



**Cross - Party Group on Turkey
in the Scottish Parliament**

Inaugural Meeting of Cross-Party Group on Turkey

In Committee Room 5, Scottish Parliament on Wednesday, 20 August 2014

Minutes

PRESENT

Guests

H. E. Ambassador of Republic of Turkey Abdurrahman Bilgic
Humza Yousaf, Minister for External Affairs and International Development
Garry Clark, Head of Policy and Public Affairs of Scottish Chambers of Commerce

Members:

Convener: James Dornan MSP
Deputy Convener: Gordon MacDonald MSP
Secretary: Sitki Nalci
Richard Lyle MSP
Semih Turgut, Turkish Consul General in Edinburgh
Elvan Hacıefendioglu, Counsellor, Turkish Embassy
John Clifford, Honorary Consul of Austria
Cllr Yen Hongmei Jin
Ahmet Serhat Sari, Turkish Airlines
Seref Zengin, Turkish Scottish Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Garry Clark, Scottish Chambers of Commerce
Dr Can Ozkan, Speak Turkish
Nick Soper, Scotch Whisky Association
Professor James Crow, Edinburgh University
Hasan Bakimci
Kirsty MacAlpine
Nazmi Okan
Atilla Boyla
Serkan Aydin
Susan Fountain
Duygu Duman
Fatih Atmaca
Savas Ekinli
Sinem Thomson

1. James Dornan MSP Convener of Cross-Party Group on Turkey welcomed everybody and H. E. Ambassador of Republic of Turkey Abdurrahman Bilgic, Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for External Affairs and International Development, and Semih Turgut, Turkish Consul General in Edinburgh. Convener stressed the importance of public involvement in developing economic, cultural and political links between Scotland and Turkey and Cross-Party Group was an extension of this involvement.
2. H. E. Ambassador of Republic of Turkey Abdurrahman Bilgic in his speech said he was delighted to see the Cross-Party Group on Turkey was up and running for the benefit of both countries and this was an important step forward in increasing economic, political, educational and cultural exchanges between both countries. H. E. Ambassador thanked Convener James Dornan MSP and Sitki Nalci, Secretary of the CPG for the hard work they put in establishing the CPG-on-Turkey.
3. Humza Yousaf, Minister for External Affairs and International Development welcomed H. E. Ambassador of Republic of Turkey Abdurrahman Bilgic to Edinburgh and welcomed the establishment of this new Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament. The Minister also stressed the importance of ever developing economic and political links between two countries i.e. opening of Turkish Airlines in Edinburgh with direct flights between Edinburgh and Istanbul. And also establishment of Turkish Scottish Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
4. Guest speaker Garry Clark, Head of Policy and Public Affairs of Scottish Chambers of Commerce said he was delighted to be at this meeting specifically during his own organisation's desire of expansion internationally. He said he would be happy to work with and the support the work of this Cross-Party Group. He has recognised the value of this group and importance of public involvement in developing further links between two countries.
5. Semih Lutfu Turgut, Turkish Consul General in Edinburgh welcomed the opening of the Cross-Party Group on Turkey in the Scottish Parliament and introduced members of the Turkish Community to the Group
6. The following work plan discussed and accepted unanimously.
 - Understanding the structure of Turkish and Scottish businesses operating in Scotland & Turkey and study of their roles in both countries.
 - Importance of Educational links and educational exchanges between two countries
 - Study of cultural links between Scotland and Turkey
 - The role of parliamentarians through exchange visits between two countries in promoting the mutual interests of both countries.
 - Study of voluntary and statutory organisations in both countries and benefits of exchanging ideas and partnership work
 - The Promotion of joint trade and industry exhibitions and visits between Scotland and TurkeyMembers also agreed to set up 3 sub-groups to work independently between the meetings to help to achieve above work plan. These sub-groups are; Education Sub-Group, Business Sub-Group and Parliamentary Sub-Group.

7. There were no other businesses to discuss and the meeting is closed at 2pm.