



ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
BRITISH GROUP  
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY  
UNION  
2018



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**The BGIPU Chair, Nigel Evans MP delivering the UK General Debate statement at the 139th IPU Assembly in Geneva**

# **ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP**



# Chair's Report



**Mr Nigel Evans MP**  
**Chair, BGIPU**

As my three-year tenure as Chair draws to an end, I am pleased to have this final opportunity to report on BGIPU activities for the year since our last Annual General Meeting. Looking back on a very busy and productive term as Chair, I want to express my sincere gratitude to all members of the Executive Committee and broader membership for the support they have provided me and vital support across many inter-parliamentary activities and exchanges, both here in Westminster and elsewhere.

Widely acknowledged and admired as one of the most active and influential members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), BGIPU's priority activities have remained focused on our programme of bilateral exchanges in hosting parliamentary delegations to the Palace of Westminster and visiting our counterparts overseas in their own parliaments. This gives UK parliamentarians unique and valuable opportunities to engage with foreign counterparts at a fraught time in international relations where uncertainty, distrust and conflict has made constructive dialogue between opinion-leaders across all countries even more essential. Additionally, with the UK seeking new engagements and partnerships as we leave the European Union, inter-parliamentary contacts provide an alternative source of interaction to Government which will complement such efforts and help shape our global role into the future.

In a very busy year since the last Annual Report, BGIPU has hosted inter-parliamentary delegation visits to the United Kingdom from eight parliaments namely Cuba, Norway, Estonia, Liberia, Lithuania, Uruguay, Austria and Angola. There has been a deliberate focus on maintaining our bilateral engagement in Europe and advancing the potential of some highly prospective relationships.

In terms of our own overseas delegations, in the last 12 months we have sent UK parliamentary delegations to eight counterpart parliaments in Albania, Iraq, Nepal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus, Cuba, Vietnam and Chile. This diversity of destinations reflects the vast breadth of UK foreign policy priorities and draws upon the

specific interests of our membership. With this level of activity, BGIPU has already surpassed its stated target of at least ten bilateral exchanges in the current financial year. Detailed overview reports of these activities are published on BGIPU's website which supplements this Annual Report.

I also want to recognise the contribution and commitment of UK delegates to IPU Assemblies and other IPU-hosted thematic meetings during the year. The IPU remains an important conduit for inter-parliamentary engagement on international issues but there is increasing division among its 178-member parliaments as global tensions and ideological differences surface in IPU debates and activities. The BGIPU places high priority on using our participation in IPU Assemblies to take maximum advantage of the chance to have bilateral meetings with up to a dozen counterpart parliaments each Assembly. This also gives foreign counterparts the opportunity to hear directly from UK members about a wide array of bilateral, regional and international issues encompassing the main political perspectives across both Houses.

In my capacity as BGIPU Chair, I had the honour to lead UK delegations to the 138<sup>th</sup> and 139<sup>th</sup> IPU Assemblies which both took place in Geneva in March 2018 and October 2018 respectively. These Assemblies saw general debates on “Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: the need for evidence-based policy solutions” and “Parliamentary leadership in promoting peace and development in the age of innovation and technological change”. Demonstrating growing geopolitical tensions in the IPU, the UK and around 30 other like-minded delegations disassociated themselves from a wrong-headed “emergency item” resolution adopted in March on “The consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions” (noting the IPU has a dedicated Committee on Middle East Affairs where such matters can already be discussed). Back to a more suitable topic in October, an emergency item on “Climate change – Let us not cross the line” received widespread support in highlighting the deep concerns of small islands developing nations at recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reporting on impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways.

I have been particularly vocal on matters of injustice and intolerance during my period as Chair of the BGIPU. I have championed the cause of disadvantaged groups globally, regularly raising the plight of the Rohingya in Burma, and I have worked in strong support of our parliamentary counterparts facing harsh suppression in Venezuela. For example, in October this year, the UK delegation partnered with the Netherlands to draft a very strong resolution on “The urgent need to resolve the humanitarian crisis caused by the deterioration of parliamentary democracy in Venezuela” which garnered very strong 12 Plus and other support but which we withdrew at the request of members of Venezuela’s legitimate National Assembly as they feared losing the vote might damage their cause at home.

Standing Committee outcomes of IPU Assemblies in 2018 have included resolutions on “Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development”, “Engaging the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy” and on “Strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and migration governance in view of the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration”. There have been debates and side events on a myriad of other issues such as “fake news”, children’s rights, climate change and disarmament issues. A Special Session on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) at the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly saw our Vice-Chair, Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP play a key role in the adoption of a declaration by members on the importance of the UDHR. In striking contrast, however, was a very damaging vote by members to reject even the suggestion of a discussion on addressing discrimination against the LGBTI community. As I continue to participate in UK delegations to the IPU after my time as Chair, I will be dedicating myself to reverse and redress such bigotry and prejudice growing within the IPU itself with the help of many like-minded colleagues in the 12 Plus and elsewhere. If we cannot put our own inter-parliamentary house in order on such basic principles of there being inclusive global norms, we don’t deserve to be seen as a relevant voice in the global debate on democracy and human rights in the 21st century.

In addition to IPU Assemblies, we have also sent UK delegations to a wide-range of IPU-convened meetings, often providing parliamentary

perspectives in connection with major global meetings. BGIPU supported UK participation in the Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations in February (addressing migrant and refugee issues) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) which was also held at the UN in New York in March. We have also continued to contribute parliamentary perspectives through Lord McConnell's participation on behalf of the APPG for Global Goals at several UN-based meetings. In one of my final duties as Chair, I also represented the Speaker of the House of Commons (with our Vice-Chair Baroness Hooper representing the Lord Speaker) at the recent Parliamentary Speaker's Summit at the G20 in Buenos Aires.

Alongside our formal inward programme, BGIPU also hosted leaders, parliamentarians and officials from a wide array of countries for shorter visits, including from South Korea, Chile, Poland, Kyrgyzstan, Slovakia, Belarus, Iceland, New Zealand, Portugal, Ukraine, Iraq and Argentina as well as the President of Gabon and hosting a visit by IPU Secretary-General, Martin Chungong in July.

This extensive programme of inter-parliamentary engagement would not be possible without the support of many others, particularly the invaluable support we receive from UK Ministers and Her Majesty's ambassador's and Embassy staff overseas for which we are grateful. We also very much appreciate the involvement in our work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) which supports our visit preparations, along with the vital assistance provided by the Parliamentary Relations Department. I must also recognise the support of the Ambassadors and diplomatic mission staff here in London who give vital support and encouragement to BGIPU's activities.

In closing this report, I must pay the warmest possible tribute to our Deputy Director, Ms Dominique Rees MBE, who during the past year became the BGIPU's longest serving staff member. In celebrating her 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of employment, she also surpassed the length of service of BGIPU founder, Sir William Randal Cremer MP. Her outstanding commitment to this organisation over the last two decades serves to highlight the invaluable contribution made by many of our staff over more than a century. Indeed, I should take this last opportunity to express my gratitude as outgoing Chair to the Director, Mr Rick Nimmo, and all BGIPU staff who consistently ensure our organisation's overall mission is fulfilled at such a high level of

excellence. Complementary to the efforts of its membership, the skill and dedication of Secretariat staff have clearly been vital to our organisation reaching its 130<sup>th</sup> year since the very first bilateral exchange under BGIPU auspices with France back in October 1888.

Nigel Evans MP  
Chair, British Group IPU  
6 November 2018

# Director's Report



**Rick Nimmo**

**Director, BGIPU**

In outlining the main management challenges for BGIPU this year, I acknowledge the contributions made by all our members in both Houses and our incredible Secretariat staff. This combined with the support of key partners in UK Parliament and more broadly, particularly at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and UK missions abroad, has been vital in enabling BGIPU to deliver a very diverse, frequent and successful programme of inter-parliamentary engagement and activity in 2018.

This was the final year of the three-year Strategic Business Plan, adopted by the Executive Committee in February 2016 with work now underway to prepare a new three-year plan for the 2019/20-2021/22 period ahead. This will help BGIPU better identify key objectives and work priorities to ensure its programme is well-targeted, its activities are properly resourced, and key goals are realistic and obtainable.

