



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BRITISH GROUP
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
UNION

2016

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The BGIPU Chairman, Nigel Evans MP, speaking at the State Opening Reception on 18 May 2016

ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

Chair's Report



Mr Nigel Evans MP
Chair, BGIPU

I am pleased to report a very active year for BGIPU since our last Annual General Meeting, held later than usual last January due to parliamentary commitments. At the outset, I would like to register my gratitude to fellow members who have supported me in my role as Chair, in particular my fellow Executive Committee members.

I also want to register my appreciation to all those members who have supported our work by engaging with visiting delegations to Westminster and note the vitally important contribution of members undertaking outward visits to counterpart parliaments abroad. These bilateral visit exchanges provide rich experience and valuable insights into international relations of ever-increasing complexity, not least as Britain begins to pursue new opportunities, take existing relationships in new directions and use our international connections to forge a successful post-Brexit future.

I also want to thank members who have joined our UK delegations to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assemblies and other inter-parliamentary meetings overseas. Given the heightened international tensions and stresses in today's world, the importance of maintaining cooperative and cordial contacts with the widest scope of parliamentarians in other countries cannot be underestimated.

As it has done for well over a century, BGIPU's engagement continues to play an important and complementary role in parallel to formal government-to-government channels. In particular, we work to ensure there is informed and deeper understanding of the UK's interests and perspectives globally among parliamentary counterparts and ensure the diversity of UK political debate is fully reflected to a broader international audience.

This inter-parliamentary activity would not be possible, of course, without the invaluable support we receive from UK Ministers and Her Majesty's Government officials, most particularly the staff of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), particularly the Parliamentary Relations Department. The support of the FCO remains vital to our work including through meeting visiting delegations here in London and supporting our delegations when overseas. I must also acknowledge the key contribution made by Ambassadors and their diplomatic mission staff here in London and the UK's missions abroad which have provided strong support to BGIPU throughout the year.

Since the last Annual Report, BGIPU has received delegations to the Palace of Westminster from Saudi Arabia, Mongolia, Iceland, Nepal, Albania and, in the near future, Iraq. Well-advanced visits from Argentina and Ethiopia have recently been deferred due to parliamentary commitments in both those countries but are expected to be rescheduled.

In addition we also hosted a multi-country delegation from a range of EU and non-EU Parliaments in Europe to observe the UK's EU referendum on 23 June. All these exchanges gave visiting counterparts deeper understanding of the United Kingdom in the course of an extremely busy political year in the lead-up to and following the EU referendum. It gave those delegations opportunities to engage with members across a wide scope of issues, albeit questions about Brexit and the future of Britain's role in the world were often to the fore. The referendum observation mission was a unique but important undertaking which gave the opportunity for European counterparts to follow the referendum day's event first hand on what they all agreed was a truly momentous and historic day for the UK.

There are a range of other inward visits under preparation which will ensure BGIPU will exceed its nominal number of visits into the UK for the period 2016/17. Alongside this formal inward programme, BGIPU also hosted parliamentarians, officials and other interlocutors from a wide array of parliaments, including the Speaker of the Knesset from Israel and other visitors from Thailand, Vietnam, Argentina and Kosovo. We also hosted two substantive visits this year by the

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Secretary General, Mr Martin Chungong, including a signing on 28 April of the agreement for the 136th IPU Assembly in Dhaka in 2017 and a presentation to the Executive Committee on 12 July on the IPU's revised Strategic Plan.

In terms of overseas bilateral activity, since last year we have sent UK parliamentary delegations to Burma, Bolivia, France, Estonia, Uruguay, Philippines, Portugal/Cape Verde and the Dominican Republic. There will be other delegations before the end of the 2016/17 financial year which means BGIPU will surpass our target number of outward visits for the year as well. Reports of all of these activities, both inward and outward, are published on BGIPU's website which supplements this Annual Report.

In addition to participating in some areas of this bilateral activity, as BGIPU Chair, I have also had the honour to lead UK delegations to the 134th and 135th IPU Assemblies in Lusaka, Zambia and Geneva, Switzerland in March and October 2016 respectively. With the IPU's membership now reaching a historic high of 171 parliaments, Assemblies give us an important opportunity to debate a diverse range of current international issues and engage with counterparts across a large number of countries.

In pursuit of the UK's bilateral objectives, BGIPU held over a dozen targeted meetings with selected parliaments at each Assembly, in addition to a wide range of less formal contacts. At the multilateral level there have been general debates on "Rejuvenating democracy, giving voice to youth" and "Human rights abuses as precursors of conflict: Parliaments as early responders". There have also been emergency item debates on "the plight of children without civil status" and "the war and severe humanitarian situation in Syria, particularly in Aleppo".

Substantive committee outcomes of IPU Assemblies in 2016 have included resolutions on "Terrorism: The need to enhance global cooperation against the threat to democracy and human rights", "Ensuring lasting protection against destruction and deterioration for the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of humanity" and the "The freedom of women to participate in

political processes fully, safely and without interference: Building partnerships between men and women to achieve this objective”.

The UK delegation to IPU Assemblies continues to play a very active role in the core work of the IPU, including through Ian Liddell-Grainger MP’s current role as Vice-President of the IPU Executive Committee. With its 40th anniversary marked at the 135th Assembly in October, the IPU’s unique Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians continues to play a very important role in protecting the rights of parliamentarians across the world and I acknowledge the long-standing contribution to its work made by the Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP as a past President and current member of this vital organ of the IPU.

In addition to IPU Assemblies, we have also sent UK delegations to a number of IPU-organised meetings, often convened in connection with major global meetings, such as the Parliamentary Meeting at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris in December 2015. In 2016, we supported BGIPU participation in the Annual Parliamentary Hearing (this year on drug policy reform) at the United Nations in February, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) also in New York in March, the IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Zambia prior to the 134th Assembly, the Annual Session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO in mid-June and the World e-Parliament Conference in Valparaiso, Chile later that month.

I have been greatly enthused as BGIPU Chair to see the many opportunities our activities present to advance UK interest in both multilateral and bilateral contexts. This is particularly important at a time when we are seeking to create new ways of engaging with the world as a confident, forward-facing and deeply engaged country seeking to cement strong relations with a wide range of political and trading partners as we work resolutely towards our departure from the European Union. UK Parliamentarians have a key role to play in this process through dialogue with counterparts to ensure any misperceptions are addressed, dialogue is constructive and opportunities are seized.

The IPU continues to provide us with good mechanisms to do this work, as shown by our expanded bilateral engagement at Assemblies where I have

been delighted, as BGIPU Chair, to lead our efforts, acknowledging also the support of our hard-working and efficient Secretariat.

In closing this report, I pay tribute to two outgoing Officers who have come to the end of their tenure, Vice-Chair Mike Gapes MP and Treasurer Fabian Hamilton MP who have both made outstanding contributions to our work in recent years, although we look forward to their continuing involvement in other capacities on the Executive Committee in the years to come.

Nigel Evans MP
Chair, British Group IPU
7 November 2016

Director's Report



Mr Rick Nimmo
Director, BGIPU

In outlining the key administrative and organisational issues addressed by the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (BGIPU) Secretariat in 2016, I am grateful for the support of the entire BGIPU membership from both Houses and the very high quality work and dedication of our excellent team in delivering a wide-ranging and dynamic programme of inter-parliamentary activities.

This success has been against the backdrop of an extraordinary year in British politics with a landmark referendum outcome which will reshape the foundations of Britain's relationship with the world for years to come as well as the sudden change of Prime Minister and subsequent frontbench appointments which had knock-on effects for all parliamentary bodies, including BGIPU.

This was the first year of a new three-year Strategic Business Plan, adopted by the Executive Committee in February 2016. The Secretariat continues to draw on a very strong foundation for our administrative, financial and human resources functions having completed appropriate reviews in recent years to improve and strengthen these. Such improvements have helped ensure we meet fully all our obligations under the Financial Memorandum (FM) with our funding bodies in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. BGIPU hope to renew this FM in March 2017 after a comprehensive review already underway. Rewarding its efforts to operate as effectively and efficiently as possible, the Secretariat was gratified to receive a positive Internal Audit outcome when the House of Lords Audit Team completed an extensive study of our finances, programme management and operating procedures in June 2016.

In support of our 2017-18 Request for Funding submitted in September 2016, I again completed a detailed review of achievements against the BGIPU objectives outlined in the Strategic Business Plan. This review highlighted key outcomes

for the year including full compliance with BGIPU governance rules, including through the election of the Executive Committee for 2016 with Nigel Evans MP re-elected as Chair. Other key indicators suggest BGIPU would likely exceed its qualitative targets for inward and outward delegations for 2016-17 and that we continue to enjoy strong levels of participation from both Houses. I also noted uniformly positive feedback from members, visiting delegations and other key stakeholders for the Secretariat's work.

In the last two years, BGIPU have successfully brought down our financial reserves in line with FM expectations, including through matching the pattern of payments against expenditure to achieve lower reserve levels. The high quality of our accounts continues to be recognised with excellent external and internal Audit outcomes this year. Such praise is a credit to the efforts of our outgoing Treasurer, Mr Fabian Hamilton MP, and the excellent work of our Finance and Administration Manager, Ms Jackie Rhodes.

