

CROSS PARTY GROUP: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

30 SEPTEMBER 2014

COMMITTEE ROOM 5, SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

5.30PM – 7PM

Attendees: Sarah Boyack MSP, John Mason MSP, Patrick Harvie MSP, Ruairidh Nicolson, Chris Stephenson, Rachel Campbell, Ulrich Loening, Julian Holbrook, Zarina Ahmad, Milla Harju, Pete Cannell, Rosie Mellor, Justina M. Kolberg, Greig Mccracken, Axelle Walcott, Ann Kingiri, Felix Owusu Arabio, Daniel Gay, Benjamin Carey, Hyemin Yoo, Jake Broadhurst, Julian Siann, Eva Todd, Colin Pritchard, Elizabeth Odoyo, Lordvicus Juma Okwach, Rose Chiteva, Tom Kallenbach, Katharina Trachmann, Declan Murray, Ciaran Davidson MSYP, Aaron Rhys Doidge MSYP, Rebacca Marek, Liz Cooper, Anthony Olowoyeye, Elaine Mullan, Leonie Meier, Leonie Hammerstein, Katerina Michailidou, David Stevenson, Ruben Ekow Gaisie.

Apologies: Siobhan McMahon MSP, Jackie Baillie MSP, Dr Richard Simpson MSP, Pat Hiddleston, Prof RRB Leakey, Hamish Goldie Scot, David Kenvyn, Lorna McDonald, Rob Crawford.

Welcome and Introduction

Sarah Boyack MSP opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending the meeting on Climate Justice of the Cross-Party Group on International Development. Sarah welcomed the large turnout and apologised for the technical issues with the committee room. Then, Sarah introduced the two speakers, Chris Hegarty and May East, before introducing the topic of Climate Justice and explaining the link between climate change and international development. The minutes from the Annual General Meeting (17 June 2014) were agreed unanimously with no amendments.

Presentation by Chris Hegarty, Senior Policy and Advocacy Adviser, Christian Aid

Chris Hegarty provided a brief introduction on the issue of Climate Justice and started his presentation providing an overview of the climate talks. His presentation provided the following information on United Nations' summits:

- UNFCCC/COP process is the UN forum for climate negotiations & agreements;
- Emerged from the Rio 'Earth Summit' in 1992, started in 1994;
- This year is COP 20 in Lima and next year will be COP21 in Paris with lot of expectations.

Chris highlighted the importance of the 2015 Paris summit:

- New agreement to be signed to replace the Kyoto Protocol from 2020 onwards;
- Science is more compelling than ever;
- 'Last chance to get it right'.

The presentation provided further information on the current mood in climate talks:

- Some encouraging noises e.g. USA, China;
- Countries to make 'bottom-up pledges' in Q1 2015;
- Still huge gap between likely pledges and required action.

In the second part of his presentation, Chris focused on the issue of Climate Justice, highlighting three key elements. The first one is fairness. Countries' responses and obligations should reflect:

- Historic responsibility for emissions;
- Capacity – who can afford to act first?;
- Levels of extreme poverty – the right to development.

The second key element is power. According to Christian Aid, 'Only the transformation of power relations will change an unjust world'. Chris highlighted the fact that:

- One of the main reasons why climate talks don't reflect interests of those affected is the global imbalance of power;
- Correlation between economic power and political power is at the heart of the injustice: Big economies, big emissions, big political power = big incentive to keep things as they are.

The last key element is participation. Chris advocated that participants at the top table of climate talks should be different:

- e.g. Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance
- Support for partner organisations to take part in national delegations
- Women: disproportionately affected by climate change.

The last part of the presentation focused on actions that have to be taken:

- UK/Scottish Governments (businesses, NGOs, people, etc.) have roles to play
- Scotland has an important contribution to make;
- Many in Scotland (e.g. business, cross-party politicians) aiming to highlight this internationally.

Chris presented a film launched last week by several organisations on Scotland's Climate Action Story. The video can be accessed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woY8TvgswjU>

Chris concluded his presentation stating that 2015 will be a major fork in the road in how we respond to climate change. Fairness, power, participations are the three key elements at the heart of climate justice. Finally, Scotland has an important contribution to make.

Presentation by May East, Chief Executive, CIFAL Scotland

May East started her presentation quoting the UNITAR Affiliated Training Centre: "CIFAL programmes promote solutions of a sustainable future within planetary boundaries where no one is left behind".

May provided information on the strategic vision of the United Nations, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were set up in 2000 and which synthesise all goals previously discussed and agreed in UN summits. She described the MDGs as very successful, capable of catching people's imagination. However, she added that MDGs were created by 'North' to be implemented in the 'South'.

May introduced the three different work streams of the UN which relates to the topic of the meeting: the MDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate change. Then, she provided further information on the Post-15 process. She stated that Post-MDGs and SDGs agendas merged into one Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Furthermore, May added that NGOs working on sustainable development and NGOs working on international development are starting to work together.

May explained that the SDGs Outcome Document was tabled in July 2014. The report which contains the 17 goals will now be synthesised by Ban Ki-moon. She highlighted the interesting relationship between SDGs which are the philosophical thinking and framework and climate change negotiations which is legally binding.