Alongside the BGIPU Staff Handbook and Guidance for Members Travel, this 3-year plan provides a solid foundation for any administrative, financial and human resources planning in addition to setting some of the key international relations objectives of its work. This helps to ensure BGIPU meets all required conditions under the Financial Memorandum (FM) with funding bodies in both Houses as renewed the previous year in September 2017.

In support of the 2019-20 Request for Funding, I submitted a detailed review of achievements against the BGIPU objectives outlined in the Strategic Business Plan in September 2018. This review highlighted key outcomes for the year including full compliance with BGIPU governance rules and strong levels of participation and satisfaction with inter-parliamentary activities from members in both Houses. Furthermore, BGIPU has again exceeded its target number of inward and Outward delegations and managed high levels of other activity through events in the UK and participation in IPU conferences overseas.

BGIPU has continued to monitor closely its financial reserves which now stand some five percent above the levels recommended by its funding bodies. Nevertheless reserves will be reduced more actively this year through programmed over-expenditure to make up for last year when the general election suspended the programme for a four-month period.

Such uneven expenditure patterns year on year are not unusual and will always be subject to the vagaries of domestic and international political developments over any given period and we maintain regular dialogue with funding bodies on the impacts on such events on BGIPU's bottom line. To this degree, exchange rate variations and cost rises through 2018 have been manageable although this might not be the case into the future given various conflicting estimations on the value of the pound and inflation post-Brexit.

Overall, the quality and accuracy of financial accounts was again acknowledged by external auditors which was credit to the usual precision and expertise demonstrated by the Finance and Administration Manager, Ms Jackie Rhodes.

BGIPU continued to manage human resource issues in line with its employer obligations, including allowing continuing or new flexible working agreements upon request. Generally, however, the year has seen a more stable workplace staffing profile than years previous with no departures and no recruitment since the last Annual Report.

Uncertainty about the impacts of House of Commons staff pay negotiations on BGIPU salary levels remains outstanding with the potential for unfunded impacts on pay and pensions moving forward.

Following complex dealings over General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), a large number of IT platform and software changes during the year posed challenges to BGIPU's output and productivity. This was particularly the case when such changes coincided with BGIPU moving offices from Fielden House to 1 Millbank with serious impacts avoided by BGIPU staff showing incredible flexibility and forbearance to the regular disruptions to "business as usual" including during peak periods of intense activity.

BGIPU continues to conduct the majority of its reporting and outreach activities through the BGIPU website and Twitter which

has saved significant publications costs down the years. There are three regular newsletters (financial year end, summer recess and year end) and delegation reports as required to supplement the Annual Report. Over the past 12 months, BGIPU has increased its number of Twitter followers by one-third to over 2,500 with 3,000 tweets totalling over 900,000 tweet impressions (effectively the number of times a tweet is seen on a users' timeline) for the year across all its inter-parliamentary activities.

In terms of policy-related events, BGIPU have convened a range of policy events and delegation report-back meetings. These have included follow-up on key IPU priorities such as human rights, global political/regional issues, economic/trade issues and gender equality. As has become more routine, the BGIPU convened roundtable meetings with UK Ambassadors during FCO Leadership week in July.

A highly successful International Parliamentary Seminar on the Western Balkans Seminar was held 10-12 September to support implementation of the outcomes of the Berlin Process Leaders' Summit hosted by HMG in London in July, superbly conceived, managed and coordinated by Deputy Director, Ms Dominique Rees MBE and International Project Manager, Ms Lauren Tait.

In membership promotion events, we arranged three outreach stand events in Portcullis House and organised an annual charity quiz night on 5 September (this year supporting the Kosovo children's charity, the Ideas Partnership) raising a new record amount of £650.00 while also raising awareness of BGIPU's work and better engaging members and their staff about activities.

There has been continuation of the partnership with the John Smith Trust where BGIPU hosts a Day in Parliament for its fellows from Wider Europe and Central Asia at six-monthly intervals.

Alongside continuing priority attention to gender issues such the Commission of the Status of Women delegation each year, BGIPU has maintained its active role supporting implementation of the key outcomes of Prof, Sarah Childs' "The Good Parliament" report which we helped launch in July 2016. This includes collaboration with the IPU Secretariat in Geneva to support the first ever gender audit of the UK Parliament just finalised in recent weeks.



We look forward to the results of this gender audit, particularly in bringing about meaningful change for UK Parliament while also acting as an example to other parliaments elsewhere. For this and many other reasons, ensuring Parliament has a robust, transparent and accountable mechanisms for addressing workplace bullying and harassment is vital, not least given the negative attention this has attracted for the UK Parliament internationally in recent years.

BGIPU maintains continuing close engagement with other inter-parliamentary bodies, particularly the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and regular and mutually beneficial engagement with country-based and thematic All Party Parliamentary Groups. Indeed, in 2018 we have more than fully expended dedicated programme funding for APPG support for the first time in many years. This pleasing result is perhaps reflecting far greater willingness by members to visit their overseas counterparts under APPG auspices than previous years, noting such visits are entirely free from the possibility of compromise, obligation or controversy over funding which too often arises from visits using registerable funding sources, such as provided by business entities or foreign governments.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Secretariat values its close cooperation with the Overseas Offices of both Houses and I acknowledge the excellent cooperation we enjoy with the budget holders, Mr Matthew Hamlyn and Mr Jake Vaughan as well as the respective Speakers' Offices of both Houses. Likewise, we depend heavily on the cooperation of security, catering, customer services and committee staff across both Houses who play an important, albeit often unrecognised, role in ensuring international visitors are well received when visiting the Palace of Westminster.

I offer sincere gratitude to all members of the Executive Committees for their guidance and support of BGIPU throughout 2018, both here in London and on delegations, meetings and Assemblies abroad. I am particularly indebted to the outgoing Chair Mr Nigel Evans MP who has made an enormous contribution to BGIPU and to the work of the IPU internationally.

When other IPU delegations have praised BGIPU's commitment to democracy and activism in support of vulnerable groups in recent years, it has followed on the heels of one of Nigel's barnstorming speeches or passionate interventions appealing to others across geopolitical divides. We look forward to his continuing contribution to the organisation's work in the years ahead.

Rick Nimmo  
Director, British Group IPU  
6 November 2018

**Minutes of the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the British  
Group Inter-Parliamentary Union  
Wednesday 6 December 2017**

The Annual General Meeting of the British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union was held in the IPU Room, Houses of Parliament, on Wednesday 6 December 2017. Mr Speaker, The Rt Hon. John Bercow MP, was in the chair as Honorary President.

**Item 1: Opening Remarks by the Speaker of the House of Commons, The Rt Hon. John Bercow MP—Honorary President**

**MR SPEAKER:**

My Lords, ladies and gentlemen, I now call this Annual General Meeting to order. I extend a very warm welcome to everyone. I hope that you have had some time to review the 2017 Annual Report, which was published on the BGIPU website on 15 November. Hard copies are available here for those who would like a copy. Please note, colleagues, that there is no election ballot today, as all nominations have been accepted. The election of the new Executive Committee will be dealt with under item 8.

**Item 2: Apologies for Absence**

**MR SPEAKER:**

I shall move on to item 2, which is apologies for absence. Do we have any apologies?

**RICK NIMMO, DIRECTOR:**

There are 21 apologies.

**MR SPEAKER:**

Thank you. That record can be inspected if anyone wants to do so.

**Item 3: Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on  
Wednesday 7 December 2016**

**MR SPEAKER:**

We come now to item 3. We are required, colleagues, to adopt the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 7 December 2016. Those are printed on 16 to 31 of the 2017 Annual Report. May I have a proposer and seconder that the minutes be adopted as a true record of the meeting?

*(Proposed by Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger MP and seconded by Mr Fabian Hamilton MP.)*

All those in favour, please raise your hand.

Are there any against? No.

Thank you. I shall now sign the minutes as a true record.

While welcoming colleagues, I will, as I did on a previous occasion at another AGM, take the opportunity to welcome ex-members present. I welcome in particular John Austin, who of course was a notable mainstay of the IPU during his time as a Member of the House and whose interest continues to this day. We would have expected that and are delighted to see that it is the case, so John, welcome and thank you for coming to be with us today.

**Item 4: Matters Arising from the Minutes**

**MR SPEAKER:**

Item 4 is matters arising. Are there any arising from those minutes?

**DIRECTOR:**

No matters arising have been confirmed or advised to the Secretariat.

**MR SPEAKER:**

Thank you. There is nothing additional for today.