In meeting core human resources obligations in 2016, BGIPU continued to offer staff access to flexible working provisions and completed two successful recruitment rounds for one new International Project Manager (IPM) and an Executive Assistant position designed to cover staff maternity leave obligations. Following a comprehensive survey of our pension options, BGIPU have now implemented new pension arrangements ready to meet statutory obligations at the staging date at the start of 2017. I am grateful for the guidance of our contracted human resources adviser, Ms Alison MacDonald, who has ensured staff are kept better informed of their entitlements and obligations through the BGIPU Staff Handbook which she updates on a quarterly basis in line with relevant House of Commons staffing provisions.

Consistent with past Executive Committee decisions, BGIPU now exclusively operates through electronic communications and outreach tools, maintaining high quality and timely reporting on the BGIPU website. This includes regular newsletters and reports to supplement the Annual Report which is now only circulated electronically rather than by mail to achieve a significant cost saving. BGIPU also has a

very active Twitter account with more than one thousand followers to highlight the breadth of its inter-parliamentary activities, publicise the main outcomes of BGIPU's work as well as promote awareness of the IPU as the world body of national parliaments.

In terms of policy-related membership events, BGIPU have convened a wide range of thematic lectures and policy events in 2016 including presentations on IPU priorities such as advancing the role of young parliamentarians and youth, having parliamentary perspectives on global climate change issues heard and parliamentary oversight of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. An IPU Strategy for 2017-21 adopted at the 135th IPU Assembly in Geneva in October by all 171 member parliaments will guide and help prioritise future IPU activities which will be reflected in BGIPU's future work.

As well as report-back meetings from outward delegations, BGIPU convened useful roundtable meetings with key stakeholders on the transnational security threats in West Africa and the current state of play in the Balkans region drawing on recent BGIPU exchanges. In collaboration with Wilton Park, we also co-hosted a very successful International Parliamentary Seminar on European Security issues in February attended by some 50 UK and European parliamentarians, government officials, NGO representatives, and academic experts. Participants discussed key challenges facing European security such as hybrid security threats and transnational trends, including the importance of robust parliamentary democracy in the face of such pressures.

Of particular note, BGIPU provided strong support to Professor Sarah Childs of the University of Bristol during her secondment to the House of Commons to produce the report, "*The Good Parliament*" launched in July 2016. This report, and follow-up work through a related House of Commons Reference Group, reflects key IPU gender-sensitive parliament principles in advancing a suggested blueprint to make the House of Commons more representative and inclusive. BGIPU is proud of its support for this initiative to encourage greater inclusiveness in the UK Parliament and looks forward to continued cooperation, including by promoting

the IPU's unique expertise in the gender empowerment field in which UK Parliament should also take the lead in global efforts.

BGIPU maintained regular cooperation and engagement with other inter-parliamentary bodies, particularly the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, including hosting a number of joint activities in addition to our regular joint diplomatic function for the State Opening of Parliament on 18 May 2016. It had strong engagement with a diverse range of country-based and thematic All Party Parliamentary Groups, including in support of inward and outward delegation visits and in providing financial support to facilitate exchanges between APPGs and their overseas counterparts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I offer my sincere thanks to all members of the Executive Committee for their guidance and support of BGIPU throughout 2016, including in support of activities here at Westminster and abroad. I am particularly grateful to our outgoing Officers, Vice-Chair Mike Gapes MP and Treasurer Fabian Hamilton MP. I would also like to recognise the invaluable leadership of our Chair, Nigel Evans MP, in chairing BGIPU since the 2015 General Election in what has been a very turbulent political time. I am also grateful to Ian Liddell-Grainger MP for his important contribution on the IPU Executive Committee culminating in his election earlier this year in Lusaka as Vice-President of the IPU Executive Committee. Our Vice-Chair for the House of Lords, Lord Anderson of Swansea has also made a highly valued contribution in giving clear direction for programme priorities.

BGIPU continued to benefit from the very strong support of many work colleagues in both Houses of Parliament, at all levels. The Secretariat particularly values our close cooperation with the Overseas Offices of both Houses and I acknowledge the excellent support received from our budget holders, Mr Simon Burton and as recently appointed, Mr Matthew Hamlyn. I also want to single out for specific praise the most recent past Clerk of the Overseas Office of the House of Commons, Mr Crispin Poyser, who was a very strong supporter of BGIPU's objectives and work.

In closing, I also express gratitude for the outstanding contribution to BGIPU's work made by Ms Sophia Ostler who served as our International Programme Manager for the Americas Programme and Human Rights from August 2011 to September 2016. The high regard and warm appreciation of Sophia's work expressed by members when she departed provided strong testament to the value they place on the Secretariat's work and this positive and generous feedback was greatly appreciated by the entire Secretariat.

Rick Nimmo
Director, British Group IPU
7 November 2016

Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union

Wednesday 13 January 2016

The Annual General Meeting of the British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union was held in the IPU Room, Houses of Parliament, on Wednesday 13 January 2016. The Honorary President, the Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Mr Speaker, was in the Chair.

Opening Remarks by Mr Speaker

MR SPEAKER:

My Lords, Ladies and gentlemen, I now call this Annual General Meeting to order. I extend a very warm welcome to everybody, noting that this AGM was deferred from its earlier scheduled date of 2 December, due to the vote on UK military action in Syria. Thank you for your understanding of the reason for the postponement.

I hope that colleagues have had a chance to review the 2015 Annual Report, which was published on the BGIPU website on 10 November. Hard copies are available here for those who would like them. Please note that there will be no requirement for an election ballot today, as the nominated Officers and Members of the Executive Committee are all standing unopposed for these positions, in itself a tribute to the exceptional service that they have given. This election—or rather the absence of its need—will be dealt with under item 8.

Apologies for absence

MR SPEAKER:

The next item is apologies for absence. Do we have any, Rick?

RICK NIMMO, DIRECTOR:

We have 29.

MR SPEAKER:

We have 29 apologies. Thank you. I am sure the list can be made available, if necessary.

MR SPEAKER:

We are now required to adopt the minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 3 December 2014. These are printed on pages 17 to 36 of the 2015 Annual Report. May I have a proposer and seconder that the minutes are adopted as a true record of the meeting? (Proposed by Lord Dholakia and seconded by Lord Popat.)

All those in favour please raise your hand.

Any against? No. Unanimously adopted. Thank you.

I shall now sign the minutes as a true record.

Matters arising from the Minutes

MR SPEAKER:

Are there any matters arising from those minutes?

DIRECTOR:

Nothing has been advised.

MR SPEAKER:

Nothing advised. Pause for opportunity to raise matters from the floor. There is clearly nothing arising. Thank you.

Adoption of the Annual Report 2015

MR SPEAKER:

I should now like to invite Ian Liddell-Grainger, MP for Bridgwater, as a Member of the IPU Executive Committee to propose the adoption of the 2015 Annual Report.

MR IAN LIDDELL-GRAINGER MP:

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am pleased to propose the adoption of the BGIPU Annual Report 2015, in my capacity as a Member of the IPU Executive Committee. I have the honour to represent the 12 Plus Geopolitical Group. This year's edition discusses a wide range of activities undertaken by the group in 2015, as reflected in the detailed report of our Chairman, Mr Nigel Evans MP.

It notes that, over the course of the year, the BGIPU organised inward delegation visits from five Parliaments, including Speaker-led delegations from Morocco, Honduras and Côte d'Ivoire, a high-level parliamentary delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and a delegation of very impressive young members from Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada. I apologise if my pronunciation is wrong.

The delegation from Iran was particularly timely, coming immediately prior to the conclusion of the landmark Iran nuclear deal and providing an opportunity for UK Members to discuss with Iranian counterparts their perspectives on those important negotiations. It also provided complementary support to significant efforts by Her Majesty's Government to re-engage Iran after a period of disruption in relations and we were all pleased to see the subsequent re-opening of our respective embassies in London and Tehran. Likewise, engagement with Members from Ukraine this year has allowed UK parliamentarians a direct opportunity to hear at first hand the views of our counterparts in Kiev at a time when the conflict in that country has wide-ranging implications for the future of European security.

During the same period, the BGIPU has delivered an active programme of outward delegation visits to Burma, Ukraine, Romania, Angola and Mexico, as well as a visit to Senegal, which provided diverse and unique opportunities for UK Members to explore at first hand the key challenges facing counterparts across the world. The delegation to Burma was particularly significant in having a specific focus on the political empowerment of women, allowing UK women parliamentarians to engage directly with counterparts and parliamentary staff in Burma in support of a greater role for women in their nascent democracy, including meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi. I cannot say her name—go on, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Aung San Suu Kyi

MR IAN LIDDELL-GRAINER MP:

Thank you; I did try in the mirror but it did not work at all! She remains an inspiration for the world and in women's politics.

Equally important, such visits add to the quality and quantum of foreign policy knowledge in the UK Parliament by creating opportunities for direct engagement with parliamentary counterparts, Government Ministers and civil society groups in many countries abroad. These outward visits are an important component of the UK Parliament's international engagement, which readily recognises the important "soft power" contribution they make to advancing the UK's broader international interests. There is little doubt these outward delegations also contribute to the quality of our debates and exchanges on international affairs here in the Chambers of both Houses.