May proposed to pass on her notes of the pledges made by the different countries at the last UN summit on climate change (a summary of the pledges can be accessed at: <http://www.cifalscotland.org/index.php/international-campaigns/275-climate-summit-a-major-turning-point-in-the-way-the-world-is-approaching-climate-change>). She stated that some pledges were recycled and some unambitious. However, climate change is now a real problem for, if it is not all, most of the countries in the world, as climate disasters affect the economy.

May said that she is hoping that the COP in Paris will result in a binding legalisation to tackle climate change. She stated that it is time to convert commitments into action.

Sarah Boyack MSP thanked the speakers who, she said, were both very inspiring, and asked CPG members to circulate the film presented by Chris Hegarty around their networks.

Sarah called on everyone to think about what they could do through networks and organisations they are members of to get informed discussion and support for action on Scottish carbon emissions. She added that a key question is what we do to act on our ambitions in relation to reducing our own climate change emissions given that Scotland has failed to meet them three years in a row.

Question and Answer session

A range of questions were asked following the presentation. Please note that it is not the intention of the minutes to record a verbatim account.

Julian Holbrook raised the point that it is difficult to get people to accept that small changes can make a difference.

Colin Pritchard highlighted the fairness importance in addressing climate change. He also made the point that Scotland might not be doing as good as it said when buying from China and thus offloading some of our CO² emissions to China. Finally, Colin raised the issue that it is an accumulation process and asked who should get the rest of the emissions.

May East made the point that communities are the most important; she joined 'We have solutions' in the March for Climate Change. Communities are very important drivers of the climate change's process. She also stated that the UN aim as high as possible because of compromises at later stages. Goals are aspirations that need to move onto opportunities.

Chris Hegarty stated that in 2009 pledge, the Scottish Government attempted to try to capture consumption base emissions.

Patrick Harvie MSP stated that the way of measuring Scotland's emissions is meant to be developed and cited a range of approaches.

Chris Hegarty stated that the legislation in Scotland is starting to address the issue of fairness.

Sarah Boyack MSP added that when the Scottish Government was a minority government, the opposition had more power to push for radical legislation. Now, the context is different. She also stated that more and more businesses get involved but there is a long way to go in delivering the level of emission reductions required.

Julian Siann raised the point that environmental agencies in Rwanda need help but Scotland has a very short fund. He asked the Scottish Government to create a viable fund to finance those agencies and also required more studies and research programmes transfer.

Ulrich Loening raised the point that contraction and convergence is needed. He also stated that Scotland should be an initiator.

The issue of development in African countries was raised with regard to the compensation they should receive for climate change.

Chris Hegarty answered that one of the main aim is to get rid of poverty. He said that climate change is a threat to development. Solutions have to be found and it is the responsibility of the Northern countries which, indeed, are not fulfilling their responsibilities at the moment.

May East stated that countries should have differentiated responsibilities. The main polluters need to do more. They should not be setting the targets for themselves.

Sarah Boyack MSP noted that for countries like Malawi the cost of developing renewable energy is high so help is needed to enable developing countries to use and customise clean technology.

May East stated that the Scottish Fund was a good thing but it was not enough yet.

Pete Cannell provided information on the World Justice Festival starting on the 4th of October where the issue of Climate Justice will be discussed. He raised the point that the mobilisation in Scotland for the March for Climate Change was low in comparison of the one in New York for instance.

Benjamin Carey asked if there is any room for optimism.

Jake Broadhurst stated that vested interests are a barrier. He also asked how we could get the economists to help out and what is the role of the IMF and World Bank.

May East stated that the two elements - reflection and action - need to be balanced. She said that having a positive vision is necessary, i.e. a vision to be turned into spreadsheet that economically makes sense. The point that no opinion either on or from the Scottish oil industry was heard in the meeting was raised as well as the issue of corporate social responsibility.

Anthony Olowoyeye raised the issue of projects funding in Africa.

David Stevenson provided the contact information of the person in charge of the Scottish fund.

May East answered that some countries have launched new initiatives in cooperation with the oil industry.

Sarah Boyack MSP concluded stating that the international development agenda and the climate change agenda need to converge. Climate Justice is a challenge for all and for the Parliament. She introduced the next Cross-Party Group meeting on 8th October on the topic of rewilding. Moreover, she asked the audience to think about what they will do after this meeting (e.g. contacting MSPs, MPs, using twitter, supporting NGO campaigning on the issue...). Sarah said she will be in touch with the Oil and Gas Cross-Party Group.

Sarah closed the meeting and thanked Chris Hegarty and May East in particular and all attendees for the two inspiring presentations and an excellent discussion.

Forthcoming meetings of the CPG:

- 8th October 2014
- 18th November 2014
- 20th January 2015
- 24th March 2015
- 16th June 2015 (AGM)

All meetings are held in the Scottish Parliament and commence at 5.30pm until 7pm (except the 8th October, on Rewilding which has George Monbiot and Alan Featherstone speaking at 1pm – 2.30pm)