**Item 5: Adoption of the Annual Report for 2017**

**MR SPEAKER:**

Item 5 is adoption of the Annual Report for 2017. I invite the Minister of State at the Department for International Development and

the Minister of State for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office—one and the same person—Rory Stewart, to propose the adoption of the 2017 Annual Report. Rory, thank you for being with us. We look forward to your proposal of the report.

## **RORY STEWART MP:**

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I shall make some brief remarks. I wanted, obviously, to begin by congratulating the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on its work. This is genuinely an extraordinary story. We have gone from a situation in which, at the first meeting in the hotel in Paris, nine countries were represented, to the situation today, in which we are working with 180 Parliaments.

I thought I would reflect on three things, which from our point of view looking at the work of the IPU seem to really matter in international development. The core of this is the work of parliamentarians. Parliamentarians are absolutely critical in improving governance, democracy and parliamentary activity in developing countries in a way that cannot be done by anyone else. It cannot be done by academics. It cannot be done by governance specialists. It cannot be done by civil society contractors paid for by the Department for International Development. It cannot, in fact, be done by anybody except Members of Parliament. I understand that not all the IPU's work is driven by Members of Parliament, but I want to pay particular tribute to Members of Parliament today for this reason.

There is something quite unique about the actual practice of parliamentary democracy that is never captured in a constitutional textbook, never fully captured by a theorist and would never really be captured if you were sitting here listening to a DFID governance adviser giving a speech on how Parliament ought to work. It is very easy for us all to sit around a table and say that Parliaments provide oversight, provide legislation and represent their constituents, but only people who are inside the system—maybe I can extend this from Members of Parliament to Clerks of the House of Commons, to people who work with political parties—understand the gap between the theory and the practice. They understand that those big words, “oversight”, “legislative scrutiny”, “representing constituents”, happen in an entire political context.

They happen in a political context where there may sometimes—

not always, but sometimes—be situations that a Member of Parliament understands and a constitutional theorist does not, where potentially one or two of the people in the Division Lobby have not necessarily read all the legislation on which they are voting, where one or two of the people in the Division Lobby may be in that Division Lobby because the Whips have told them to be in that Division Lobby, and where one or two of the people in the Division Lobby may be concerned about their promotion prospects. This is really important, because when we go to other people's countries and try to have conversations with other people's Members of Parliament, we need to bring the three elements of honesty about ourselves, humility about some of the practical limits and incentives of a political system, and a sense of optimism. That last thing is the most tricky.

Obviously, in the practical world of politics, 99 times out of 100 our idealism can be disappointed; 99 times out of 100 we may begin to worry that we are not fully living up to the constitutional ideal of oversight, of legislative scrutiny and of championing our constituents in the way that we want. Yet we are also aware that this Parliament is somehow a miracle. The reason we all turn up to work every morning and the reason we are genuinely proud of our jobs is that we genuinely do feel that there is no better way that has ever been invented of trying to keep a peaceful, prosperous, well governed, just society going than through holding an Executive to account through a Parliament. Conveying that sense of cynicism, realism, pessimism, depression and frustration to someone else while retaining the optimism is something that desperately needs to happen.

Otherwise, what happens when you go to see the Burmese Parliament, travel to visit a Mongolian Member of Parliament or do the excellent work that the British Group of the IPU is doing in Peru?

You are facing somebody else who is going through exactly the same problem—somebody else in the Sierra Leonean Parliament who may themselves sometimes worry that when they are voting on a particular piece of legislation they may be concerned about their party's prospects, their promotion or what the Whips are saying. They may be under other types of pressure that we cannot even imagine in this room. Many of the countries in which we operate and many of the people with whom we work are facing huge pressures, such as pressures to accept bribes and pressures that if they do not accept

bribes they could be killed. I remember working, in some of my very early work, in a provincial council in Iraq. The two women I worked with on that council were shot. They were shot dead for their work on that council. I went through a psychological experience where I began by feeling frustrated and by feeling that these two women on the council were only there for reasons of diversity and were not really participating. I felt they were being shut out of the system by clerics at the other end of the room who were shouting at them and not allowing them to fully participate in the process. That led me to feel pessimistic and cynical, and that I was underestimating what kind of contribution they were making, but in the moments of their deaths, we saw very clearly that what they were doing was genuinely revolutionary—it was threatening the deepest power structures within that society. What they represented in a room in which I never saw them really say anything was something that was genuinely changing the world.

To go from these somewhat grandiloquent, abstract points back to a thank you, I was very lucky to serve on the Foreign Affairs Select Committee with Ann Clwyd. When I think about the work that the IPU does, I suppose I think generally of Ann and the work she does around the world, the inspiration I took from her in the Committee and the inspiration I have taken from seeing the work she has done in Iraq over the years.

If I am looking for a symbol of those three things with which I began—of that honesty about ourselves and our own limitations and the way in which our Parliament does not always work in the way in which someone in a school might imagine, of that humility and of that optimism that, notwithstanding all the compromise, misery and murkiness of politics, we can genuinely change the world—I would look to Ann. Thank you very much indeed. *[Applause.]*

**MR SPEAKER:**

Minister, thank you. I thank you very warmly. I do not say that in any perfunctory way; I say it sincerely from the bottom of my heart. I have chaired this meeting several times, and I really felt that your speech resonated very much with people here. You spoke with the beauty and clarity of thought that we have come to expect from you, but it really resonated across the divide. I first became involved with the IPU at the request of Ann Clwyd more than a decade ago. I thought what you said by way of tribute to Ann was warmly appreciated by

Members of both House and from all sides of the arguments, because everyone respects her knowledge, commitment and sincerity. Rory, it was typical of you and it worked very well with this audience. Thank you.

The proposition is now to be followed by a seconding, which will be done by the inimitable shadow Foreign Secretary, Emily Thornberry.

**RT. HON. EMILY THORNBERRY MP:**

Never one to leave a lectern unused, may I first thank Rory? What a lovely speech. Follow that? I don't think I can. I would like to begin by saying what an honour it is to be asked to second the adoption of the report and to accept the position of vice-president of this group.

In what feels like an increasingly uncertain world, the Inter-Parliamentary Union brings parliamentarians together to share ideas and different perspectives on global events and things that we have in common. Rory was right when he went through what parliamentarians share, but I think he missed something out. The other thing we share is an understanding of what a huge honour it is to be parliamentarians and to represent our communities.

In that context, I come to work in a palace every day, and I do that because my local people want me to. I would hope that being in awe of the job that you have been given is something that we would share with parliamentarians around the world.

Perhaps now more than ever, it is important to reflect on a central pillar around which the IPU is built, which is that unity, peace and mutual understanding can be achieved through political dialogue, but the annual report notes the importance of bilateral exchanges, hosting parliamentarians from abroad here in Westminster and visiting colleagues overseas. As shadow Foreign Secretary, I have had the great privilege of meeting many international parliamentarians regularly. Those meetings are a frequent reminder of how much we can learn from those colleagues and how much they can learn from us. We can be proud of the example we can show developing democracies and of our lessons in governance and democratic structure. I have particularly enjoyed speaking to international parliamentarians about the way Labour engaged with young people during the last election.



In the past year, the IPU has hosted delegations in Westminster from Iraq, Argentina, Poland, the Philippines, Cuba and Turkey, and British parliamentarians have been on IPU visits to Kosovo, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Peru, Serbia, Mongolia and Madagascar. That is a pretty impressive set of visits, particularly given that there was a snap election in the middle that disrupted the programme for four months. From my discussions with foreign parliamentarians, I can say that the general election has been of great interest to our colleagues around the world. Those who have spoken to me have been interested in asking, “What on earth happened?” and even more interested in asking, “What is going to happen next?” which, of course, one cannot answer.

The UK has sent delegations to IPU assemblies, to Dhaka and St Petersburg among other meetings. In Dhaka, the delegates passed a resolution calling for “urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and drought in parts of Africa and Yemen”—a strikingly similar sentiment to the concerns of MPs expressed in last week’s SO24 debate on the crisis in Yemen. The assembly in St Petersburg passed a resolution on the plight of the Rohingya—another area about which MPs at home have expressed deep concern.

I thank the IPU for the important work you do. I know that many of my colleagues are very grateful to the British Group of the IPU for the many opportunities they give us parliamentarians. I would also like to thank Nigel Evans for his chairmanship. It is a privilege to second the adoption of this report.