Indeed, as an active participant in meeting inward delegations myself, and having recently led the outward delegation to Senegal, I certainly very much appreciate, as do many colleagues in this room

and outside, the opportunity to meet overseas counterparts. By engaging with visiting delegations we can all contribute to the vital task of maintaining substantive dialogue between Parliaments and encouraging understanding, peace and prosperity in the world.

The BGIPU has also effectively managed the UK's role in the global body of parliamentarians, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in which I represent the UK Parliament and other parliamentary counterparts on the IPU Executive Committee.

The Committee oversees the IPU's international activities, convening each year of two IPU Assemblies. The Assemblies are very important to the work of the BGIPU, giving Members opportunities to engage with counterparts from up to 167 countries on a range of global issues as diverse as cyber-warfare, sovereignty and human rights, sanitation and water governance, climate change, and democracy in the digital age, to give just a few examples from recent Assemblies.

There have been some high-level debates at recent IPU Assemblies about the threat posed by terrorist extremism, particularly on the need for international efforts to combat the likes of Daesh and Boko Haram, which was addressed earlier this year in Hanoi; and most recently in Geneva there was a debate on the plight of refugees and the importance of finding more humane solutions to the challenges posed by mass movements of people. Those are a few examples to highlight the important role the IPU plays in advancing major international issues through encouraging dialogue and co-operation at the global level among the world's parliamentarians and the vital work of the BGIPU in ensuring the UK Parliament is able to play a leading role in that effort.

In highlighting the important contribution the BGIPU makes to the international relations work of the UK Parliament not only in 2015, but over many decades, I have great pleasure in proposing the adoption of the 2015 annual report.

MR SPEAKER:

Thank you very much indeed for that. I now invite Stephen Twigg, Member of Parliament for Liverpool, West Derby and the Chair of the Select Committee on International Development, to second the adoption of the 2015 Annual Report.

STEPHEN TWIGG MP:

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am very pleased to have been invited to attend this afternoon and to second the adoption of the 2015 Annual Report, which Ian has proposed.

As Ian said, this year's report outlines the wide range of activities of the BGIPU over the past year. In my role as Chair of the International Development Committee, I would like to focus on some of the activities that most directly relate to our work.

I start by noting the significant contribution made by you, Mr Speaker, and your counterpart in the House of Lords, Baroness D'Souza, to the 4th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which is held every five years by the IPU and was convened in 2015 in New York shortly before the UN General Assembly that adopted the new Sustainable Development Goals. The Speakers of the two Houses are honorary presidents of the British Group, and their participation in that event was facilitated by the staff of the group.

One of the key objectives of the event was to highlight the importance of parliamentary involvement in both the shaping and the implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals, to ensure that the voices of parliamentarians are not absent from that important UN process, which now has a 15-year timespan. Both of our Speakers were able to make significant contributions across a broad range of key development issues, with Mr Speaker participating in

meetings on disaster risk reduction and parliamentary oversight and the Lord Speaker active on issues including violence against women in conflict and women's economic empowerment. Mr Speaker, you also delivered an impassioned plea to your counterpart Speakers for appropriate recognition of LGBT rights in the work of Parliaments as a fundamental test of the quality of democracy and equality in all member nations.

More broadly, the World Conference of Speakers served to underscore the vital role that Parliaments play in the effective oversight of the new global goals. Speaking on behalf of the International Development Committee, we see the adoption of those goals in New York in 2015 as an historic milestone for the United Nations in the struggle to eradicate extreme poverty and inequality around the world. The Committee was in New York shortly after you were for the adoption of those goals, and we are currently holding an inquiry into their implementation.

We believe, and I am sure this will be agreed on a cross-party basis, that Parliaments have a very important role to play in holding Governments to account in this important area and in engaging citizens in the adoption of the global goals, which are of course universal in character. In other words, they apply in our own country just as much as they apply in other countries. I know that that is an area where the IPU globally continues to make a key contribution, and that the British Group will be very active in drawing the example of my Committee to the work across the board, not least because the Chair of the British Group is a member of the International Development Committee. I am very grateful to the British Group for the opportunities that you give to members of the International Development Committee to meet overseas counterparts when they visit this country under your auspices.

I want to say something about the very important work that your Group has been undertaking on gender equality issues—I have kept this in my speech despite being put on an all-male platform. Perhaps next year you will find some women to appear on the

platform at the Annual General Meeting of the Group. Nevertheless, it is great to see the very important work that the Group does, both in this country and internationally, on gender equality issues. Both for the British Government, including DFID, and for the International Development Committee and the wider development community, gender equality, and particularly issues around violence against women and girls, are right at the top of our agenda.

I know that for many years the British Group has managed UK parliamentary participation in the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations, reflecting the high priority that the IPU attaches to gender equality, including the importance of encouraging greater levels of political participation by women. To that end, and in conclusion, I welcome the British Group's work to advance the IPU's priority objective of making Parliaments across the world more gender sensitive through programmes in counterpart Parliaments, including, as Ian told us, Burma, but also here in the Palace of Westminster. Gender equality surely remains one of the most vital development challenges facing the world, and I am very pleased that it remains such a priority for our own country.

I am pleased to confirm that I second the adoption of the British Group Annual Report for 2015, and I wish the Group continued success in its important work over the coming year. The efforts of the Group here, and the efforts of IPU internationally, are very significant in ensuring that the United Kingdom plays an important role and that UK parliamentarians in particular are well placed to contribute both to international development and to international relations through active participation in the work of the British Group. I second the report.

MR SPEAKER:

Stephen, thank you very much indeed for that speech. Thank you both, colleagues.

The 2015 Annual Report has now been proposed and seconded.

Is it agreed that we adopt the report?

All those in favour please raise your hand.

Any against?

The Annual Report is unanimously adopted.

I would just add, on the matters that have been mentioned, that I hope in a way that underscores the work of the IPU I am myself shortly going to Ukraine. It is incredibly important, at what is a taxing time, that we offer succour, encouragement and practical support to democratic forces there. That visit is in the process of being arranged now, not least thanks to the excellent help of Crispin Poyser, who heads the Overseas Office.

I mention in passing, absolutely welcoming the work that is being done to encourage gender equality in Burma, that we do have—and I am not sure to what extent colleagues are necessarily particularly conscious of this—an ongoing dialogue with parliamentarians in Burma. Specifically, I am in regular contact with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Some of you may recall that when she came in 2012 and addressed both Houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall she did make a plea for help from the British Parliament. It was not just a rhetorical point. She did actually want practical, concrete help, and we said yes. If I may say so, on behalf of Parliament I said yes and the Clerk of the House at the time said yes—and we have since been providing ongoing help in trying to build capacity, including, colleagues, in relation to things that you will probably think are rather prosaic and we would take for granted, but which cannot be taken for granted in a nascent embryonic democracy.

An example is the existence of a high-quality research service in Parliament providing briefs to parliamentarians, and advice on

how to go about the scrutiny of legislation, in some cases in quite straightforward terms. I arranged for the secondment of a Library specialist from the House of Commons to Naypyidaw and he did fantastic work there. His term has now come to an end and the arrangement is being continued with a successor. We have also had various delegations of parliamentarians that Daw Suu has asked me and the Clerks Department of DCCS to receive, and we have said yes to her every time. I have since reiterated both in correspondence with her and to intermediaries a desire not only to continue what we are doing but, within reason and the constraints of our capacity, which is considerably greater than theirs, to do more work if that will help in this very crucial period now, following the historic elections, and so on.

I mention that not as a boast—it is not a boast; we need to do a lot more—but simply to say that we are trying to work together on these matters. The IPU does fantastic work, but if the House of Commons as an institution and the Speaker's Office can help as well, then help we should; and we are doing so and we will do so more in the future. I hope that is thought to be welcome.

Presentation of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2015 by Fabian Hamilton MP, Honorary Treasurer of the BGIP

MR SPEAKER:

Mr Fabian Hamilton, Honorary Treasurer of the BGIPU, who warrants congratulation on his recent elevation to the Opposition Front Bench, will present the Financial Statements.

FABIAN HAMILTON MP:

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I am told that the elevation, if such it be, means I can still carry on as Treasurer of this august body.

Mr Speaker, before I present the Financial Statements and

Annual Governance Statement for 2015, may I just say a word about my esteemed predecessor Mike Gapes, who is currently recovering from major heart surgery. I am sure you would want to join with me in wishing him a very quick and rapid recovery and return to us here in Parliament.

I present the Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2015, which is shown at pages 40 to 59 of our 2015 Annual Report. These cover the 2014-15 financial year, noting that the rest of the Annual Report reflects all BGIPU activities since the 2014 Annual General Meeting on a calendar year rather than financial year basis. Kreston Reeves LLP conducted the audit. Peter Hudson, the audit partner, and Kirsty McMeechan, the audit manager, are both with us today.

On page 51 of the 2015 Annual Report, our auditors report their unqualified opinion of the Financial Statements. The Audit Committee deliberated on 14 September 2015 and recommended that the Executive Committee approve the Financial Statements, which the Chair and Treasurer signed at or following the Executive Committee meeting on 15 September 2015.

