would be extremely useful.

9 Updates from Members

James Brodie spoke of future CBBC events.

Betty Gao spoke of the Early Learning of Chinese Project.

Professor Natascha Gentz and Dr Meryl James described the celebrations planned by the Confucius Institute for Scotland and by CISS in honour of the world-wide Confucius Institute Day on 27 September.

Li Zihan spoke of her enthusiasm for China/Scotland links and her desire to recruit Mandarin teachers from China and to encourage Scottish students to visit China. The Convener suggested that she send details to the Secretary for circulation.

Caroline Watson described the very successful Hua Dan event at Summerhall for the Festival.

Professor Tariq Durrani spoke of the planned delegations from the Royal Society of Edinburgh to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Cross Party Group on China will be held on Tuesday 4 November 2014 in the Scottish Parliament.

- Review of progress with Scotland's Strategy for Stronger Engagement with China, 2013-2017; the annual China Strategy Implementation and Delivery Forum takes place on 28 August 2014 at Victoria Quay.
- Discussion of action following the presentation and questionnaire of Claudia Beamish MSP and Mary Fee MSP
- Mr Nigel Fong will speak of The Wilson Trail and of his new project linking schools in Hong Kong and Scotland
- Members of the SCEN Youth Committee will describe the SCEN Ambassadors' Conference, held in partnership with the Confucius Institute for Scotland in the Playfair Library, University of Edinburgh.

The Convener thanked Mr Pan Xinchun and Jim Scott most warmly for their presentations. The meeting concluded with sparkling wine, sponsored by SCEN, in honour of Mr Pan Xinchun.

Appendix

The Speech Of Consul General Of The People's Republic Of China Mr.PAN Xinchun
At The Annual General Meeting
Of the Cross Party Group On China Of the Scottish Parliament

13 August 2014, Scottish Parliament

One day I took a taxi in Edinburgh. The taxi driver immediately recognised that I am from China because nowadays many Asian tourists in Edinburgh are from China. The driver said to me without thinking that China would become a superpower and rule the world. I was totally surprised that an Edinburgh cab driver is so interested in China. His comments did give me pause for thought. He raised questions of who China is, how China sees the world and what China is going to do on the world stage.

His comments highlight the fact that China is in the spotlight, attracting a great deal of attention around the world. If you ask people about China, I am sure a hundred people will have a hundred pictures. But how do we see ourselves? For us, China is an ancient country with a five thousand year-old civilisation. The

philosophy of Confucius has not only influenced Chinese generations, but also shone out in the world. Chinese inventions of the compass, paper making technology and printing technology not only benefited the Chinese people, but also boosted the progress of human civilisation. China once led the world, but also suffered from foreign invasions. China enjoys the fastest economic growth, but still remains the biggest developing country. The volume of our economy takes second place in the world, but its GDP *per capita* only ranks around 80th. China is a peaceful nation, but is faced with increasing challenges to our security by forces of separatism, extreme religions and terrorism. All in all, China is proud of its achievements, but has no reason to be complacent. China harbours an aspiration that by 2020, its GDP *per capita* will be doubled compared with 2010, and by 2049 China will develop into a modern, democratic, wealthy and harmonious country. We know that the track to our destination will not be smooth, with a lot of hurdles to be overcome. But we are confident, that through hard work, deepening reform, innovation and learning from other countries, our dream will come true sooner rather than later.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the world we are living in today is undergoing deep and complex changes. Although far from being perfect, it is a land of hope and great potential. At present, peace, development, co-operation and shared benefits are the themes of our times. Global polarisation and economic globalisation are deepening, cultural diversity and the information revolution make continuous advances, the science and technology revolution create new breakthroughs. Many rising economies and developing countries are on the fast track of development, with billions of people speeding up their modernisation process, and economic centres popping up around the globe. The power of rising economies and developing countries is strengthened. The balance of power is heading toward the maintenance of world peace. No country will ever rule the world alone. Now countries are more closely related and interdependent with each other and have formed a community of shared destiny.