### **MR SPEAKER:**

Emily, thank you very much indeed for what you said and the way in which you said it. The 2017 Annual Report has now been proposed and seconded. Is it agreed that we adopt the report?

All those in favour please raise your hand. Thank you.

Any against? No. That is unanimously adopted. Thank you both, and thank you, colleagues.

**Item 6: Presentation of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2017 by Nic Dakin MP, Honorary Treasurer of BGIPU.**

## **MR SPEAKER:**

We come now to item 6 of our agenda. Mr Nic Dakin MP, the Honorary Treasurer of the BGIPU will present the Financial Statements of the Group. Nic, welcome, and thank you.

## **NIC DAKIN MP:**

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Thank you, everybody. This is one of those speeches in which you have to read what is on the page. Otherwise, you lose the gist of what is to be said. I thank Rick and the Secretariat team—particularly Jackie Rhodes—for all their work in supporting me this year in this work. I present the Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31 March 2017, shown on pages 39 to 65 of our 2017 Annual Report. These cover the 2016-17 financial year, noting the rest of the rest of the Annual Report reflects all BGIPU activities since the 2016 annual general meeting held in December 2016 on a calendar year, rather than a financial basis.

Kreston Reeves LLP conducted the audit. Peter Hudson, the audit partner, is with us today. Neither Kirsty McMeechan, the outgoing audit manager, who has now left the firm, nor Anne Carter, who will be resuming her role, are here. On page 49 of the 2017 Annual Report, our auditors report their unqualified opinion of the Financial Statements, which is always good to get. The Audit Committee deliberated on 4 July 2017 and recommended that the Executive Committee approve the Financial Statements, which the Chair and Treasurer signed at the Executive Committee meeting on 11 July.

The income and expenditure account appears on page 52. You can see that income increased from £1,285,881 to £1,300,969. The Group received £1,300,400 grant-in-aid, representing 100% of the maximum available, compared with £1,285,000—also 100%—in the year ended 31 March 2016.

Bank interest fell from £814 in the previous year to £509, due to falling interest rates. Expenditure fell from £1,308,283 to £1,192,232. Subscription expenses decreased by around £23,000, with the majority of that cost being the IPU subscription fee, which reduced due to changes in the UN scale of assessment. That saw the total UK share in Swiss francs fall to 465,800 Swiss francs in 2017 from 529,100 Swiss francs in 2016.

The aggregated costs of conferences, IPU seminars and outward delegations fell from £280,615 to £185,770. The main assembly costs fell from £110,341 in the prior year to £43,641, comprising a small portion of the costs from the 2016 spring assembly in Lusaka, those at the autumn assembly in Geneva and some of the costs of the 2017 spring assembly in Dhaka. Delegates were sent to 10 smaller IPU meetings for a total cost of £39,669. Eight outward delegations were undertaken at a total cost of £102,460. Five inward delegations and seven smaller events classed as “days in Parliament” were hosted at a total of £119,266.

Funding was claimed by 11 all-party groups at a total cost of £16,369. The cost of staff salaries and related expenses increased from £413,119 to £436,261, with an average of nine permanent employees in post, including those on maternity leave and one who resigned during the year and was replaced through a competitive selection process. Employees received pay increases in line with the House of Commons three-year pay settlement, and cover for one employee taking maternity leave was provided by a secondment from the Commons Overseas Office, followed by a new recruit on a fixed-term contract.

Printing—this is getting exciting—and stationery, postage and telephone costs fell for the seventh successive year due to an increase in electronic communication. Publishing and public relations costs have risen, mainly due to the cost of the EU referendum observation event being included in this heading. General hospitality and depreciation costs have fallen slightly. Audit fees increased due to timings of audit committee meetings, while insurance costs rose marginally. Sundry expenses, including bank charges and other office costs, have risen, mainly due to giftware restocking. The Executive Committee approved a one-off donation to the IPU solidarity fund of 30,000 Swiss francs. The net effect was a surplus for the year of £108,737.

The balance sheet on page 53 shows that net assets have increased from £622,477 to £731,234, reflecting the surplus. Fixed assets have decreased marginally, with a full summary of changes to those appearing in note 5 on page 60. Current assets have increased, mainly due to the rise in the bank balance from £377,336 to £440,740 and in prepayments from £285,835 to £315,178. The debtors are £4,296,

comprising mainly recharged hotel costs of House of Commons employees at the 136th assembly, refunds for cancelled flights for the conference on the status of women, and an employee season ticket loan.

Creditors and accruals have decreased from £56,708 to £36,767. Those mostly comprise invoices and expense claims related to events held in February and March, pension contributions and payroll taxes for March. The cash flow statement on page 54 highlights an increase in cash of £63,404, compared with a decrease of £101,039 the previous year.

The financial memorandum dated 1 April 2014 was in effect throughout the 2016-17 financial year. A newer version has been negotiated with retrospective effect from 1 April 2017. The annual report containing the financial statements has been published on the BGIPU website for the sixth year running.

**MR SPEAKER:**

Thank you very much indeed, Nic. Are there any questions for the Treasurer? The noble Lord, Lord Jopling has a question, to which we look forward with eager anticipation.

**LORD JOPLING:**

I am not an accountant, but if you look at page 52, at the bottom of the figures for 2017, it shows a deficit of £108,737. As I look at the figures, it looks like there is a surplus, and I thought the Treasurer himself referred to a surplus. Could I enquire whether I am right or I am wrong?

If I am right, I wonder whether we could examine whether this has been put up by the auditors, or whether it is our own printer who made a mistake. I used to be a member of the audit committee, and I played a major part in firing the previous auditor. If it is the auditors who have done this in a sloppy way, they have been highly paid, and I think they ought to have a reduction in their fee.

**MR SPEAKER:**

We are grateful to the noble Lord, but I think the explanation is

more innocent and prosaic, my Lord; namely, it is a printing error. I do not think it is an error on the part of the auditors. It is an error, and I think there will be acclamation for your implicit proposition—or, if not yours, mine—that the brackets be removed.

Nevertheless, in all solemnity, these are serious matters, and Lord Jopling has done us a service by pointing out that there is rather a big difference between there being a surplus of that sum or a deficit. I thank him. It is a cautionary note, and I am sure the auditors are relieved to have been exonerated .

Nic, you have shown a compendious grasp of your brief, so I am not sure whether there will be other questions, but if there are, colleagues, please, to put it bluntly, spit 'em out. No? In that case, thank you, and thank you very much indeed, Nic.

## **Item 7: Re-appointment of Auditors**

### **MR SPEAKER:**

We now move to item 7, on the obligation to appoint auditors for the current year. Do we have a proposal that our current auditors, Reeves & Co, be re-appointed? I may be pushing my luck to hope that Lord Jopling will be a proposer or a seconder on this, but maybe somebody will be willing.

*(Proposed by Mr Fabian Hamilton MP and seconded by Mr Mike Gapes MP.)*

All those in favour please raise your hand.

Any against? No.

That is carried. Reeves & Co are unanimously appointed as the group's auditors for the current year. Thank you to them. We look forward to their work in the coming year.

## **Item 8: Election of Officers and Members of the Executive Committee for the period 2017-18**

### **MR SPEAKER:**

I now move on to the elections, and I take it that the AGM is

willing to confirm the election of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the group, as notified to all members by the Secretariat on 1 December. If there are no objections to that outcome—they would presumably have to be on some sort of procedural ground—I am also pleased to confirm, on the basis of nominations received, that the following Officers and Executive Committee members are elected unopposed; I am just looking to see if anybody has any objection, but I do not see any: Chair, Mr Nigel Evans MP; Vice-Chair from the Government party, Mr John Whittingdale MP—welcome John, and thank you; Vice-Chair from the Opposition, the Right Hon. Ann Clwyd MP; Vice-Chair from the other place, Baroness Hooper—welcome to you, Gloria, and thank you; Treasurer, Nic Dakin, of whose prodigious grasp we have just become aware. Conservative party MPs: Bob Blackman MP, Conor Burns MP, James Duddridge MP, Ian Liddell-Grainger MP, Ranil Jayawardena MP, Mark Menzies MP, Andrew Rosindell MP and Laurence Robertson MP. I think the great majority of them, if not all of them, are present. Thank you.