The income and expenditure account appears on page 52. I will draw out a few points from that account. Income decreased from £1,140,977 to £1,073,547. The Group received £1,072,800 grant in aid, representing 85% of the maximum available, compared with £1,139,400, or 90%, in the year ended 31 March 2014. Due to the lower cash reserves and lower interest rates, bank interest fell from £910 in the previous year to £646.

Expenditure increased marginally from £1,216,444 to £1,287,544. Subscription expenses decreased by around £51,000, with the majority of that cost being the IPU subscription fee, which reduced owing to changes in the UN scale of assessment. That saw total UK share in Swiss francs fall to CHF 561,200 in 2015 from CHF 581,000 in 2014. Significant franc and sterling exchange rate

variation also affected final subscription costs.

The aggregated costs of conferences, IPU seminars and outward delegations increased from £179,401 to £257,849. The main Assembly costs increased slightly, from £51,174 in the prior year to £56,753, as the spring IPU Assembly was held in Hanoi but the cost straddled the year end. Delegates were sent to 18 smaller IPU meetings for a total cost of £71,190. Seven outward delegations and two capacity building visits were undertaken at a cost of £129,906. Six inward delegations, eight smaller events classed as Days in Parliament and a seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty were hosted at a total cost of £168,220. Funding was claimed by nine all-party parliamentary country groups at a total cost of £15,949.

The cost of staff salaries and related expenses increased from £406,838 to £413,724, with seven permanent employees in post throughout the year, plus one who resigned being replaced within a month through a competitive selection process. Employees received pay increases in line with the House of Commons three-year pay settlement, however requests by two employees to work reduced hours under flexible working arrangements were agreed and another employee works compressed hours.

Printing, stationery, postage and telephone costs fell for the fifth successive year due to increased use of electronic communications. Publishing and public relations costs have also decreased, while general hospitality costs increased marginally. Audit fees increased slightly, while insurance costs also increased marginally—I am not sure what the difference is. Sundry expenses including bank charges and other office costs have risen marginally. The net effect was a small deficit for the year of £213,997. The balance sheet on page 53 shows net assets have decreased from £865,297 to £651,300, reflecting the small deficit. Fixed assets have decreased marginally, with a full summary of changes to those appearing in note 2 on page 57.

Current assets have decreased mainly owing to the fall in

the bank balances from £593,505 to £478,375. The debtors of £1,268 comprise mainly an employee season ticket loan and private hotel costs related to participation in the 132nd Assembly, subsequently recovered against subsistence costs.

Creditors and accruals have increased from £64,840 to £167,871. These mostly comprise invoices and expense claims related to events held in February and March 2015, the House of Lords grant in aid for the first quarter of 2015-16 paid early, pension contributions and payroll taxes for March. The cash flow statement on page 54 highlights the continuing decrease in cash of £115,130 compared with £34,359 the previous year—we are nearly there.

The Financial Memorandum dated 1 April 2012 was in effect until the 2014-15 financial year. However, a revised version came into effect from 1 April 2014 with minor technical changes but no substantive impact on the scale or scope of financial arrangements with both Houses of Parliament. The Annual Report containing the Financial Statements has been published on the BGIPU website for the fourth year running.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I pay tribute, as always, to Jackie Rhodes, without whom my job would be completely impossible.

Thank you.

Re-appointment of Auditors

MR SPEAKER:

Do we have a proposal that our current auditors Kreston Reeves LLP be re-appointed? May I have a proposer and seconder? (Proposed by Baroness Hooper and seconded by Virendra Sharma MP.)

All those in favour, please raise your hand.

Any against? No. Carried unanimously.

Kreston Reeves LLP are appointed as the Group's auditors for the current year.

The Election of Officers and the Executive Committee for the Period 2015-2016

MR SPEAKER:

I now move on to the Election of Officers and the Executive Committee.

As I announced at the beginning of this meeting, all the Officers and Executive Committee Members who are standing for election are unopposed. These names were first circulated to members on 26 November 2015, with an update published on the BGIPU website on 7 January 2016. Copies of that notification are also available today.

If there are no objections, I hereby declare that these nominated members are duly elected with effect from the close of this Annual General Meeting. The list of new Officers and Executive Committee members will be placed for the record in the IPU Room, the Noes Division Lobby and on the Group's website following this meeting. I congratulate all those members on their election.

Speech by Chair of the BGIPU, Mr Nigel Evans MP

MR SPEAKER:

We now come to the moment you have been keenly anticipating, namely the speech by the Chair of the Group. I invite the re-elected Chair—not merely the elected Chair, but the re-elected Chair—of the

BGIPU, the hon. Member for Ribble Valley, Mr Nigel Evans MP, to take the floor and to orate to us.

MR NIGEL EVANS MP:

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First, thank you not only for chairing our AGM but for your proactive involvement as our Honorary President. Today, we have heard about your intended visit to the troubled country of Ukraine and your involvement with the emerging democracy in Burma. We are incredibly grateful for your individual involvement in these matters and indeed for your visit to the United Nations in New York. As Stephen spoke about in his contribution, we know the contribution you made there and we are incredibly grateful to you for doing that.

I also thank Rick Nimmo and his excellent team at the IPU, and Sarah Crandall—could you raise your hand, Sarah? There she is. Sarah is with us for a one-year secondment. We welcome you and hope you enjoy and get fulfilment out of your appointment here with the IPU. May I also thank and congratulate the new Officers of the IPU? We have an excellent and strong team. I hope, Fabian, that you will get the message back to Mike Gapes that we are thinking of him at this moment and wish him a speedy recovery, so that he can fully rejoin us. I also thank Ian Liddell-Grainger, Stephen Twigg, who is my other boss—I have several bosses, and you are one of them, Stephen—and Fabian for your contributions at this Annual General Meeting.

It has been a very busy year, as you can see from the Annual Report. I hope you take a copy away with you. There is an excellent photograph of me on page 7—[Laughter.] It may even be next year's Christmas card picture—we'll see. Anyway, it is all there, and there is more information on the website of our organisation.

The work of the IPU is vital. We are looking at parliamentarians talking to parliamentarians. We know that dialogue takes place Government to Government, and that is clearly vital, but sometimes

it breaks down. Sometimes, parliamentarians are fighting their own struggle, as we saw in Burma and as we see in Ukraine, and even in Russia, Hong Kong and various countries where parliamentarians themselves want to make a difference. That is where our organisation comes into play. We can talk to those politicians. There are heightened tensions throughout the world, but when we visited Geneva last year, we were able to talk to parliamentarians from Argentina, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Russia. In some cases, as we know, Government-to-Government relations are, to say the least, not healthy.

Outward and inward delegations from and to the IPU are of our essence, and we still have one to Bolivia in this financial year. We have decided, since the appalling terrorist attack on France, that we will be expediting a delegation from this Parliament to France, to show our solidarity with them at this time. We also intend to establish a regular dialogue with parliamentarians from China, with outward and inward delegations. We will extend the dialogue to them in Zambia, when we have our next international meeting there.

Please look at the Whip for our activities and get involved. We want more people to apply for these delegations. It is an unsteady world, and through the work of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and our endeavours, may parliamentarians speak to parliamentarians, and may we get a better understanding of not only our differences but our similarities, and how we all, as parliamentarians, can work together for a better world.

MR SPEAKER:

Nigel, thank you for that pithy but illuminating speech and for the commitment you have made to the organisation, which is hugely appreciated and respected right across the House.

Any other business

MR SPEAKER:

May I confirm with the secretariat that there has been no

written notification in accordance with BGIPU rules over any other matters of business to be raised?

DIRECTOR:

No, there are no other matters of business

MR SPEAKER:

None has been notified.

Closure of the meeting

MR SPEAKER:

Thank you for coming. I think the IPU does incredibly important work. I will not repeat what I have said at a previous AGM on that front, but the building of relations, the development of capacity, the reporting on abuses, the encouragement of better, more pluralistic institutions and simply good relations with fellow parliamentarians across the piece are important priorities for the House. We must not be deflected from the pursuit of them by those who tend to focus on the trivial and to ignore the important.

I know that lots of colleagues go to a lot of very difficult and challenging parts of the world. I also know that a lot of colleagues take great pride in being part of the welcoming delegation for the delegations that visit us here in the UK. That is all part of the work, and it is very valuable.

It is a matter not purely of tradition, but of respect for the work of the IPU, that the Speaker comes each year to chair the AGM. If I have not outworn my welcome, and you invite me again, I shall come again. Thank you very much. I declare this meeting closed.

Officers and Executive Committee

Following the Annual General Meeting held on **Wednesday 13 January 2016**, the under-mentioned were elected as Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

BGIPU Honorary Presidents

Rt Hon John Bercow MP (The Speaker)
Rt Hon the Baroness D'Souza (The Lord Speaker)

BGIPU President

Rt Hon David Cameron MP (The Prime Minister)

BGIPU Vice-Presidents:

Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP
Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP
Rt Hon Justine Greening MP
Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP
Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP
Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP
Ms Diane Abbott MP
Mr Ivan Lewis MP
Rt Hon the Baroness Boothroyd PC OM
Rt Hon the Baroness Hayman
Rt Hon the Lord Hurd of Westwell CH CBE
Rt Hon the Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC DL
Rt Hon the Lord Owen CH
Rt Hon the Lord Hague of Richmond PC FRSL

Meetings of the Executive Committee

Since the last Annual General Meeting on 13 January 2016 there have been five Executive Committee meetings: Tuesday 2 February, Tuesday 12 April, Tuesday 24 May, Tuesday 12 July and Tuesday 1 November.

