

Minutes Cross Party Group

On the

Middle East and South Asia

1.00pm 2nd April 2014, Committee Room 5, Scottish Parliament

MSPs Present:

Hanzala Malik MSP (Convener)

Jamie McGrigor MSP

Anne McTaggart MSP

All Others Present:

Bob Haddow- UK Filter

Goran Zangana- Individual

Apologies:

Mohammed Razaq- West of Scotland Regional Equality Council

Faten Hameed- Scottish Iraqi Society

Umbreen Khalid- Secretary

1. Matter arising from previous minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting on 17th April 2013 were approved with no amendments.

Matter arising from previous minutes were:

- Pakistan cycle challenge and visit- The Pakistan cycle challenge in Lahore was a success and took place in the beginning of February 2014. The challenge raised £32,600 for the Yorkhill hospital in Glasgow. Those funds are not ring-fenced There was also £6,500 raised for the children's hospital in Lahore which is ring-fenced and will only be used for beds and incubators. It was discussed in the meeting of holding a cycle challenge next year in 2015 as well.

2. AGM/ election of office bearers

The group approved the results of the election of office bearers. All of the office bearers are as in the previous year.

3. Proposed Friendship Visit

Hanzala Malik MSP proposed a "Friendship Visit" for the Winter Break of 2014-15 to Pakistan. The Group would elect members for the visit, which would conclude after 5 days. Hanzala Malik MSP proposed there would be one formal engagement a day, with other informal events over the visit. Hanzala Malik MSP also proposed a "Heritage Exchange" between students in Lahore and students at the Glasgow Art College in Glasgow. The purpose of the exchange would to share cultural and other aspects between Glasgow and Lahore.

Actions: Hanzala Malik MSP will negotiate with contacts in Pakistan and let the Group know of approval/progress of the visit and Heritage Exchange by the end of May.

4. Anna McDonald

Hanzala Malik MSP held a meeting with Anna McDonald, who is taking a group of 5 people to Kurdistan to play a concert of traditional Scottish music and Gaelic singing. This is being overseen by the British Consulate, and Anna is going in order to raise money for a hospital that was recently damaged in a fire in Son Omani.

Actions: Hanzala Malik MSP will prepare a motion for the Scottish Parliament to recognize the event. Goran Zangang will also get in touch with Anna to see how the CPG can aid her visit.

5. Iraqi Elections

The IHEC has announced they will establish a voting poll in Glasgow for the upcoming Iraqi election. Thank you to Hanzala Malik MSP for voting. The location for the polling place has not been announced, Hanzala Malik MSP suggested Napierhall Street as a suitable location. IHEC realised decision only those with Iraqi documents to vote in the election. The votes from the polling place will be counted in Glasgow, not Iraq as well.

Actions: Hanzala Malik MSP will decide whether or not to write to the commission about requirements to vote and will also aid the Commission in the decision of where to set up the election polling place.

6. Subgroups

Women- Anne McTaggart MSP reported on FGM. They have had several meetings in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Thank you to Hanzala Malik MSP and his office for their help. Anne announced there will be a national meeting on FGM in Edinburgh. Thank you to Fatem and Umbreen for organising the event 'Women in Politics' which advertises what happens in the CPG on the Middle East and South Asia, and advises on how women can get involved with the Group and politics.

AOB

Arrangement of next meeting and sub group meetings:

Action: Umbreen will circulate dates of the next meeting and sub group meetings as soon as possible.