From the other place, the Rt Hon Lord Jopling, from whom we have just heard, and Lord Gilbert of Panteg—Stephen Gilbert. Stephen, welcome to you.

From the Labour party, the following: Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods, Wayne David, Mike Gapes, Fabian Hamilton, Diana Johnson, Graham P. Jones, Kerry McCarthy and Stephen Pound, of whom the great majority are also—as it happens—present. From the other place, Lord Dubs.

## **DIRECTOR:**

Apology from Lord Dubs.

## **MR SPEAKER:**

We have an apology from Alf Dubs, who is not able to be with us, but he has been returned.

From the Scottish National party, Dr Lisa Cameron, who is with us—Lisa, thank you. Other peers: Lord Dholakia and, from the Cross Benches, the Rt. Hon. Baroness D’Souza and the Earl of Sandwich. I congratulate members on their election. This election result will be confirmed after the conclusion of this AGM and it will be posted on the IPU Room door and on the BGIPU website.

## **Item 9: Speech by the Chair of the BGIPU**

### **MR SPEAKER:**

Colleagues, I would now like to invite the re-elected Chair of the BGIPU, Mr Nigel Evans, to take the Floor.

### **MR NIGEL EVANS MP:**

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. It is a delight to be here. I am grateful to you, John, for giving up some of your valuable time to spend it with us. We are incredibly grateful for the time and support you give the IPU. I would also like to thank Rory and Emily for giving up some of their time and for proposing and seconding the annual report. We are grateful to them for what they have done today.

You heard from Emily, who stole my speech, which is most of all the countries that we have visited and those that have come in. But you did it so much better than I could, Emily, so I am grateful. I do not intend to repeat everything contained in the report. There is a mugs gallery there as well, so you can have a look at the pictures if the verbosity is a little too much. None the less, it has been an incredibly packed year.

I cannot overemphasise again the importance of the IPU to international politics. When Governments find it difficult to talk to one another, parliamentarians fill the void. We do it time and time again, in such a splendid fashion, when there are problems. We have seen it done at assemblies, we have seen it in inward delegations and outward delegations. We have seen it with visits to some of the most battle-torn countries where MPs and peers are brave enough to go, and their Members of Parliament come here as well. Emily listed the countries, and you know how battle-torn some of them are.

As we leave the European Union, you will know the importance of us not turning our back on the European Union. We are leaving the institutions, but we are not distancing ourselves from the Parliaments contained within those countries. We have recently had delegations that we would not have had in the past, but we have started to do them again. Today, we have selected an outward delegation to Spain, which will be going in the recess.

Emily, you say that you were asked time and again by people what went on in the general election, and I would like to know, too. I would

also like to know why we had a general election, but there you go. I am sure it is not a question I am alone in asking, and the next chapter is as much of interest to us as it is to these other politicians. During the election, we had some MPs from other countries who came and monitored what was going on—the activities of the general election—and we are grateful to them for doing so.

I mention the recess because, since the election, the reality of a very slim majority means it is incredibly difficult to send out delegations in term time.

The Whips are naturally worried that either they will lose a vote or they could possibly win one with the right arithmetic. So the Whips are being incredibly cautious. I hope that next year we can establish properly that when there is a balanced delegation going out and everybody is on the same plane going out and coming back, they are effectively paired. I hope we can get some sort of understanding in the future.

May I thank Rick and his amazing staff of the IPU? It is Gabriella's birthday today. She is standing at the back. I cannot think of a better way to spend a birthday than at an IPU AGM. They do an incredible amount of work. These delegations do not organise themselves. As you know, even with a lot of preparation going in, sometimes a phone call comes and all of a sudden something has happened in another country and they pull the delegation visit; the large amount of work that has gone into preparing for that visit gets pulled because there is a general election in another country. We are incredibly grateful for all the support that you give.

Rory, may I ask you to thank all your team in the Foreign Office and also your team of ambassadors who gave us support when we got out to countries? John Whittingdale gave me some information when he was out in Serbia recently about the amazing support that he had from the ambassadorial team there. We are grateful for everything that is done there.

I mentioned how we are able to be constructive in areas where it is far more difficult. Argentina is a perfect example where relations were incredibly fraught following the Falklands war. I remember going to IPU assemblies where we used to sit opposite the Argentinian delegation and they fairly well spent 45 minutes shouting at us about the Malvinas. We sort of diplomatically sat there for a while and then



we would answer their other questions. It was awkward.

Over the last few years, relatively recently, relations have become so good now that we have had an inward delegation from Argentina here, and we have had an outward delegation there. Indeed, tonight I, Rick and two others will go to Argentina as part of a WTO ministerial where we are having an IPU conference, and we have got a bilateral with the Argentinians again. It is absolutely a changed game. I am absolutely certain that that is because of the hard work that we and they have put into it and because of the opportunities that exist because of the IPU assemblies. Seeing the same politicians time and again means you can build up a relationship with them, and that is exactly what we have done. So I am extremely grateful to the IPU for affording us that opportunity.

We have had a couple of assemblies since the last AGM. There has been one in Dhaka, where we have been looking at issues such as addressing inequalities, delivering on dignity and wellbeing for all, and cultural pluralism, which allowed us to talk about LGBT rights. Not everybody likes to listen to it—we know that—and a lot of squirmishing goes on from the delegations of some countries. Indeed, at the most recent conference in St Petersburg, which went a lot better with a record number of countries attending, several countries talked about LGBT rights. We actually got an agreement during the conference that we would address this in one of our side meetings, where we would start to discuss LGBT issues—not have a declaration or anything like that. Right at the very end of the conference when it should have all been endorsed, I am afraid some countries—a lot of delegations had already left—turned on the chairman, forcing her to withdraw the fact that we would have the opportunity to discuss these issues as they pertained to a number of other countries.

I have to tell you now, I cannot wait for Geneva, when we will make absolutely certain these issues are discussed whether they like or not. I am not asking for them to like it or agree with it or to endorse a motion that they would ordinarily run a million miles away from, but having the opportunity to discuss these issues is vital. That is something that we will do, and we will not allow the hijacking of a motion at the nth hour of the closing ceremony in St Petersburg to deny us the opportunity to discuss these issues.

In Dhaka we were instrumental in getting a debate on the urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and droughts in parts of Africa and Yemen and also on ending the great human crisis, persecution and violent attacks on the Rohingya as a threat to international peace, and securing and ensuring their unconditional and safe return to their homeland in Myanmar. We were very instrumental in getting these issues debated by either the contribution that we made or by being a co-sponsor of these motions and arguing our case. In the end we won through and I am extremely grateful for all the support that we got there.

We also saw in Russia the standing down of Saber Chowdhury as President of the International IPU. We are incredibly grateful for the dignity, diligence and honesty that Saber has shown in the presidency throughout these few years. He has been absolutely superb. He has also been a great friend to us. We met him not only at the assemblies, but in Paris when we went to visit the site of the appalling atrocity at the Paris nightclub. We met Saber to chat about the direction of the IPU. We have already written to him, thanking him for all his work on behalf of the British Group of the IPU.

We welcome Saber's replacement, who is Senator Gabriela Cuevas Barron of Mexico, an incredibly articulate lady who I know will take up the issues with some energy, which is something that we look forward to. She came to visit us earlier in the year, to lobby us for our support. Thanks to Ian Liddell-Grainger being a Vice-President of the International IPU, we decided not to go public on whom we were going to support, but it did not take Sherlock Holmes to work out where our enthusiasm lay as far as Gabriela is concerned. We look forward to meeting her in Argentina and in the following assemblies in Geneva.

I mentioned Ian. Ian, you have been absolutely superb as the Vice-President of the organisation. You have been incredibly diligent in the way that you have worked, so much so that he was re-elected when he should not have been—I think the rules were sort of kicked over somewhat. That Ian was not only supported but sponsored by a French Member of Parliament just shows you his ability to win over people who ordinarily might not support the British. So, Ian, thank you, and we look forward to working alongside you over the next 12 months.

Congratulations to everyone who has now been elected on to the Executive for the next 12 months. I am glad that we do not have to endure the indignity of the ballot box this time. We were able to do it in such a way—or people were incredibly intelligent with the numbers and the way in which they filled in their application forms—that we were able to accept everyone on to the Executive.

It is going to be an incredibly interesting 12 months. As I said earlier, with us leaving the European Union we have got a lot of work to do to ensure that our contacts with MPs of the European Union Parliaments are kept absolutely active and alive.