Officers & Executive Committee (As of 13 January 2016)

Chair:

Nigel Evans MP

Vice-Chairs:

Ian Liddell-Grainger MP

Mike Gapes MP

Rt Hon the Lord Anderson DL

Treasurer:

Fabian Hamilton MP

Executive Committee:

Conservative Party

Stewart Jackson MP

Andrew Bingham MP

Tim Loughton MP

Mark Pritchard MP

Andrew Rosindell MP

Bob Blackman MP

Conor Burns MP

Laurence Robertson MP

The Baroness Hooper CMG

Rt Hon the Lord Jopling DL

Lord McColl of Dulwich CBE

Liberal Democrat Party

Rt Hon the Lord Dholakia OBE DL

Lord Purvis of Tweed*

Democratic Unionist Party

Ian Paisley MP*

Labour Party

Wayne David MP

Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP

Roberta Blackman-Woods MP

Sir Alan Meale MP

Gavin Shuker MP

The Lord Dubs

Scottish National Party

Dr Lisa Cameron MP

Stuart Donaldson MP

Cross Bench

The Earl of Sandwich

The Baroness D'Souza*

* (Subsequently co-opted)

Membership of the British Group

As a result of rule changes adopted at the AGM on December 3 2014, all members of both Houses of Parliament are deemed to be full members of the BGIPU. As of 1 November 2016, total membership of the group is 1,462. In addition there are 160 Associate Members and 1 Honorary Member.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS, FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

**Year ended 31 March 2016
British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

**Kreston Reeves LLP
Statutory Auditors & Chartered Accountants
Third Floor
24 Chiswell Street
London
EC1Y 4YX**

Annual Governance Statement

Governance framework

The British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (BGIPU) is an unincorporated association comprising members of both Houses of the UK Parliament united in their support for the aim of the Inter-Parliamentary Union as the focal point for world-wide parliamentary dialogue. As a result of an amendment of the BGIPU Rules in December 2014, all members of both houses of the UK Parliament are now deemed to be full members of the BGIPU with a right to participate in the Group's activities. Governance of the BGIPU is exercised through a 26-member Executive Committee, appointed annually by its entire membership (with provision for up to four additional members to be co-opted annually). The Executive Committee approves and oversees the implementation of a Forward Programme of engagement with counterpart parliaments, the principal organs of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and other bodies as appropriate in pursuit of advancing the parliamentary dimension of Britain's foreign relations.

Aside from Honorary Presidential posts, the Officers of the BGIPU comprise the Chair, three vice-Chairs, Honorary Treasurer and the Director. The Officers exercise financial authority on behalf of the Executive Committee on a day to day basis. The Officers meet formally as required, usually in advance of any Executive Committee meeting. All decisions taken by the Officers are duly reported to the full Executive Committee at its next meeting. They are supported by a Secretariat, led by the Director and senior staff comprising a Deputy Director, Finance and Administration Manager and well-qualified and appropriately experienced international programme management and administrative support staff.

The Honorary Treasurer as Accounting Officer is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the aims and key objectives of the BGIPU whilst

safeguarding the public funds and assets in a manner that is consistent with the Financial Memorandum (FM) issued by both Houses of Parliament for the use of the BGIPU's grant in aid. The Honorary Treasurer is also responsible for ensuring such internal control measures are fully implemented in compliance with relevant Treasury and other guidelines. In particular, the role seeks to ensure that all resources are used economically, efficiently and cost-effectively including that the Executive Committee take financial considerations into account in making operational and policy decisions.

The Director is responsible to the Officers and the Executive Committee for the implementation of their decisions and for the administration of the organisation and its Secretariat; ensuring that appropriate personnel management policies are observed. The position is also responsible to the Honorary Treasurer for ensuring that effective procedures are in place to control the expenditure of the organisation, to maintain a record of losses, special payments or write-offs, to calculate the budget required to carry out the organisation's authorised activities and to submit the annual request for grant in aid.

The full Executive Committee considers the preparation of the organisation's forward programme of activities and facilitates through Selection Committees, the identification of the most appropriately qualified delegates for Assemblies of the Union and other inter-parliamentary activities. It also decides what action is to be taken on recommendations and resolutions of Assemblies and the Governing Council of the Union. It also promotes membership of the BGIPU and has overall control of the Group's funds. The Executive Committee is also responsible for formal correspondence with the Secretariat of the IPU, consideration and adoption of the BGIPU Strategic Business Plan and authorisation of the appointment of the Director of the Secretariat.

Under the authority of the Executive Committee, the Audit Committee gives advice to the Honorary Treasurer on the adequacy of audit arrangements and on the implications of assurances provided

in respect of risk and control in the organisation. The Committee regularly reviews the organisation's Risk Register and, when necessary, draws to the attention of the Honorary Treasurer and the Executive Committee any additional measures needed to control risk, or if the scope of the external audit needs to be adjusted.

Arrangements for funding inter-parliamentary groups in the UK Parliament have evolved over many years. While funding of the BGIPU originally came from member contributions, and later the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Treasury, in recent years the funding has been provided directly by both Houses of Parliament with 70 percent from the House of Commons and 30 percent from the House of Lords.

A new FM was signed on 31 March 2014 providing the basis for the continued financial support of BGIPU by both Houses of Parliament. This was negotiated, with minor updates, drawing on past memoranda agreed in 2009 and 2012 to set out the arrangements governing the funding relationship. The current FM requires the preparation of a detailed annual business plan, including estimated costs of programme and non-programme expenditure, regular quarterly reports of outturn figures and an overall commitment to meet recommended limits on reserves. BGIPU is also required to follow specific administrative, financial and human resources policies, analogous to those operated by the House of Commons, albeit proportionate and relevant to BGIPU's own unique character and circumstances.

At the request of BGIPU's funding bodies in both Houses in early 2016, an internal audit was undertaken by the Audit Office of the House of Lords and completed in June 2016. Overall, the internal audit provided "substantial assurance that the processes in place within BGIPU will result in the intended objectives being achieved". While this was a very positive finding, the audit also recommended that when next reviewing the Financial Memorandum, the budget holders should review and validate their requirement for BGIPU procedures outlined in Annex B of the Financial Memorandum and

seek assurance that these are fully in place. The audit outcome was also conveyed in a management letter from the Head of Internal Audit in the House of Lords to the BGIPU Chair noting the audit recommendation on any future Financial Memorandum and providing some suggestions for enhancing BGIPU's monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and its risk management strategy. BGIPU will take into account the audit outcome in its future work in these areas

Internal financial oversight is exercised by an Audit Committee selected from members of the Executive Committee as noted above. The BGIPU also has an annual external audit, with authorised financial statements, an explanatory commentary, and a key issues memorandum presented to the Audit Committee in mid-year for consideration and referral to the Executive Committee. In accordance with the Rules of the Group (last reviewed and amended in December 2014), the BGIPU produces an Annual Report in advance of the Annual General Meeting.

Work of the Executive Committee

The BGIPU Executive Committee met on three occasions during the 2015-16 Financial Year being convened on Tuesday 7 July 2015, Tuesday 15 September 2015 and Tuesday 2 February 2016. The Audit Committee was convened on Monday 14 September 2015 to recommend approval of final accounts.

There was a Special General Meeting on Tuesday 30 June 2015 necessitated by changes in the composition of Parliament as a result of the 2015 General Election and the Annual General Meeting took place on Wednesday 13 January 2016 to elect a new Executive Committee for 2016.

Under the guidance of the Executive Committee, the Director has continued efforts to improve the organisation's effectiveness through a sharper focus on BGIPU's strategic priorities and regular review of planning and implementation procedures. Consistent with the requirements of the FM, the Director submitted to the funding bodies

in September 2015 the annual review of the Executive Committee approved 3-year Strategic Business Plan adopted in 2012 (a new 3-year Strategic Business Plan was subsequently adopted in February 2016). BGIPU also submitted detailed forward planning budgets for the next three financial years in support of BGIPU's 2016/17 Request for Funding. In addition, the Executive Committee approved a detailed Forward Programme drawing on the objectives set out in the Business Plan as the basis for BGIPU's targeted inter-parliamentary exchanges and international relations work. The Secretariat is also developing a framework for evaluation and monitoring to better inform internal review mechanisms and objective-setting, gathering data and feedback from participants on both a quantitative and qualitative basis.

Under the day-to-day management of the Director, and with the assistance of a specialist human resources expert brought in on a contract basis, the Executive Committee has taken all appropriate steps to ensure staff members are employed on terms broadly in line with those of the House of Commons as required in the FM, including following the appropriate pay-bands and salary levels applying to House staff. The BGIPU Secretariat also maintains a comprehensive Staff Handbook, updated regularly in line with any relevant changes to House of Commons policies or practices.

