

Nuclear Disarmament Cross Party Group,

Wednesday 19th September

1800-1900

Present (Parliamentarians)

Bill Kidd MSP (Chair)

Isabella Gabrovsky Parliamentary Assistant to Bill Kidd

John Finnie MSP

Ruth Maguire MSP

Civil Society Organisations

Lynn Jamieson (SCND)

Brian Larkin (Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre)

Eve McCarthy (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom)

Carol Acute (Soko Gakkai UK)

Christine Kydd (traditional singer)

Andy Shanks (traditional singer)

Maike Beenes (PAX NI)

Anthony Donovan (ICAN, & UfP US)

Timmon Wallis (NuclearBanUS & ICAN)

Vicky Elson (NuclearBanUS & ICAN)

Jane Tallents (Trident Ploughshares)

Chris Pettigrew (IVS)

Steve Davies (SNPCND)

Ivon Bartholomew (photographer appointed to record ICAN visitors to the Scottish Parliament)

Janet Fenton (CPG group secretary - Scottish CND, ICAN)

Michael Orgel (MEDACT)

apologies:

David Mackenzie (Nukewatch)

Gari Donn (United Nations Association Scotland & UN House Scotland)

1. INTRODUCTIONS, MINUTES MATTERS ARISING

Welcome from Bill Kidd and two traditional singers Christine Kydd and Andy Shanks who sang two welcoming songs that shared some Scots words with the international visitors.

2. SCOTTISH ACTIVITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Janet Fenton welcomed all to participate in the Nae Nukes Rally which will meet at Faslane Peace Camp at 12noon on the 22nd September and then walk to the North gate

3. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

3.1 Feedback from Hiroshima from Carol Acutt from SGI
<https://www.sgi.org/>.

Carol explained something of the history and philosophy of the Buddhism in Action for Peace SGI and that SGI recently has collaborated with ICAN to produce an exhibition and a short animated course. She reported on her recent visit to the Hiroshima Memorial and how it represents the events of 6th August 1945, the 90% devastation for the city, the over 140,000 people who had died within the year, along with the testimonies of Hibakusha, and the story of the little girl who when faced with leukaemia tried to fold a thousand paper cranes.

As well as documenting the hellish effects of the bomb, the museum has a history its development, the use made of means to deliberately amplify its terrible effects and some documentation of the history of arms race and disarmament. Carol also described some of the monuments and dedications in the memorial peace park including the flame of peace which has burned continuously since it was lit in 1964 and will burn until there are no nuclear weapons in the world.

After leaving Hiroshima and thinking about the contrast between what you see today and the legacy of these events she reflected on another day in Scotland when she thought of Sorely MacLlean's poem Gaelic poem Sgreapadal which talks of the clearances of people by the landlord (Rainy) from that township on the Scottish island of Raasy and she quoted some lines from the English translation:

Rainy left Sgreapadal without people,
with no house or cattle, only sheep
but he left Sgreapadal beautiful
in his time he could do nothing else.
A seal would lift its head
and a basking-shark its tail,
but today in the sea-sound
a submarine lifts its turret
and its black sleek back
threatening the thing that would make
dross of wood, of meadows and of rocks,
that would leave Sgreapadal without beauty
just as it was left without people.

3.2 Visitors from the USA,

Anthony Donovan, reported that he had met Bill Kidd and Janet Fenton at the UN in New York and there learned a great deal about nuclear weapons and the horror and menace Trident is to the world. He introduced **Timmon Milne Wallis**, Executive Director of NuclearBan US. and cofounder Vicky Elsan

<http://www.nuclearban.us> who reported on the work that was going on in the USA to build Nuclear Weapons ban treaty. California state has voted to support the treaty, and then started to think about how to boycott and divest and progress is ongoing in other states. At the grassroots level they are working to get people to align with the treaty at as individuals, cities, states and organisation. **Maike Beenes** from Pax, the Netherlands <https://www.paxforpeace.nl/> explained that the Netherlands also hosts US nuclear weapons despite about three quarters of the Dutch population wishing that the government would use the treaty to get rid of the them The TPNW campaign in the Netherlands had 40,000 signatures in support. Unlike the UK, their government attended the talks on TPNW treaty and engaged although they voted against it. A lot is happening in their parliament including divestment efforts. Pax produced a Don't Bank on the Bomb report and Maike is speaking at 6.30 in 50 George Square on 20th September in an event organised by the Scottish group working on Don't Bank on the Bomb to launch the Scotland specific version of the report authored by Linda Pearson.

4 POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UK

John Finnie MSP emphasised the importance of working together across parties and boundaries. He noted that he became involved in politics because of his awareness of the threat of nuclear weapons in the Holy Loch at the time in his home in Argyll.

Ruth Maguire MSP noted that it was also anti-nuclear sentiment that sparked her interest in politics, particularly Chernobyl. She observed that the work in the UN by Scottish peace movement activists showed what a determined group could do