In the meanwhile, the world is still not pacific, facing a bundle of difficulties and challenges. The impact of the global financial crisis still has deep influence. The elements of instability and uncertainty of global economic growth are adding up. The imbalance of global development is escalating. Regional conflicts are threatening world peace, ranging from North Africa, the Middle East to Ukraine. Some global issues such as food safety, natural resource safety and network safety are more outstanding. Promoting global polarisation and democratisation of international relations, realising the sustainable development of the world economy, and preserving the diversity of global civilisation have become the common tasks of human beings. We hope the international community will establish a new type of international relationship, based on cooperation and common benefit. We think that all countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, should be treated as equals. We should respect their rights to choose their own way of development, oppose interference into their domestic affairs and maintain global fairness and justice. We appeal to all countries to work together to create a prosperous and peaceful world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, after more than 30 years of reform and opening up, China enjoys rapid development in all fields. Some people may think a rising China will pose a threat to the world. There are question marks surrounding China's future role in the world. A conventional theory holds that a rising power is set to challenge the existing ones and that this will lead to conflicts or even wars, as evidenced by two world wars. Will China go on the same path? The answer is negative.

First, China will be an anchor of world peace. The Chinese nation is a peace-loving nation. The pursuit for peace and harmony is deeply rooted in our way of thinking. Our ancient philosophers and thinkers have taught us that any warlike countries are doomed to failure; peace is precious. These thoughts have a profound influence on us, enabling us to live in peace with the world. In history, China never invaded or occupied other countries. On the contrary, in modern history, China suffered from foreign invasions and humiliation. We know too well how precious peace will be. Two world wars have indicated that without peace, there will be no development. Without peace, China would not have achieved today's progress. The objective of China's foreign policy is to maintain world peace so that all countries will live in harmony and achieve common prosperity. China means what she says. As a UN Security Council member, China has done its best to preserve world peace. China is the only nuclear power promising not to use nuclear weapons as a first strike and against non-nuclear nations. Sticking to the track of peaceful development and opposing hegemony have already been enshrined in our constitution. China has sent the biggest number of peacekeeping personnel in the world. China maintains that all disputes should be settled by peaceful means, through consultation and dialogue.

Second, China will promote cooperation with rest of the world. The 21st century is a century of co-operation. China will not develop itself at the expense of others and will support and help other countries in order to seek common progress and prosperity. China is now the biggest trading country to 128 countries. Last year, China's trade volume surpassed 4 trillion US dollars and became the biggest trading nation, importing goods of 1.95 trillion US dollars. China obtained foreign direct investment valued at 120 billion dollars and invested 100 billion dollars overseas. In five years' time, China will import 10 trillion dollars of products. China's investment abroad will reach 500 billion dollars. Chinese tourists will exceed 500 million. China's development is an opportunity to the world. China's development cannot take place without collaboration with the world. The world also needs China for its development. As a Chinese proverb goes: *One flower does not make a spring, but one hundred flowers in blossom*. China's progress will not spell the end of the world, rather the beginning of a better world.

Third, China will not only focus on its own development, but also shoulder responsibilities for making greater contributions to the world. China has provided assistance to over 120 countries and help developing countries to strengthen their abilities to develop. This assistance includes building infrastructure, industrial and agricultural projects, providing equipment, sending experts to carry out technical co-operation, sending medical teams and volunteers, providing emergency humanitarian assistance and holding personnel

training. On a bilateral note, China has also become a lucky star to Britain. Britain's exports to China have kept two-digit growth for the past consecutive years. China's investment in Britain reached 13 billion US dollars for the last two years, surpassing the total volume of the previous 30 years. Our bilateral trade volume has increased from less than 20 billion dollars to 70 billion dollars last year. Since this year, Britain has replaced Holland to become the second biggest trading partner of China in the EU. During our Premier's successful visit this June, China and Britain signed over 40 commercial agreements valued over 30 billion dollars. Both sides set out a target for bilateral trade reaching 100 billion dollars in 2015. This vibrant bilateral economic co-operation has boosted China's economic growth, and also helped Britain step out of the shadow of its economic decline and achieve outstanding performance.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a rising China will not seek hegemony, walk its own way, monopolise global resources and the market, or take advantage of others to seek its own economic benefits. I will conclude my speech by simplifying China's foreign policy: peace, development, co-operation and common prosperity.