Under the guidance of the Executive Committee, the Secretariat has continued to provide comprehensive activity reporting through its website, in addition to using social media and electronic newsletters to make the Group's work more accessible and ensuring its promotional activities are cost-effective. Recognising the need for professional and personal development, there has also been an emphasis on staff training including boosting information technology, communications and design skills, ongoing financial management and budget training, further development of international relations policy skills and support for specialised language training.

Risks

BGIPU's mechanisms and procedures are designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the policies, aims and objectives of the organisation. In doing this, it can provide only reasonable, not absolute assurance of effectiveness. This involves identifying and prioritising the risks for the achievement of the organisation's objectives, evaluating the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact in that event, so best to anticipate and manage risks effectively.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The process of risk management in the BGIPU is based on the judgement and authority of the Executive Committee, including the advice of the Director. As far as possible, BGIPU employees are encouraged to take full ownership of their work and be responsible for their part of the risk control process. Members of staff are appropriately informed, guided and trained to manage risk relevant to their particular responsibilities, including close attention to ensuring due probity and care in the expenditure of public monies. A working environment which encourages teamwork and dialogue, encouraging regular staff meetings and opportunities for consultation, provides an effective process for the identification and dissemination of best practice and lessons learned. Feedback to the Secretariat is provided by the Officers and Executive Committee and by open report back meetings following completion of projects, attended by the MPs and Peers who have participated in them and other interested stakeholders, including government officials.

Risk Control Framework

A Risk Register has been compiled and approved by the Executive Committee, and forms the focus of the organisation's risk management strategy (last reviewed in February 2016). The Director

also undertook specialist Risk Management training in 2014 based on House of Commons procedures. The Executive Committee has delegated authority to the Audit Committee to regularly monitor and scrutinise the Risk Register and to take appropriate action where necessary. The Audit Committee reports back to the Executive Committee on a regular basis to ensure any issues are fully discussed. Risk management is embedded in the organisation by all activity being approved by the Executive Committee, by staff reporting and commenting upon good practice and by constant review of expenditure and regular scrutiny of the Risk Register by the Audit Committee. Greater clarity around BGIPU practices and policies has been encouraged through the work undertaken on the BGIPU Staff Handbook, including the approval by the Executive Committee in July 2014 of reviewed travel and subsistence policies for BGIPU Members titled “Guidance for Members Travelling Overseas on BGIPU Delegations”.

Most residual risks are low. The main risk priorities for the organisation are in the areas of effective project management, which in turn depends upon the professionalism and motivation of staff, a coherent trail from policy decisions to project delivery, and the promotion of best practice. Past structural weaknesses in only having one staff member occupied with finance and administration tasks was addressed in early 2013 by the recruitment of a Finance and Administrative Assistant which has strengthened capacities over time. This has also helped address financial risks related to fraud or error in ensuring enhanced scrutiny of expenditure and accounts. Potential compliance risks, including regarding the taxation status of the BGIPU, were addressed fully and resolved through accessing specialist advice and effective remediation action by the Executive Committee.

Review of Effectiveness

It is a significant enhancement to the Group’s overall corporate governance that the Executive Committee adopted in February 2016

a multi-year Strategic Business Plan, governing the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 (replacing the earlier 3-year plan adopted in 2012). This long-term planning process combined with appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms allows the Group to be in a stronger position to assess its effectiveness with key objectives. The inclusion of an indicative annual programme also allows the Executive Committee to better judge the scope and level of inter-parliamentary activity, in addition to ensuring the impact of key outcomes in meeting the Group's goals.

While notionally independent of the management arrangements of both Houses of Parliament, the fact that the BGIPU is entirely dependent on external funding from Parliament requires it to maintain the full confidence and support of its funding partners. This requires close attention to the provisions of the FM and sufficient transparency and probity to ensure that funding levels are sufficient for implementation of the programme activities being planned. If funding is reduced or withdrawn, there could be insufficient resources available to meet core elements of the Forward Programme and this puts the BGIPU's ability to meet its key objectives at risk. A close, consultative and effective relationship with its funding bodies in both Houses is essential, requiring BGIPU to fully comply with the FM in all its aspects, including prudent management of any reserves.

Based on the feedback of members through formal meetings and informal channels, the support and regular exchanges with the Group's key funding partners, and other key stakeholders, including the IPU Secretariat in Geneva, the FCO and other relevant UK government bodies, I assess that the Executive Committee and Secretariat are undertaking the key roles and responsibilities of the BGIPU to an appropriate level of effectiveness. This includes with regard to its cost-effective use of public monies, its employment responsibilities to staff and its management of operational risk.

Mindful of the key monitoring role played by both the BGIPU's funding bodies in Houses of Parliament, I assess the BGIPU's governance mechanisms to be robust, allowing for appropriate management oversight by the Executive Committee, including through the combined financial scrutiny and risk management roles of the Audit Committee. Combined with independent external audit mechanisms, I am confident there are sufficient measures in place to ensure the Group's inter-parliamentary activities are well-targeted and they represent effective use of the public monies provided for this purpose.

As Honorary Treasurer, I am assured by reports from the Audit Committee and through witnessing the deliberations of the Officers and the Executive Committee that the current BGIPU governance structure is sustainable and sufficiently robust in all aspects. On this basis, I have every confidence in concluding that the governance of BGIPU adequately addresses the expectations of its membership, can be responsive to changes in its operating environment, fulfils the expectations of its funding bodies and fully meets all its financial, administrative and programme obligations to a fully satisfactory level.

(Signed)

F Hamilton MP

Honorary Treasurer

12 July 2016

Statement of the Executive Committee's responsibilities

Under the BGIPU's rules, the duties of the Executive Committee of the BGIPU include control and expenditure of the organisation's funds. It is also required to ensure that financial statements (duly audited) are prepared. The Executive Committee of the BGIPU has accepted responsibility for the preparation of these financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 which are intended by them to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the organisation and of the deficit for that period. The Executive Committee has accepted that the financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In preparing these financial statements, the Executive Committee has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- stated whether applicable accounting standards have been followed; subject to any material departures being disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepared the financial statements on the going concern basis as it believes that the organisation will continue to function for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the balance sheet.

The Executive Committee has general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to it to safeguard the assets of the BGIPU and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

The Executive Committee confirms that, so far as it is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the organisation's auditors are unaware; and that it has taken all the steps that it ought to have taken to make itself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the organisation's auditors are aware of that information.

Report of the independent auditors to the members of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

We have audited the financial statements of British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for the year ended 31 March 2016 set out on the following pages, which comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared for the reasons and on the basis set out in note 1 to the financial statements.

This report is made solely to the organisation's members, as a body determined by the rules of the organisation. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the organisation's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the organisation and the organisation's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Executive Committee and auditors (Firm)

The Executive Committee's responsibilities for preparing the financial statements in accordance with the organisation's rules are set out in the Statement of Executive Committee's responsibilities on the previous page.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standards for Auditors

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view. We also report to you if, in our opinion, a satisfactory system of control over transactions has not been maintained, if the organisation has not kept proper accounting records, or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read the other information contained in the Annual Governance Statement and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. We consider the implications for our report if

inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the organisation's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the members; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Governance Statement to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters, where we are required to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the organisation's affairs as at 31 March 2016 and of its results for the year then ended and

- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Opinion on Annual Governance Statement

In our opinion the information given in the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Kreston Reeves LLP

Statutory Auditors & Chartered Accountants

Third Floor

24 Chiswell Street

London

EC1Y 4YX

Date: 12 July 2016

Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March 2016

	Note	2016 £	2015 £
Income			
Grant in aid	1	1,285,000	1,072,800
Donations/ Subscriptions received from members	1	67	101
Interest receivable	1	814	646
		1,285,881	1,073,547
Expenditure			
Subscriptions		395,758	399,791
Conferences, IPU seminars and outward delegations		280,615	257,849
Inward delegations, BGIPU seminars and days in Parliament		185,977	168,220
All party groups		860	15,949
Salaries, national insurance and other staff costs	3	413,119	415,857
Printing, stationery and publications		2,543	3,148
Postage and telephone		353	411
Publishing and public relations		5,912	5,664
Audit fee for the audit of these financial statements		6,830	7,029
Insurance		5,281	5,281
General hospitality		1,792	1,431
Sundry expenses		4,406	4,884
Depreciation of fixed assets	5	4,837	4,163
		1,308,283	1,289,667
Deficit for the year	10	(22,402)	(216,130)
Opening Reserves		644,879	861,009
Closing Reserves	10	622,477	644,879

The income and expenditure account has been prepared on the basis that all activities are continuing activities.

There are no other items to be recognised in other comprehensive income.

Notes 1 to 15 form part of the financial statements.

Balance sheet

at 31 March 2016

	Note	2016		2015	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	5		8,975		10,893
Current assets					
Debtors	6	10,035		1,268	
Prepayments and accrued income		282,835		328,635	
Cash at bank and in hand	7	<u>377,336</u>		<u>478,375</u>	
		670,206		808,278	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	8	<u>(56,704)</u>		<u>(174,292)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>613,502</u>		<u>633,986</u>
Net assets			<u>622,477</u>		<u>644,879</u>
Financed by:					
General fund	10		<u>622,477</u>		<u>644,879</u>
			<u>622,477</u>		<u>644,879</u>

Notes 1 to 15 form part of the financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the undersigned and authorised for issue on 12 July 2016.