You will see from page 10 a number of other meetings that we have had in New York, Bonn, Ottawa and Malta, so please have a look at that. They have been vitally important to us.

In closing, I want again to thank Rick and his staff for their dedication and support, and to mention one other thing as well. Don Anderson was mentioned earlier on. Don has been a member of our Executive for longer than I have been a Member of Parliament, and I have been a Member of Parliament for 25 years, which shows you the unstinting dedication that Don has put in over a long period of time. We know his brilliance and genius got him to the chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee, but for him to give such a contribution in such a way—not only as a former Vice-Chairman of our IPU and a former Treasurer, but on the Executive for 34 years—shows that he can take punishment greater than almost any other MP that I know. We are incredibly grateful to him for all his work.

Thank you once again, Mr Speaker, for gracing us with your presence tonight and for your support.

## **MR SPEAKER:**

Nigel, thank you very much indeed for what you have said and the range that you were able to cover. On behalf of everybody, I think, I would like to underline the particular importance of the point you made about the work of the IPU. In underscoring that point, perhaps I can just say that it is a great feature of the IPU that it is supported and actively participated in not just by Members across the House, as one would hope—indeed, from both Houses—but by people who have served long-term as Back-Bench Members and by people who have

served in ministerial office. We have a number of such people here today: Lord Jopling of course served at a very senior level; James Duddridge served in Government; and that is true of John Whittingdale and of a number of others. That is very much to the benefit of the work of the IPU, so thank you for your support and engagement. It is appreciated and we are all the stronger for it.

## **Item 10: Any Other Business**

### **MR SPEAKER:**

May I confirm from the Secretariat that there has been no written notification, in accordance with our rules, of any other matters of business to be considered?

### **DIRECTOR:**

No, there has not.

## **Item 11: Closure of meeting**

### **MR SPEAKER:**

Having come to the end of our agenda and in wishing you well for the festive season, I declare to your evident delight that this meeting is now closed.

## **Honorary Officers**

Following the Annual General Meeting held on **Wednesday 6 December 2017**, 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 Lord Fowler (The Lord Speaker)

### **BGIPU President**

Rt Hon Theresa May MP (The Prime Minister)

### **BGIPU Vice-Presidents:**

Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP

Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP

Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP

Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP

Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP

Rt Hon Emily Thornberry MP

Ms Kate Osamor MP

Ms Mary Creagh MP

Rt Hon the Baroness Boothroyd PC OM

Rt Hon the Baroness Hayman

Rt Hon the Baroness D'Souza CMG

Rt Hon the Lord Owen CH

# **Officers & Executive Committee (As of 6 December 2017)**

## **Chair:**

Nigel Evans MP

## **Vice-Chairs:**

Rt Hon John Whittingdale MP

Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP

Baroness Hooper CMG

## **Treasurer:**

Nic Dakin MP

## **Executive Committee:**

### **Conservative Party**

Bob Blackman MP

Conor Burns MP

James Duddridge MP

Ian Liddell-Grainger MP

Ranil Jayawardena MP

Mark Menzies MP

Laurence Robertson MP

Andrew Rosindell MP

The Lord Gilbert of Panteg

Rt Hon the Lord Jopling DL

### **Scottish National Party**

Dr Lisa Cameron MP

### **Democratic Unionist Party**

Ian Paisley MP\*

\* ( Subsequently co-opted)

### **Labour Party**

Roberta Blackman-Woods MP

Wayne David MP

Mike Gapes MP

Fabian Hamilton MP

Diana Johnson MP

Graham Jones MP

Kerry McCarthy MP

Stephen Pound MP

The Lord Dubs

### **Cross Bench**

The Earl of Sandwich

Rt Hon the Baroness D'Souza

CMG

### **Other Party Peer**

Rt Hon the Lord Dholakia OBE DL

## **Membership**

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 6 November 2018, total membership of the group is 1,441.

# **Governance Meetings**

## **Meetings of the Executive Committee**

Since the last Annual General Meeting on 6 December 2017 there have been five Executive Committee meetings in 2018: Tuesday 6 January, Tuesday 27 February, Tuesday 1 May, Tuesday 3 July and Tuesday 23 October.

## **Meetings of the Audit Committee**

Since the last Annual General Meeting on 6 December 2017 there have been two Audit Committee meetings in 2018: Tuesday 20 February and Tuesday 26 June.





**Diana Johnson MP briefing the Estonian Delegation on the work of the Heath Select Committee**



**President of Gabon Ali Bongo Ondimba speaks at Speaker's House on vital importance of tackling wildlife crime**



**BGIPU Parliamentary Seminar on the Western Balkans Delegates and Staff**



**BGIPU Executive Committee Members meet with Secretary General of the IPU Martin Chungong**





**UK Parliamentarians at the 138th IPU Assembly in Geneva**



**Meeting the Belarusian Opposition Party in Minsk**



**Meeting the President of Iraq Fuad Masum in Baghdad**



**Meeting local community group who installed a new water pump in Nepal with DFID Support**

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

**Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement  
Year ended 31 March 2018**

**Kreston Reeves LLP  
Statutory Auditor & 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<sup>1</sup> 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 to 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.

<sup>1</sup>

Most small voluntary organisations and community groups are unincorporated associations. "Unincorporated" means not a company. An unincorporated association has been defined as:

"two or more persons bound together for common purposes, not being business purposes, by mutual undertakings, each having mutual duties and obligations, in an organisation which has rules which identify in whom control of it and its funds rests and on what terms and which can be joined or left at will."

*Conservative and Unionist Central Office v Burrell, 1982*

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 its 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 effective administration of the organisation and its Secretariat, observing appropriate personnel management policies. The position is also responsible to the Honorary Treasurer to ensure 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 BGIPU's forward programme of activities and facilitates through Selection Committees, the identification of the most appropriately qualified delegates for IPU Assemblies 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, 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.

Under the authority of the Executive Committee, the Audit Committee gives advice to the Honorary Treasurer on the adequacy of audit arrangements and the implications of assurances regarding 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 allocated from the House of Commons and 30 percent from the House of Lords.

A new FM was negotiated in February 2017, cleared by the BGIPU Executive Committee on 20 March 2017 and after final approval by the administration of both Houses, signed in September 2017. The FM provides the basis for the continued financial support by the UK Parliament of BGIPU. This latest iteration followed directions set in past memoranda agreed in 2009, 2012, and 2014 respectively outlining the arrangements governing the funding and institutional 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 follow recommended limits on reserves. BGIPU is also required to follow broadly a range of administrative, financial and human resources policies, analogous to in the House of Commons, albeit proportionate and relevant to BGIPU's own unique character and circumstances.

Internal risk and audit oversight is exercised by the Audit Committee selected from members of the Executive Committee.

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. In response to the findings of an audit undertaken by the funding bodies in early 2016, the Risk Register was streamlined and a new Procurement Policy was adopted by the start of 2017. Some suggestions from this audit outcome were also addressed in negotiating the current FM and there was also subsequent updates in late 2017 to the Guidance for Members' Travel to address some reputational and operational risk issues.

## **Work of the Executive Committee**

The BGIPU Executive Committee met on four occasions during the 2017-18 Financial Year being convened on Tuesday 11 July 2017, Tuesday 30 October 2017, Tuesday 16 January 2018 and Tuesday 27 February 2018. The Audit Committee was convened on Tuesday 4 July 2017 to recommend approval of final accounts, and on Tuesday 20 February 2018 to consider the auditors' Letter of Engagement and supporting documents, and the Risk Management Strategy, including the Risk Register. The Annual General Meeting took place on Wednesday 6 December 2017 to elect a new Executive Committee for 2018.

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 2017 the annual review of the Executive Committee-approved 3-year Strategic Business Plan adopted in February 2016. BGIPU also submitted detailed forward planning budgets for the next three financial years in support of BGIPU's 2018/19 Request for Funding.

In addition, the Executive Committee approved a detailed Forward Programme for 2018 in its meeting on 27 February 2018, which is consistent with the objectives set out in the Business Plan. The Secretariat has also continued to utilise a framework for evaluation and



monitoring to collect quantitative and qualitative data to better inform internal review mechanisms and objective-setting based on self-assessment and feedback from participants.

Under the day-to-day management of the Director, and with the assistance of a specialist human resources expert working 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 of Commons 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.

