



All-Party Parliamentary Group on the United Nations

MEETINGS CONVENED 2013/2014

Facing critical challenges: bolstering state support to the International Criminal Court (21 October 2013)

Speakers:

- Mr James Stewart, Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court
- Ms Elizabeth Evenson, Senior Counsel, International Justice Program, Human Rights Watch

Mr Stewart remarked that the conditions under which the ICC may become involved with a state can hamper its effectiveness and neutrality, highlighting the need for state cooperation in three key areas: arrests, investigations and witness protection.

Ms Evenson addressed the recent accusations of bias directed at the ICC. Highlighting the need for public and diplomatic support, Ms Evenson praised the UK Government for its public commitment to the Court. She also urged the UK Government to engage with key African partners in reinforcing collective support for the Court amongst all states parties to the Rome Statute. Addressing the issue of perceived 'double standards', Ms Evenson called for the UN Security Council to pursue a more consistent approach to the ICC, particularly with regard to the referral and follow up of cases.

The meeting was chaired by Lord Hannay and jointly hosted by the UN APPG, United Nations Association – UK, and Human Rights Watch.

* * *

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls in Emergencies: A Joined-Up Response (12 November 2013)

Speakers:

- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women
- Zainab Bangura, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict

On 12 November at a joint event of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the United Nations and the Associate Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace and Security, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, head of UN Women, called for concrete action to protect women and girls in emergencies. This was Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka's first official visit to the UK in her new role, which she took up in August. *This meeting was chaired by Lord Hannay and hosted by the UN APPG.*

The meeting was chaired by Lord Hannay and Baroness Hodgson, and was jointly hosted by the UN APPG and the Associate Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace & Security.

* * *

UN Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights' inquiry on drones (4 December 2013)

Speakers:

- Ben Emmerson QC, UN Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights
- Professor Michael Clarke, Director General, Royal United Services Institute

During his presentation, Mr Emmerson raised concerns over the lack of accountability for the CIA-led drone strikes in Pakistan, particularly those strikes occurring between 2005-11 in Waziristan. He went on to welcome President Obama's announcement in May 2013 of plans to move responsibility for armed drone operations away from the CIA to the Department of Defence, where operations would be subject to more Congressional oversight.

Both Professor Clarke and Ben Emmerson spoke of the contrasting practices of the UK and US governments in deploying armed drones. Unlike the US, the UK only operates armed drones in Afghanistan and apparently never when there is risk of civilian casualties. There was also agreement between the speakers on the likelihood of UK intelligence being used by the US to support their armed drone operations outside areas of armed conflict – operations which are incompatible with UK policy.

The meeting was chaired by Lord Hannay and Tom Watson MP, and hosted jointly by the UN APPG and the APPG on drones.

* * *

What is membership of UNESCO worth to the UK? (5 December 2013)

Speakers:

- Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO
- Professor W John Morgan, Chairman of the UK National Commission for UNESCO
- Ambassador Matthew Sudders, UK Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Mrs Bokova outlined UNESCO's immense contribution across the fields of education, culture and heritage, including for the UK. She also spoke about the importance of gender equality in education and the need to promote freedom of speech and expression. Mrs Bokova praised the National Commission's report which estimates that UNESCO affiliated organisations in the UK benefit by generating £90 million per year through the UK's membership of UNESCO. This is six times the contribution made by the UK Government to the Organization.

This meeting was chaired by Lord Hannay and hosted by the UN APPG.

* * *

Mainstreaming R2P in UK strategy (6 May 2014)

Speakers:

- Professor Jennifer Welsh, UN Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)
- Professor Jason Ralph, University of Leeds

Professor Welsh stressed the importance of the Secretary-General's Rights up Front initiative, a follow up to the findings of the Internal Review Panel on the UN's actions in Sri Lanka, which seeks to put human rights and the protection of populations at the centre of everything the UN does. She also stated that the UK could do more on the Security Council to connect the agendas of civilian protection and

peacekeeping to R2P and speak up on the current French proposal to introduce a code of conduct on the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocity.

Professor Ralph presented the findings of his UNA-UK report on Mainstreaming R2P in UK strategy, which examines how the UK prepares for and responds to the threat of atrocity crimes. He discussed the differences between conflict prevention and atrocity prevention and suggested ways in which the UK could plug the gaps in its conflict prevention strategy in order to better deploy scarce resources to prevent atrocities.

This meeting was Chaired by Lord Hannay and jointly hosted by the UN APPG, the APPG on Global Security and Non-Proliferation and the APPG on Genocide Prevention.

* * *

Challenges Facing the UN Security Council: Past, Present and Future (15 May 2014)

Speakers:

- Sir Mark Lyall Grant, UK Permanent Representative to the UN
- Lord Hannay of Chiswick, UK Permanent Representative to the UN (1990-95)

The event took the form of a conversation between Sir Mark and one of his predecessors: Lord Hannay of Chiswick, giving rise to a lively discussion covering a wide range of topics, from the emergence of a new Cold War-type paralysis within the Security Council, to the ever-heated debate on Security Council reform.

To conclude the discussion, Lord Hannay asked Sir Mark about the UK's place within the UN. Citing our position as a member of the P5, being the only G20 country to meet the development target for overseas aid, and the English language as a benefit in terms of negotiating, Sir Mark stated that he believes the "United Kingdom's standing at the UN is very high" and he believes it will remain that way for the foreseeable future.

This meeting was jointly hosted by the United Nations Association – UK and Chatham House with participation from the UN APPG.

* * *

The destruction of Syria's chemical weapons (11 June 2014)

Speakers:

- Dr John Walker, Senior Principal Research Officer, Arms Control & Disarmament Research Unit at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Richard Guthrie, Director of CBW-Events.

The speakers highlighted that, although the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was unlikely to fully complete its mission to remove Syria's chemical weapons material and equipment by 30 June, a huge amount of progress had been made, with the OPCW having successfully removed around 92% of Syria's chemical weapons to date.

The use of chemical weapons in Syria sparked swift and productive diplomatic cooperation in 2013 between states that had hitherto been broadly opposed on action in Syria, reinforcing the global norm against the use of chemical weapons. During the meeting it was acknowledged that the handful of states not yet party to the Chemical Weapons Convention, including Burma, Egypt and North Korea, will be reminded of the overwhelming feeling amongst the international community that use of these weapons is unacceptable and the event of their use will be responded to robustly.

UNA-UK acts as the Secretariat of the UN APPG
Visit <http://www.una.org.uk/un-appg> for more info

This meeting was chaired by Lord Hannay and was jointly hosted by the UN APPG, the Global Security and Non-Proliferation APPG, and the UNA London and Southeast Region.

* * *

The next International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, Vienna, December 2014 (2 July 2014)

Speaker:

- HE Ambassador Alexander Kmentt, Director for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs

Chaired by Alistair Burt MP, the event was a joint meeting of the Top Level Group of UK Parliamentarians for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament & Non Proliferation (TLG), the APPG on Global Security & Non Proliferation, the UN APPG, and the European Leadership Network.

* * *

For more info on the UN APPG visit <http://www.una.org.uk/un-appg>