(Signed)
F Hamilton MP
Honorary Treasurer

(Signed)
N Evans MP
Chairman

Cash flow statement at 31 March 2016

	Note	2016	2015
		£	£
Cash flow from operating activities			
Deficit for the financial year		(22,402)	(216,130)
Adjustments for:			
Interest received		(814)	(646)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		37,033	(5,255)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		(117,588)	105,164
Depreciation charge		4,837	4,163
Purchase of fixed assets		(2,919)	(3,072)
Net cash flow from operating activities		(101,853)	(115,776)
Cash flow from investing activities			
Interest received		814	646
Net cash flow from investing activities		814	646
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(101,039)	(115,130)
Cash at the beginning of the year		478,375	593,505
Cash at the end of the year		377,336	478,375
Cash bank and in hand		377,336	478,375

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2016

1 Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the organisation's financial statements.

1.1 Legal form

The BGIPU is an unincorporated entity, acting as an autonomous body within Parliament and is an independent parliamentary association. The Group is domiciled in the United Kingdom and the address of its registered office and principal place of business are Palace of Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA. Details of the principal activity of the BGIPU are included in the Annual Governance Statement on page 38.

1.2 Basis of preparation

The BGIPU is not required by law to comply with the requirements of the Companies Act and generally accepted accounting principles. However, as explained in the Statement of Executive Committee's responsibilities, the Executive Committee has accepted that these financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and under the historical cost convention.

Information on the impact of first-time adoption of FRS 102 is given in note 15. The preparation of the financial statements in compliance with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgement in applying the accounting policies (see note 2).

The following accounting policies have been applied:

1.3 Fixed Assets and depreciation

All assets over £100 are capitalised. Depreciation is provided to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of tangible fixed assets by equal instalments over their estimated useful economic lives as follows:

Office equipment	-	15% per annum (10% in the 7th year)
Computers and software	-	25% per annum

No depreciation is provided on paintings or the commemorative bell. There is no available market value but it is thought that the current market value would exceed the carrying amount.

1.4 Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment.

1.5 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours.

1.6 Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price.

1.7 Pension costs

The organisation makes payments to personal pension plans for the benefit of its employees.

Contributions payable to the schemes are charged against income in the period in which they fall due.

1.8 Financial Instruments

The Company only enters into basic financial instruments transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable. Debt instruments that are payable or receivable within one year, typically trade and other payables or receivables, are measured, initially and subsequently, at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration, expected to be paid or received.

However if the arrangements of a short-term instrument constitute a financing transaction, like the payment of a trade debt deferred beyond normal business terms or financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate or in case of an outright short-term loan not at

market rate, the financial asset or liability is measured, initially, at the present value of the future cash flow discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument and subsequently at amortised cost.

1.9 Foreign currency translation

Functional and presentation currency

The company's functional and presentational currency is GBP.

Transactions and balances

Foreign currency transactions are translated into the functional currency using the actual rate of exchange used when either converting currency, making payments by bank transfer or making payments by way of credit card. Any reimbursement to delegates or staff will be at either the actual rate suffered or up to 3% above the rate prevailing at the time of the transaction to account for standard bank and credit card charges. At each period end foreign currency monetary items are translated using the closing rate. Non-monetary items measured at historical cost are translated using the exchange rate at the date of the transaction.

1.10 Grant in Aid

Grant in aid is recognised as income in the financial statements in the period to which the grant relates.

Grant in aid for the year ended 31 March 2016 of £1,285,000 (2015: £1,072,800) has been provided by the House of Commons and the House of Lords; contributing 70% and 30% respectively.

1.11 Conference, delegation and all party group expenditure

Expenditure in respect of conferences, inward and outward delegations and seminars is charged against income in the period in which the event occurs.

1.12 Interest receivable

Interest earned on all bank accounts is recognised in the income and expenditure account on an accruals basis.

1.13 Donations / Subscriptions received

On 1 February 2011, the Executive Committee voted to suspend the annual membership fees. At the AGM in November 2011, the BGIPU Rules were formally amended abolishing the requirement for membership fees. However, there would be no refunds of unnecessary payments, which will be treated as donations in the future.

2 Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

No significant judgements have had to be made by management in preparing these financial statements.

3 Staff costs

The total emoluments paid to employees during the year, including pension contributions are disclosed in the income and expenditure account. Staff costs include all independent consultancy fees.

The average number of employees of the BGIPU during the year was 8 (2015: 8).

Staff costs, including director's remuneration, were as follows:

	2016	2015
	£	£
Wages and salaries	306,562	312,685
Social security costs	32,552	35,773
Pension costs	40,388	43,162
Other costs	33,617	24,237
	413,119	415,857

4 Tax status

The BGIPU acts as an autonomous body within Parliament and as such is treated as an independent parliamentary association and accordingly is not chargeable to tax.

5 Tangible fixed assets

	Paintings	Commemorative bell	Office equipment	Computers & software	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At beginning of year	3,183	890	2,413	23,095	29,581
Additions	-	-	-	2,919	2,919
Disposals	-	-	(300)	(1,866)	(2,166)
At end of year	3,183	890	2,113	24,148	30,334
Depreciation					
At beginning of year	-	-	1,587	17,101	18,688
Charge for year	-	-	305	4,532	4,837
Disposals	-	-	(300)	(1,866)	(2,166)
At end of year	-	-	1,592	19,767	21,359
Net book value					
At 31 March 2016	3,183	890	521	4,381	8,975
At 31 March 2015	3,183	890	826	5,994	10,893

6 Debtors: amounts receivable within one year

	2016	2015
	£	£
Trade debtors	5,610	-
Prepayments	282,835	328,635
Other debtors	4,425	1,268
	292,870	329,903

7 Cash at bank and in hand

	2016	2015
	£	£
Interest earning bank deposit accounts	367,009	467,717
Non-interest earning bank deposit account	10,000	10,000
Cash in hand	327	658
	<u>377,336</u>	<u>478,365</u>

8 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2016	2015
	£	£
Trade creditors	3,634	1,263
Accruals and prepaid income	44,442	163,758
Social security and other taxes	8,628	9,271
	<u>56,704</u>	<u>174,292</u>

9 Financial instruments

	2016	2015
Financial assets	£	£
Measured at fair value through profit or loss	<u>670,206</u>	<u>808,278</u>
Financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	<u>48,076</u>	<u>165,021</u>

(i) Risk Management

The company's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including foreign exchange risk:

Foreign exchange risk

The organisation operates internationally and is exposed to foreign exchange risk with respect to the Swiss Franc and various other currencies, depending on events taking place overseas. Market risk arising from movements in foreign exchange rates is identified and monitored.

(ii) Fair value

The company's financial assets and liabilities comprise debtors, creditors and cash at bank. The book values and fair values of the company's financial assets and liabilities are identical and are disclosed on the balance sheet and within related notes.

10 Reserves

General fund

This reserve comprises all current and prior period retained surplus and deficits.

	General Fund
	£
Balance at 31 March 2015	644,879
Deficit for the year	<u>(22,402)</u>
Balance at 31 March 2016	<u>622,477</u>

In accordance with HM Government accounting rules, the annual grant in aid income awarded to the organisation is not paid to the BGIPU until the funds are actually required to meet expenditure budgeted for the year. The BGIPU submits returns to the funding providers covering income and expenditure, cash position and adjusted reserves for the previous period and forecasts for the year, before quarterly instalments of grant in aid are agreed and paid. The funding provider advances cash to the organisation when it is required to meet expenditure.

The General Fund balance is carried forward into the next financial year and is unaffected by the change in funding arrangement of the grant in aid.

11 Pension commitments

Contributions payable by the company relating to defined contribution pension schemes for the year amounted to £40,388 (2015: £43,162). At the year end, £3,474 (2015: £4,470) remained unpaid.

12 Published financial statements

The approved financial statements will be made publicly available on the website of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union at www.bgipu.org.

13 Related party transactions

During the year members of the Executive Committee received reimbursement of expenditure incurred on behalf of undertaking work for the organisation totalling £31,282 (2015: £34,264). At the year end £1,738 (2015: £11,250) was outstanding and is included within creditors in note 8.

During the year director's emoluments totalled £74,054 (2015: £72,839) and entity contributions to director's pension schemes totalled £10,283 (2015: £10,251). During the year retirement benefits were accruing to 1 director (2015: 1) in respect of defined contribution pension schemes. During the year the director received reimbursement of expenditure incurred on behalf of undertaking work for the organisation totalling £2,303 (2015: £4,051). At the year end £305 (2015: £543) was outstanding and is included within creditors in note 8.

14 Controlling party

The entity is under the control of the Executive Committee and the Director.

