

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CROSS PARTY GROUP
19 NOVEMBER 2013
COMMITTEE ROOM 5, SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT
5:30-7PM**

Attendees:

Sarah Boyack MSP, Patrick Harvie MSP, Katie Dearden, Otis Ortsesh, David Kenvyn, Norman Chipakupaku, Kirsty Harper, Gerda Siann, Julian Siann, Linda Todd, David Stevenson, Marjorie Clark, Agnes Ngulube Holmes, Matt Grady, Cathy Crawford, Carol Finlay, Fiona Forsyth, Rebecca Murray, Seonaid Stevenson, Anna Michna, Liberty Thawda, Alastair Greig, Sarah Jones, Rebecca Walker, Rachel McConnell, Alison Orr, Rachael Crockett, Laura Graham, Callum Todd, Afia Aslam, James Walker, Gillian Wilson, Goran Zangoma, George Palattiyil, Dina Sidhva, Martha Baillie, Frances Neo Johnston, Carolyn Ford.

Apologies:

Jayne Baxter MSP, Siobhan McMahon MSP, Colin Pritchard, Carol Morton, John M Francis, Sean Walls, Rob Crawford, Julie Hepburn, Callum Henderson, Allison Cosgrove, Susan McIntosh.

Welcome and Introduction

Sarah Boyack MSP opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. The minutes from the 24th September 2013 meeting were reviewed with no amendments. These notions were supported firstly by David Stevenson and secondly David Kenvyn.

Sarah expressed the importance of ImpActAIDS and how the medicines have been invented but are not always available to the people who need them.

Cathy Crawford, ImpActAIDS UK

Cathy introduced ImpActAIDs and spoke of personal experience of needing treatment on return from Cambodia and the availability of access to the required drugs. Cathy also suggested that it is crucial everyone should have the same access to these medicines. A short background was also provided on those affected by HIV, the rise in numbers since 2000/1 and the inclusion of this in the MDGs, most specifically on how there is a less clear idea on the issue of treatment.

Diarmaid McDonald, Advocacy Manager at Stop Aids

Diarmaid informed the group of the issues around HIV responses and access to medicines and also explained how the organisation hopes to influence responses not just from the UK Government but also internationally within the EU, UNICEF and Oxfam.

Diarmaid's presentation included an overview of the MDG's, to be reached by 2015, the importance of target 6A, 6B and 8C focusing on the importance of cooperation within pharmaceutical companies who provide the access to affordable drugs in developing countries. A short film was also provided which focused on the injustice of HIV, 'The Global Fund' and how an increase in investment can save more lives.

Diarmaid concluded his presentation by focusing on the need to:

- Develop a system driven by health needs rather than profits which ImpActAIDS will be focusing on in the next few years
- Reform and improve MDG 8C
- Receive leadership MSPs, MPs and MEPs
- Show what people in Scotland can do to influence their local MSPs.

Question and Answer

A number of questions and comments were made following the presentation to the group. Please note: It is not the intention of the Minutes to be recorded verbatim and only present a summary of the discussion.

- David Stevenson spoke of personal experience of working on the Global Fund against AIDS and Malaria and what we can do to help these conditions;
- The point was raised on how much we spend on diseases like Cancer and other neglected diseases and how everyone should receive the same treatment;
- Patrick Harvie MSP suggested the practical consequences of drug accessibility through the impact on the way HIV is perceived and how it is crucial to reinvent prevention messages for each generation;
- Sarah Boyack MSP expanded on this point suggesting ideas on how to make this effective through radios, plays etc to educate and inform the next generation;
- Otis Ortesh made the point of the demand and profit made by the global market element and factors slowing down the prevention of HIV;
- David Kenvyn focused on how we solve the accessibility to medicines, how we can influence the pharmaceutical companies to make moral decisions and how we can get countries to put more into the Global Fund;
- The point was also made of the necessity for transformation on the outlook of what should be done, that public health must take over the view of what we are dealing with and there should not be an attempt to justify these types of drugs to uphold a status quo within these companies.

AOCB

Sarah Boyack MSP closed the meeting by concluding on the importance of how millions of lives can be saved and the quality of those lives if we do something about this by lobbying, people we have access to and encourage this in groups and charities. Sarah also suggested how she and Patrick Harvie MSP will look into how they can get onto these issues and bid for the members' debate on World Aids Day.

She thanked the speakers for their presentations from ImpActAIDS and Stop Aids and for those who attended.

Next Meeting

21 January 2014

World Development Movement and Agnes Holmes will be presenting on the topic of food security