As directed by 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 while ensuring its outreach remains 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, team-building activities and further development of international relations policy skills with ongoing 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 drawing on the experience and advice of the Director and other Secretariat personnel. 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 aspects of risk relevant to their particular responsibilities. This includes particular attention to ensuring due probity and care in the responsible expenditure of public monies. A working environment which encourages teamwork and dialogue, convenes regular staff meetings and opportunities for individual consultation. The Secretariat also ensures effective processes for the identification and dissemination of best practice and lessons learned. Feedback to the Secretariat on its overall effectiveness and performance 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 2018). The Director also undertook specialist Risk Management training in 2014 in relation to 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 as required to ensure any issues are fully discussed. Risk management is embedded in the organisation through all activity being approved by the Executive Committee, by regular staff reporting and commenting upon good practice, through close review of expenditure and regular scrutiny of the Risk Register by the Audit Committee. Greater clarity around BGIPU practices and policies has been ensured through circulation of the BGIPU Staff Handbook which is regularly updated.



In addressing key reputation, financial and operational risks, the Executive Committee has reviewed and updated throughout 2017 the travel and subsistence policies for BGIPU Members titled “Guidance for Members Travelling Overseas on BGIPU Delegations”. This now includes strong language establishing high expectations of Members’ overall conduct abroad including highlighting BGIPU’s policies regarding harassment and discrimination.

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 and the promotion of best practice. An inherent 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, (although the incumbent of this post left in November 2017 and future recruitment is subject to accommodation issues), which is currently being covered through shadowing by the HR Consultant. 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. The Secretariat has also worked to address compliance risks associated with impending General Data Protection Regulation legislation, proposed new harassment and bullying policies in Parliament and prepare for office relocation and major upgrades to IT software on the parliamentary network.

## **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.

This was the second such document providing a long-term planning process combined with appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms which allows BGIPU to be in a stronger position to assess its effectiveness against key objectives.

The inclusion of an indicative annual programme also allows BGIPU, including both the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, to better judge the scope and level of inter-parliamentary activity, in addition to ensuring the impact of key outcomes in meeting its stated 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 would put 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 through the most prudent management of its 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 its major risks.

Mindful of the key monitoring role played by both the BGIPU's funding bodies in the 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 audit 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 meets all its financial, administrative and programme obligations in a fully satisfactory manner.

*(Signed)*

N Dakin MP

Honorary Treasurer

3 July 2018

## **Statement of the Executive Committee's responsibilities**

Under the BGIPU's rules, the duties of the Executive Committee of the BGIPU include the control 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 2018 which are intended by it 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 auditor**

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 auditor to the members of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

## **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (the ‘organisation’) for the year ended 31 March 2018 which comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102. The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

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.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the organisation’s affairs as at 31 March 2018, and of its deficit for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

## **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our

report.

We are independent of the organisation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Executive Committee has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the organisation's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

## **Other information**

The Executive Committee are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained during the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies

or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the organisation and its environment obtained during the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Executive Committee's responsibilities.

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 returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of the Executive Committee's remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.
- 

## **Responsibilities of the Executive Committee**

As explained more fully in the Executive Committee's responsibilities statement set out on page 52, the Executive Committee are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Executive Committee are responsible for assessing the organisation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Committee either intend to liquidate the organisation or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organisation's internal control.



- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the members.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Executive Committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organisation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organisation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*(Signed)*

**Kreston Reeves LLP**

Statutory Auditors & Chartered Accountants

London

Date: 3 July 2018

## Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March 2018

	Note	2018 £	2017 £
<b>Income</b>			
Grant in aid	1	1,247,730	1,300,400
Donations / Subscriptions received from members	1	55	60
Interest receivable	1	123	509
Other		5	-
		<b>1,247,913</b>	<b>1,300,969</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Subscriptions		374,787	372,088
Conferences, IPU seminars and outward delegations		295,288	185,770
Inward delegations, BGIPU seminars and days in Parliament		102,552	119,266
All party groups		4,252	16,369
Salaries, national insurance and other staff costs	3	445,197	436,261
Printing, stationery and publications		1,659	2,480
Postage and telephone		120	317
Publishing and public relations		4,869	11,510
Audit fee for the audit of these financial statements		7,303	7,561
Insurance		5,298	5,317
General hospitality		1,441	968
Sundry expenses		4,398	7,198
Donation to IPU Solidarity fund	15	-	24,286
Legal fees		420	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	5	2,011	2,841
Loss on disposal		148	-
		<b>1,249,743</b>	<b>1,192,232</b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for the year</b>	10	<b>(1,830)</b>	<b>108,737</b>
Opening reserves		731,214	622,477
Closing reserves	10	<b>729,384</b>	<b>731,214</b>

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 2018

	Note	£	2018 £	£	2017 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>	5		<b>5,806</b>		7,767
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	6	2,471		4,296	
Prepayments and accrued income	6	299,935		315,178	
Cash at bank and in hand	7	485,868		440,740	
		788,274		760,214	
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Creditors	8	(64,696)		(36,767)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>723,578</b>		723,447
<b>Net assets</b>			<b>729,384</b>		731,214
<b>Financed by:</b>					
General fund	10		<b>729,384</b>		731,214
			<b>729,384</b>		731,214

Notes 1 to 15 form part of the financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the undersigned and authorised for issue on

*(Signed)*  
N Dakin MP  
**Honorary Treasurer**  
3 July 2018

*(Signed)*  
N Evans MP  
**Chair**  
3 July 2018

# Cash flow statement

## at 31 March 2018

	£	£
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>		
(Deficit)/Surplus for the financial year	(1,830)	108,737
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Interest received	(123)	(509)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	17,068	(26,604)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	27,929	(19,937)
Depreciation charge	2,011	2,841
Loss on disposal	148	-
Purchase of fixed assets	(198)	(1,633)
<b>Net cash flow from operating activities</b>	<b>45,005</b>	<b>62,895</b>
	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>		
(Deficit)/Surplus for the financial year	(1,830)	108,737
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Interest received	(123)	(509)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	17,068	(26,604)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	27,929	(19,937)
Depreciation charge	2,011	2,841
Loss on disposal	148	
Purchase of fixed assets	(198)	(1,633)
<b>Net cash flow from operating activities</b>	<b>45,005</b>	<b>62,895</b>
<b>Cash flow from investing activities</b>		
Interest received	123	509
<b>Net cash flow from investing activities</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>509</b>
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>45,128</b>	<b>63,404</b>

# **Notes forming part of the financial statements**

## **for the year ended 31 March 2018**

### **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 is the Palace of Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA. Details of the principal activity of the BGIPU are included in the Annual Governance Statement on page 43.

#### **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.

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 7 <sup>th</sup> year)
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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 both defined contribution pension schemes and 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 2018 of £1,247,730 (2017: £1,300,400) 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 9 (2017: 9).

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

	2018 £	2017 £
Wages and salaries	330,195	325,410
Social security costs	36,121	33,876
Pension costs	45,113	44,252
Other costs	33,768	32,723
	<u>445,197</u>	<u>436,261</u>

## 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 and software	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Cost</b>					
At beginning of year	3,183	890	2,113	23,367	29,553
Additions	-	-	-	198	198
Disposals	-	-	(1,482)		(1,482)
<b>At end of year</b>	<b>3,183</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>23,565</b>	<b>28,269</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At beginning of year	-	-	1,871	19,915	21,786
Charge for year	-	-	56	1,955	2,011
Disposals	-	-	(1,334)	-	(1,334)
<b>At end of year</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>21,870</b>	<b>22,463</b>
<b>Net book value</b>					
<b>At 31 March 2018</b>	<b>3,183</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1,695</b>	<b>5,806</b>
At 31 March 2017	3,183	890	242	3,452	7,767

## 6 Debtors: amounts receivable within one year

	2018 £	2017 £
Trade debtors	-	1,308
Prepayments	299,935	315,178
Other debtors	2,471	2,988
	<b>302,406</b>	<b>319,474</b>

## 7 Cash at bank and in hand

	2018 £	2017 £
Interest earning bank deposit accounts	475,438	430,290
Non-interest earning bank current account	10,000	10,000
Cash in hand	430	450
	<u>485,868</u>	<u>440,740</u>

## 8 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2018 £	2017 £
Trade creditors	18,420	299
Accruals and prepaid income	36,409	27,484
Social security and other taxes	9,867	8,984
	<u>64,696</u>	<u>36,767</u>

## 9 Financial instruments

	2018 £	2017 £
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Measured at fair value through profit or loss	<u>788,274</u>	<u>760,214</u>
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
Measured at amortised cost	<u>54,829</u>	<u>27,783</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.