15 First time adoption of FRS 102

	As previously stated 1 April 2014	Effect of transition 1 April 2014	FRS 102 (as restated) 1 April 2014	As previously stated 31 March 2015	Effect of transition 31 March 2015	FRS 102 (as restated) 31 March 2015
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	11,984	-	11,984	10,893	-	10,893
Current assets	918,153	-	918,153	808,278	-	808,278
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(64,840)	(4,288)	(69,128)	(167,871)	(6,421)	(174,292)
Net current assets	853,313	(4,288)	849,025	640,407	(6,421)	633,986
Total assets less current liabilities	865,297	(4,288)	861,009	651,300	(6,421)	644,879
Net assets	865,297	(4,288)	861,009	651,300	(6,421)	644,879
General Funds	865,287	(4,288)	861,009	651,300	(6,421)	644,879

15 First time adoption of FRS 102 (continued)

	As previously stated 31 March 2015	Effect of tran- sition 31 March 2015	FRS 102 (as restated) March 2015
	£	£	
Income	1,073,547	-	1,073,547
Expenditure	(1,287,544)	(2,133)	(1,289,677)
Deficit for the year	<u>(213,997)</u>	(2,133)	<u>(216,130)</u>

Explanation of changes to previously reported profit and equity:

FRS 102 requires short term employee benefits to be charged to the income and expenditure account as the employee service is received. This has resulted in the BGIPU recognising availability for holiday pay of £4,288 on transition to FRS 102. Previously, holiday pay accruals were not recognised and were charged to the income and expenditure account as they were paid. In the year to 31 March 2015 an additional charge of £2,133 was recognised in the income and expenditure account and the liability at 31 March 2015 was £6,421.

IPU
HEADQUARTERS

Executive Committee of the IPU

The IPU Governing Council is the plenary policy-making body of the IPU. Oversight of the administration and advice to the Governing Council is provided by an Executive Committee composed as follows;

Members	Expiry of term
<i>President:</i>	
Mr S.H. Chowdhury (Bangladesh)	October 2017
<i>Members:</i>	
Mr. I. Liddell-Grainger (United Kingdom)	October 2017
Mr. E. Ethuro (Kenya)	October 2019
Mr. A. Jasem Ahmed (United Arab Emirates)	April 2017
Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation)	October 2019
Mr. A. Lins (Brazil)	October 2019
Mr. S. Suzuki (Japan)	October 2018
Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria)	October 2018
Mr. R. del Picchia (France)	October 2018
Ms. G. Eldegard (Norway)	October 2019
Ms. A. Habibou (Niger)	March 2019
Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran)	October 2019
Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia)	March 2018
Mr. N. Schrijver (Netherlands)	October 2017
Mr. Nguyen Van Giau (Viet Nam)	October 2019
Ms. Y. Ferrer Gómez (Cuba)	October 2020
Ms. M.I. Oliveira Valente (Angola)	October 2019

Liaison with the International Secretariat

The BGIPU Secretariat has maintained regular and constructive contact with the IPU Secretariat in Geneva on a wide range of issues on the IPU agenda. In addition, the BGIPU Secretariat hosted a visit of IPU Secretary General in London on 28 April 2016 to sign with the Speaker of Bangladesh the hosting agreement for the 136th IPU Assembly. The Secretary General made a further visit on 12 July 2016 to brief the Executive Committee on the draft IPU Strategy 2017-2021.

At IPU Assemblies, Geneva-based IPU meetings and in our regular daily work, the British Group continues to enjoy excellent relations at all levels and maintains a strong record of cooperation with the international Secretariat. The contact details for the Secretary General of the IPU are:

Mr Martin Chungong
Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
5, Chemin Du Pommier
Case Postale 330
CH-1218 Le Grand Saconnex
Geneva
SWITZERLAND

Telephone: +41 22 919 41 50 Fax: +41 22 919 41 60

E-Mail: postbox@mail.ipu.org

Website: www.ipu.org

National Groups of the IPU

As of November 2016 there are 171 Members and 10 Associate Members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Afghanistan	Croatia	Indonesia
Albania	Cuba	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Algeria	Cyprus	Iraq
Andorra	Czech Republic	Ireland
Angola	Democratic People's	Israel
Argentina	Republic of Korea	Italy
Armenia	Democratic Republic	Japan
Australia	of the Congo	Jordan
Austria	Denmark	Kazakhstan
Azerbaijan	Djibouti	Kenya
Bahrain	Dominican Republic	Kuwait
Bangladesh	Ecuador	Kyrgyzstan
Belarus	Egypt	Lao People's Democratic
Belgium	El Salvador	Republic
Benin	Equatorial Guinea	Latvia
Bhutan	Estonia	Lebanon
Bolivia	Ethiopia	Lesotho
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Fiji	Libya
Botswana	Finland	Liechtenstein
Brazil	France	Lithuania
Bulgaria	Gabon	Luxembourg
Burkina Faso	Gambia	Madagascar
Burundi	Georgia	Malawi
Cambodia	Germany	Malaysia
Cameroon	Ghana	Maldives
Canada	Greece	Mali
Cape Verde	Guatemala	Malta
Chad	Guinea	Mauritania
Chile	Guinea-Bissau	Mauritius
China	Guyana	Mexico
Colombia	Haiti	Micronesia (Federated
Comoros	Honduras	States of)
Congo	Hungary	Monaco
Costa Rica	Iceland	Mongolia
Côte d'Ivoire	India	Montenegro

Morocco	Romania	Tajikistan
Mozambique	Russian Federation	Thailand
Myanmar	Rwanda	The former Yugoslav
Namibia	Samoa	Republic of Macedonia
Nepal	San Marino	Timor-Leste
Netherlands	Sao Tome and Principe	Togo
New Zealand	Saudi Arabia	Tonga
Nicaragua	Senegal	Trinidad and Tobago
Niger	Serbia	Tunisia
Nigeria	Seychelles	Turkey
Norway	Sierra Leone	Uganda
Oman	Singapore	Ukraine
Pakistan	Slovakia	United Arab Emirates
Palau	Slovenia	United Kingdom
Palestine	Somalia	United Republic of
Panama	South Africa	Tanzania
Papua New Guinea	South Sudan	Uruguay
Paraguay	Spain	Venezuela
Peru	Sri Lanka	Viet Nam
Philippines	Sudan	Yemen
Poland	Suriname	Zambia
Portugal	Swaziland	Zimbabwe
Qatar	Sweden	
Republic of Korea	Switzerland	
Republic of Moldova	Syrian Arab Republic	

Associate Members

Andean Parliament

Central American Parliament

East African Legislative Assembly

European Parliament

Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union

Latin American Parliament

Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States

Parliament of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Arab Parliament

**ALL-PARTY
PARLIAMENTARY
GROUPS**

Details of funding granted in support of All Party Parliamentary Group Activities in the period November 2015 to November 2016

Each year, BGIPU approves financial assistance to a range of All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) which apply for support. APPGs eligible for BGIPU support consists of informal cross party groupings of parliamentarians from both Houses with an interest in the affairs of a specific country, including exchanges with parliamentary counterparts in that country. Funding for this activity is included within grant in aid received from the two Houses.

The approved budget for assistance to APPGs in 2015-16 was £30,000. For the Annual Report, the period of focus is between Annual General Meetings, rather than the Financial Years. Detail of support given since December 2015 until time of writing follows:

British-Danish APPG

Assistance totalling £175 was provided for a lunch in Parliament welcoming the Danish Ambassador to the UK organised by Lord Craigavon on 27 April 2016.

British-Taiwanese APPG

Assistance totalling £188 was provided for a farewell lunch in Parliament for the Taiwanese Representative hosted by Lord Faulkner on 3 May 2016.

British-Swedish APPG

Assistance totalling £120 was provided for a farewell lunch in Parliament for the Swedish Ambassador to the UK hosted by Lord Craigavon 6 July 2016.

APPG on Egypt

Assistance totally £56.90 was provided for a commemorative gift to the Egyptian Parliament marking its 90th anniversary during a visit to Sharm el Sheikh by Sir Gerald Howarth MP on 9 October 2016.

British-Tajikistan APPG

Assistance totalling £4764.42 was provided in support of an outward delegation for two parliamentarians to travel to Tajikistan to visit the capital Dushanbe and surrounding regions from 23 to 28 October

2016. A report on the visit will be published on the BGIPU website in due course.

British-Swedish APPG

Assistance totalling £150 was provided for a lunch in Parliament to welcome the new Swedish Ambassador to the UK hosted by Lord Craigavon 26 October 2016.

British-Finnish APPG

Assistance totalling £189.70 was provided for a lunch in Parliament with the Finnish Ambassador to the UK hosted by Lord Craigavon 2 November 2016.

British-Brazilian APPG

Assistance totalling £10,000 was approved in support of an outward delegation of four UK parliamentarians to travel to Brazil to strengthen bilateral relations from 4 to 11 November 2016. A report on the visit will be published on the BGIPU website in due course.

THE SECRETARIAT OF THE BRITISH GROUP IPU

	Position	Commenced
Mr Rick Nimmo	Director	May 2012
Ms Dominique Rees MBE	Deputy Director	March 1998
Ms Jackie Rhodes	Finance & Administration Manager	January 2010
Ms Gabriella Liberotti	International Project Manager	June 2008
Ms Anja Richter	International Project Manager	December 2014
Ms Emily Davies	International Project Manager	June 2015
Ms Lauren Tait	International Project Manager	September 2016
Ms Rhiannon Edwards	Executive Assistant	September 2016
Ms Alison MacDonald	Human Resources Consultant	July 2012
Ms Moyosore Shodipo	Finance & Administration Assistant	March 2013

Contact details of the Secretariat of the British Group IPU

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