

## **Nuclear Disarmament Cross Party Group**

**Wednesday 26th June, 5.30 – 6.30 pm**

### **1. Welcome and introductions**

#### **Present (Parliamentarians)**

Bill Kidd MSP (Convenor)

plus Jenny Olson, parliamentary researcher

plus Isabella Gabrovsky, parliamentary assistant

Sandra White MSP

Ross Greer MSP

John Finnie MSP

Mark Ruskell MSP

#### **Present (Civil Society Organisations)**

Janet Fenton (Secretary, and ICAN liaison Scotland))

Jean Anderson (SCP CND)

Gordon Dickson (Scottish GREENS CND)

David Mackenzie (TP)

Jane Tallents (Nukewatch)

Brian Larkin (EPJC)

Carol Acutt (SGI)

Guy Johnson (MEDACT)

### **2. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY**

#### **2.1 Intimation of Karipbek Kuyukov visit**

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1-2.15pm to the Scottish Parliament. Artist Karipbek Kuyukov will visit Parliament and there will also be an opportunity to view some of his award winning artwork on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September, 1-2.15pm in Committee Room 3, Ground Floor at The Scottish Parliament. The invitation has been sent to MSPs and others with an interest in the CPG and it was reported that invitations are also being sent to prominent people in arts,

disability and medical communities and that **Janet and Jenny** will co-ordinate these invites.

Janet reported that the upper house of the Kazakh parliament has approved the ratification of the TPNW on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June, which will bring the total number of ratifications to 24 when their instrument of ratification is deposited at the UN (imminent).

## **2.2 Feedback from Janet Fenton, who attended the NPT prep con in May and the ICAN Campaigners Conference - preceding and with additional sessions during.**

### **The NPT:**

- The TPNW's focus on the disproportionate impact of nuclear weapons is highlighting gender as an issue in UN diplomacy generally and on disarmament in particular significant side event at the NPT was the launch of the new UNDIR report 'Still Behind the Curve' (see <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/still-behind-the-curve-en-770.pdf>)

In response to a question from John Finnie, re significance of gender to nuclear weapons, Janet summarised:

- Ionising radiation has twice the impact on women's bodies as it has on men's, has more effect on soft tissue and makes the growing body more vulnerable to cancers.
  - Social stigmatisation affects female nuclear/radiation victims from Chernobyl to Fukushima where 'atomic divorce' describes marriage breakdown arising from financially unsupported evacuation of women and children
  - Nuclear weapons possession is predicated on a culture that prefers strong capable unemotional men to take charge over impulsive, emotional, nurturing women.
  - Women are usually debarred from the patriarchal political arena where there is a preference for technical description of reach and capacity, rather than description of the humanitarian consequences
  - It is not the gender of those in charge of these weapons that creates the culture, but the way that society assigns roles.
  - Astronomical cost of nuclear weapons at the expense of basic needs hits women hardest as they are the majority of those on lower incomes or in charge of the care of the poor, vulnerable and dependent.
  - The power of gender discourse to exclude what is now coded as "feminine" will be weakened by the presence of women.
  - We need to invite women and men to attend to the identities, emotions and discourses that will prevent us from accepting any possible use of nuclear weapons.
- A side event on the proposed WMD Free Middle East Conference to take place at the UN in November took place. Sharon Dolev (METO) highlighted the importance of Scotland's early input to that process and hope for a Scottish Parliament statement of support at it **Bill/Janet** to progress

- Amongst pro TPNW UN member states there is awareness and interest re Scotland's position. Bill Kidd was missed by several campaigners. Diplomats can talk with MSPs at the UN. There would be diplomatic restrictions on their visiting Scotland as distinct from the UK. It would have an important and credible impact for MSPs to be in attendance at next year's NPT, which is the first review conference since the TPNW. It takes place in My 2020 in New York. MSP's could be accredited to attend through ICAN as civil society delegates. Side events and meetings for them can be facilitated and arranged by ICAN. Details **from Janet for any interested MSPS**

### **The ICAN Campaigners Conference**

- Links between climate change and the nuclear threat are well evidenced and should be highlighted in disarmament campaigning, note Bulletin of Atomic Scientists.
- Janet requests that the ICAN Cities Appeal is supported at political party level to make it easier to brief councillors on an individual basis. This was done and greatly appreciated with the Parliamentarian's Pledge last year. An event could be planned for 21 (UN International Peace Day) or 26 September (UN elimination of nuclear weapons day) **Bill/Ross**

## **3. SCOTTISH ACTIVITY AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **3.1 The War Game**

Further to an action and invitation in February by Trident Ploughshares on the collapse of the INF Treaty, the Russian Consul in Edinburgh may be willing to attend a screening of The War Game.