	<b>General Fund £</b>
Balance at 31 March 2017	731,214
(Deficit) for the year	(1,830)
<b>Balance at 31 March 2018</b>	<b>729,384</b>

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 both defined contribution pension schemes and personal pension plans for the year amounted to £45,113 (2017: £44,252). At the year end, £3,694 (2017: £3,830) 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](http://www.bgipu.org).

### **13 Related party transactions**

During the year persons who were members of the Executive Committee at any time during the financial year incurred reimbursable expenditure while participating in delegations on behalf of the organisation totalling £4,856 (2017: £31,491). At the year-end, £985 (2017: £46) was outstanding and is included within creditors in note 8.

During the year the director's emoluments (including estimates towards bonus provisions) totalled £80,823 (2017: £73,448) and entity contributions to its director's pension scheme totalled £10,699 (2017: £10,489). During the year retirement benefits were accruing to 1 director (2017: 1) in respect of defined contribution pension scheme. During the year the director incurred reimbursable expenditure while undertaking work on behalf of the organisation totalling £1,309

(2017: £1,701). At the year-end, £249 (2017: £nil) 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 Donation to IPU Solidarity Fund**

A ‘one-off’ donation of 30,000 Swiss Francs was made to the IPU Solidarity Fund in 2016-17, following approval by the Executive Committee in February 2017. This fund was established to enable countries that are not currently members of the IPU (and not previous members in default) to attend assemblies to assess whether they would like to join. No further such donations are planned or were made in 2017-18.

# **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;

<b>Members</b>	<b>Expiry of term</b>
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<b><i>President:</i></b>	
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Ms G. Cuevas Barron (Mexico)	October 2020
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<b><i>Members:</i></b>	
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Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation)	October 2019
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Mr. A. Abdel Aal (Egypt)	April 2021
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Mr. K Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran)	October 2019
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Ms. Y. Ferrer Gómez (Cuba)	October 2020
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Ms. M. Kiener-Nellen (Switzerland)	October 2021
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Mr. G. Gali Ngothé (Chad)	October 2022
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Mr M. Grujic (Serbia)	October 2022
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Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal (Norway)	October 2019
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Ms. A. Habibou (Niger)	October 2019
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Ms. A. Lins (Brazil)	October 2019
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Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada)	October 2021
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Mr. N. Van Giau (Viet Nam)	October 2019
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Ms. M.I. Oliveira Valente (Angola)	October 2019
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Mr. C. Guomin (China)	October 2022
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Mr. K. M. Lusaka (Kenya)	October 2019
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Ms. S. Kihika (Kenya) Ex Officio	March 2022
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Ms. M. Osuru (Uganda) Ex Officio	March 2019
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## **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. The Secretary General met the Chair and other officers and addressed the Executive Committee on 3 July to brief them on the current work priorities of the IPU. Also, Ms Zeina Hilal from the IPU gender team, visited the UK Parliament in support of a Gender Sensitive Audit exercise 29 October- 1 November.

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:

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## National Groups of the IPU

As of October 2017 there are 178 Members and 12 Associate Members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

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

Micronesia (Federated States of)	Sierra Leone	Uganda
Marshall Islands	Singapore	Ukraine
Mauritania	Slovakia	United Kingdom
Mauritius	Republic of Korea	United Republic of
Mexico	Republic of Moldova	Tanzania
Monaco	Romania	Turkmenistan
Mongolia	Russian Federation	Tuvalu
Montenegro	Rwanda	Uruguay
Morocco	Samoa	Uzbekistan
Mozambique	Sierra Leone	Vanuatu
Myanmar	Singapore	Venezuela
Namibia	Slovakia	Viet Nam
Nepal	Slovenia	Yemen
Netherlands	Somalia	Zambia
New Zealand	South Africa	Zimbabwe
Nicaragua	South Sudan	
Niger	Spain	
Nigeria	Sri Lanka	
Norway	St Lucia	
Oman	Sudan	
Pakistan	Suriname	
Palau	Swaziland	
Palestine	Sweden	
Panama	Switzerland	
Papua New Guinea	Syrian Arab Republic	
Paraguay	Tajikistan	
Peru	Thailand	
Philippines	The former Yugoslav	
Poland	Republic of Macedo-	
Portugal	nia	
Qatar	United Arab Emir-	
San Marino	ates	
Sao Tome and Principe	Timor-Leste	
Saudi Arabia	Togo	
Senegal	Tonga	
Serbia	Trinidad and Tobago	
Seychelles	Tunisia	
	Turkey	

## **Associate Members**

Andean Parliament

Arab Parliament

Central American Parliament

East African Legislative Assembly

European Parliament

Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the  
Commonwealth of Independent States

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

Latin American Parliament

Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community

Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

# **ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS**

## **Details of funding granted in support of All Party Parliamentary Group Activities in the period November 2017 to November 2018**

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 2017-18 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 November 2017 until time of writing follows:

### **APPG Georgia**

Assistance totalling £460.10 was provided to the Georgia APPG for a welcome lunch for Georgian Parliamentarians in December 2017.

### **APPG Britain-Republic of Korea**

Assistance totalling £3,423.81 was provided for John Grogan MP to travel to the Republic of Korea at the invitation of the Speaker to participate in a programme with other MPs from around the world to mark the opening of the 2018 Winter Olympics in February 2018 .

### **APPG Somaliland**

Assistance totalling £2,969.68 was provided for an outward visit to Somaliland for 3 parliamentarians, Stephen Doughty MP, Liz McInnes MP and Matthew Offord MP in April 2018.

### **APPG Tunisia**

Assistance totalling £153.50 was provided for an APPG reception in Parliament in May 2018.

## **APPG Romania**

Assistance totalling £3,435.25 was provided for an outward delegation to Romania, consisting of four parliamentarians, Bob Blackman MP, John Grogan MP, Drew Hendry MP and Carol Monaghan MP in May 2018.

## **APPG Kazakhstan**

Assistance totalling £203.34 was given for gifts and a lunch during an outward visit with three parliamentarians, Bob Stewart MP, Stephen Hepburn MP and Lord Rogan in May 2018.

## **APPG Greece**

Assistance totalling £137.90 was provided for a lunch in Parliament with the Greek Ambassador in June 2018.

## **APPG Poland**

Assistance totalling £1,145.03 was provided as part-funding for an outward delegation to Poland for five parliamentarians, Daniel Kawczynski MP, Rupa Huq MP, Faisal Rashid MP, Lord Balfe and Lord Wallace in July 2018.

## **APPG Polar Regions**

Assistance totalling £5,000 was provided for flights for an outward visit to Greenland. It consisted of eight parliamentarians, James Gray MP, Stephen Hepburn MP, John Mann MP, Mark Menzies MP, Brendan O'Hara MP, Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP, Rt Hon The Baroness Neville-Jones MP and Baroness Smith of Newnham in August 2018.

## **APPG Sudan and South Sudan**

Assistance totalling £10,276.20 was provided for an outward visit to Sudan and South Sudan consisting of four parliamentarians, James Duddridge MP, Liz McInnes MP, David Drew MP and Baroness Sheehan in September 2018.

## **APPG Morocco**

Assistance totalling £5000 was approved for an outward visit to Morocco consisting of Ian Liddell-Grainger MP, Fabian Hamilton MP and Victoria Prentis MP, in September 2018.

## **APPG Kosovo**

Assistance totalling £300 was approved for a lunch in Parliament for visiting members of the Kosovan Parliament to be hosted by Martin Vickers MP and John Grogan MP in November 2018.

# THE SECRETARIAT OF THE BRITISH GROUP IPU

	<b>Position</b>	<b>Commenced</b>
Mr Rick Nimmo	Director	May 2012
Ms Dominique Rees MBE	Deputy Director	April 1998
Ms Jackie Rhodes	Finance & Administration Manager	January 2010
Ms Gabriella Liberotti-Harrison	International Project Manager	July 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 Officer	September 2016
Ms Alison MacDonald	Human Resources Consultant	July 2012

## Contact details of the Secretariat of the British Group IPU

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