

CROSS-PARTY GROUP ANNUAL RETURN

NAME OF CROSS-PARTY GROUP

Cross-Party Group on Freedom of Religion or Belief

DATE GROUP ESTABLISHED (the date of establishment is the date in this parliamentary session that the Group held its initial meeting, where the office bearers were elected and not the date that the Group was accorded recognition. All Groups should hold their AGMs on, or before, the anniversary of this date.)

21 February 2017

DATE OF MOST RECENT AGM

27 February 2019

DATE ANNUAL RETURN SUBMITTED

21 March 2019

DATE OF PRECEDING AGM [this date is required to aid clerks in verifying that the most recent AGM has taken place within 11-13 months of the previous AGM]

21 February 2018

GROUP MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Please provide details of each meeting of the Group including the date of the meeting, a brief description of the main subjects discussed and the MSP and non-MSP attendance figures.

Details of any other activities, such as visits undertaken by the Group or papers/report published by the Group should also be provided.

21st February 2018 meeting

The Group's AGM at which John Mason MSP was duly re-elected as group convener and Murdo Fraser MSP was re-elected as group vice convener. The group also heard from Ephraim Borowski of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, about the problem of antisemitism in the UK.

MSP Attendance: 2 Non-MSP Attendance: 21

5th September 2018 meeting

The Group heard from Dr. Kishan Manocha who is the senior advisor on Freedom of Religion or Belief from OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). He delivered an excellent appraisal on the importance of Freedom of Religion and Belief and the work being carried out by the ODIHR and UN in promoting it across the world. Unfortunately, this meeting was inquorate as only one MSP attended.

MSP Attendance: 1 Non-MSP Attendance: 29

5th December 2018 meeting

The Group heard from the Director of Free Tibet/Tibet Watch, Eleanor Byrne-Rosengren, who gave a report on the shocking oppression faced by the Tibetans under Chinese occupation. The meeting also included a discussion session which looked at the plight of other minority groups in China.

MSP Attendance: 2 Non-MSP Attendance: 21

MSP MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

Please provide names and party designation of all MSP members of the Group.

John Mason MSP (SNP),
Murdo Fraser MSP (Conservative),
Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP (Liberal Democrat),
Elaine Smith MSP (Labour),
Gordon Lindhurst MSP (Conservative),
Jeremy Balfour MSP (Conservative),
Maurice Golden MSP (Conservative),
Ross Greer MSP (Green)

NON-MSP MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

For organisational members please provide only the name of the organisation, it is not necessary to provide the name(s) of individuals who may represent the organisation at meetings of the Group.

Individuals	Steve Begarnie, Linda Oxburgh Brian Oxburgh
Organisations	Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Church of Scotland, Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, Glasgow Focolare, ACN UK, Muslim Council of Scotland, Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, Free Church of Scotland, Interfaith Scotland, Humanist Society Scotland, Release International, Iona Community, Baha'i Community, Shi'a Muslim Community, Steadfast Global, Tear Fund International, Open Doors Advocacy, DLMPS Researchers, Open Doors, Society for Protection of the Unborn Child, Quaker Society of Friends, Centre for Public Christianity, Global Minorities Alliance, Police Scotland, Fife Mosque, Evangelical Alliance

GROUP OFFICE BEARERS

Please provide names for all office bearers. The minimum requirement is that two of the office bearers are MSPs and one of these is Convener – beyond this it is a matter for the Group to decide upon the office bearers it wishes to have. It is permissible to have more than one individual elected to each office, for example, co-conveners or multiple deputy conveners.

Convener	John Mason MSP
Deputy Convener	Murdo Fraser MSP
Secretary	Interfaith Scotland
Treasurer	NA

FINANCIAL BENEFITS OR OTHER BENEFITS RECEIVED BY THE GROUP

Please provide details of any financial or material benefit(s) received from a single source in a calendar year which has a value, either singly or cumulatively, of more than £500. This includes donations, gifts, hospitality or visits and material assistance such as secretariat support.

Details of material support should include the name of the individual providing support, the value of this support over the year, an estimate of the time spent providing this support and the name of the organisation that this individual is employed by / affiliated to in providing this support.

Groups should provide details of the date on which the benefit was received, the value of the benefit and a brief description of the benefit.

If the Group is not disclosing any financial information please tick the box to confirm that the Group has considered the support received, but concluded it totalled under the threshold for disclosure (£500).

SUBSCRIPTION CHARGED BY THE GROUP

Please provide details of the amount charged and the purpose for which the subscription is intended to be used.

NA

CONVENER CONTACT DETAILS

Name	John Mason MSP
Parliamentary address	1335 Gallowgate Glasgow G31 4DN John.mason.msp@parliament.scot
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