A screening of the War Game will take place at Caledonian University in November. MSP's from the CPG are invited, any who wish to attend please contact **Janet**.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-war-game-censorship-war-and-the-media-tickets-64227947520>

A second screening with a panel discussion could be arranged for MSPs at the Parliament for early next year. The panel can to include Prof John Cook and students who attended. It was agreed to invite members of the Russia and US CPG's once a date is fixed. **Janet and Jenny to progress.**

**3.2 Update from Nukewatch on Unready Scotland Report** and Government response Jane Tallents reported on a convoy emergency exercise of 22 June 2016 (see <https://theferret.scot/astral-climb-nuclear-bomb-convoy-exercise/>). which took place on an uninhabited back road. It usefully revealed serious shortcomings in communication and organisation.

Mark Ruskell reported that On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June the delayed Scottish Government report on our preparedness for an incident will be published and a note will go to all MSPs and be placed on the SG web.

It was agreed that this group should ask about plans for longer term scrutiny and who will be responsible. **Mark/Jane**

### **3.3 Update on Divestment activity – Don't Bank on The Bomb –**

There are council resolutions calling for divestment: Renfrew and East Dunbartonshire are the most recent. Don't Bank on The Bomb Scotland are reaching out to all local authorities. Parliamentary pension scheme fund manager is Baillie Gifford. The Scottish Parliament Pension Scheme Trustee Board have had productive discussions and hope to move forward on more ethical investments. Don't Bank on The Bomb Scotland website will publish new report. Details from **Brian**

### **3.4 Scottish CND update**

SCND's local stall campaign 'Scotland not Trident'. We have themed activities for every month: Housing not Trident – March; Climate not Trident –April; Jobs not Trident –May; Transport not Trident –June; NHS not Trident – 6<sup>th</sup> July; Education not Trident – 3<sup>rd</sup> August. There has been Scotland-wide participation and the themed leaflets have been very popular.

New reports:

*Alliances, Power and Peace in a Changing World*

on European alliances and NATO **David**

*Banning the Bomb or Assuring Destruction?*

On the Treaty and how it can inform campaigning

*Still NoWhere To Go*

On trident replacement and the implications for Scotland **Janet**

Regular SCND activities include Glasgow street stalls on 4th Thursday of month (before the monthly Scottish Peace Network meeting), Wednesday support for the Faslane Vigil SCND supports Faslane Peace Camp with publicity and practical help (through the Helensburgh CND group).

SCND hosts the nuclearban.scot website and the SCND TPNW Working Group is working on TPNW Alliance and ICAN Cities Appeal. We are part of the ICAN Scottish Round Table. Glasgow and Edinburgh Councils will discuss motions on supporting the TPNW on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June.

Scottish CND Trade Union Network reports that a resolution was passed at the Scottish TUC Congress calling for the setting up of a Scottish Defence Diversification Agency.

### **Further info SCND office**

Scottish National Party CND Group -

The Scottish National Party CND Group succeeded in getting a resolution passed at the SNP conference in April. The 'Roadmap for Trident Removal' will create a detailed description of the processes to implement immediately when Scotland becomes independent. See <https://snpcnd.scot/news/>. The resolution is now SNP policy. SNPCND members give regular talks on 'The Trouble with Trident' around Scotland and this month have been to Glasgow Southside, Coatbridge & Chryston, Rutherglen, Inverness and Pitlochry. **Jean**

Scottish Green CND Network

A new Scottish Green CND Network is now up and running. It was warmly welcomed at the Scottish Green conference in April and membership is increasing rapidly. **Gordon**

**Peace Education Scotland** continues its outreach to schools, colleges and universities. This month they have a showing of the film *War School: The Battle for Britain's Children* which explores the growing peace movement in the UK, in the context of growing militarisation of British schools for propaganda and recruitment purposes. The *Peace of History* exhibition which celebrates 60 years of campaigning is travelling all round Scotland and is welcomed in schools, libraries, museums, community halls and art venues. **SCND office**

### **3.4 Peace Cranes Exhibition**

The Peace and Justice Centre now have 130,000 peace cranes. They will be exhibited in several places on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hiroshima bomb. The exhibitions will also raise awareness of the TPNW signatures and ratifications.

No arrangement is yet in place for the Scottish Parliament. It is agreed that SG Events Committee will be approached again to arrange an exhibition of the peace cranes in Holyrood. ICAN would be able to provide information panels for the exhibition.

**Bill and Jenny to progress**

Bill Kidd MSP thanked the participants and closed the meeting at 7pm.