



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BRITISH GROUP
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
UNION

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The BGIPU Chairman, Robert Walter MP,
addresses Members in the IPU Room

ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

Chairman's Report



**Robert Walter MP
Chairman, BGIPU**

As my tenure as BGIPU Chairman draws to a close this December, I can reflect on a very active year in which there have been many achievements in our pursuit of our main inter-parliamentary objectives. Recognising that the success of our work depends on many and diverse contributions, I would like to start by thanking all my parliamentary colleagues who have served on the Executive Committee during the past year and, in particular, the BGIPU Officers. I also want to express particular appreciation to the many members who have supported our work by participating

in events here at the Palace of Westminster, by meeting visiting delegations or through participating in outward visits to counterpart parliaments or as part of delegations to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assemblies or other IPU meetings.

I would also like to register our grateful appreciation to Ministers and Government officials, most notably at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for their vital contribution in meeting visiting delegations here in London, as well as UK Ambassadors and their staff who have so ably assisted us during outward visits and at IPU Assemblies in Quito and Geneva. I should also highlight the important role played by the diplomatic community in London who provide vital support for the full range of inter-parliamentary activities.

Recognising the hard work, time and effort that must go into preparation of our work, I also wish to pay tribute to the staff of the BGIPU Secretariat for continuing to provide us with a highly effective and professional service in organising the activities of the Group. In particular, on behalf of the Executive Committee and all members, I want to congratulate Ms Dominique Rees MBE on the recognition she received in the June Queen's Birthday Honours List which was appropriate acknowledgement of her exemplary and long-standing service to the BGIPU.

In the year since the 2012 AGM, the Group has received delegations from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Bolivia and Somalia while

a number of other incoming visits are also in the pipeline to occur before the end of this current financial year. The landmark visit of the Speaker of the Shura Council of Saudi Arabia and his delegation, which included two of that country's newly appointed female representatives, was a notable highlight of the year. In addition, the BGIPU hosted parliamentarians, officials and other interlocutors in short programmes arranged here at the Palace of Westminster from a wide array of countries, including Tunisia, Montenegro, Vietnam, Ukraine, Uruguay, Argentina, Turkey, Poland, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Syria and Slovenia. In the same period, we have also sent BGIPU delegations to a diverse range of countries such as Costa Rica, El Salvador, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina with other exchanges also under preparation at the time of writing.

In carrying out these bilateral activities, an enduring feature is to compare and contrast parliamentary practice and where counterpart needs are identified, explore whether the BGIPU can assist through targeted capacity building assistance. To this end, we have worked in support of the UK Parliament's wider contributions under IPU auspices to strengthen parliamentary democracy in Burma, as well as seeking opportunities to support and encourage democratic strengthening in the Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa and elsewhere in Africa. A key inward visit in this regard was hosting our counterparts from Somalia as that country tries to create a sustainable parliamentary democracy following years of violent conflict and upheaval.

I had the honour to lead the UK delegation to the 128th IPU Assembly in Quito in March 2013 and our Vice-Chair, Ann Clwyd MP, led our delegation to the 129th IPU Assembly in Geneva in October this year. Through BGIPU participation in these Assemblies, we engaged with delegations from over 130 of the 163 IPU member parliaments, in debating a wide range of global issues of concern to us all. Outcomes of these Assemblies included substantive resolutions on the humanitarian and security implications of developments in Syria and on the role of Parliaments in supervising the destruction of chemical weapons and the ban on their use. A key focus in our recent Assembly work has been to ensure that geo-political fissures and combative rhetoric regarding the situation in Syria does not prevent the IPU expressing entirely appropriate concern over a situation now recognised as the most serious humanitarian crisis

of the 21st century. Indeed, many delegations in the recent 129th Assembly referred to the pivotal role the UK Parliament has played in shaping the international community's response to the recent use of chemical weapons in Syria as a concrete example of the pivotal role parliaments can play on the world stage.

The BGIPU has also taken the opportunity during the course of these Assemblies to hold bilateral meetings with some 20 different counterpart delegations to discuss matters of mutual interest and to help identify opportunities for inter-parliamentary exchanges. Thematic discussions at IPU Assemblies during the year have focussed on important global issues such as the inclusion of a democracy pillar in the post-2015 international development objectives, arms control and disarmament issues, disaster risk reduction and the vulnerability of child migrants. There have also been deliberations on perennial IPU priorities such as the need for gender-sensitive parliaments, the human rights of parliamentarians, parliament's role in protecting vulnerable groups and the importance of parliamentary engagement in multilateral trade and economic matters.

The UK delegation has also played a prominent role in IPU Assemblies through Lord Judd's untiring work as President of the IPU's Committee on Middle East Questions and Ann Clwyd's widely praised contribution on the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, including chairing much of its work during the Geneva Assembly. In recognition of the active role we play in the IPU, I was honoured during the 129th Assembly to be elected to a four-year term on the Executive Committee of the IPU, representing the 12 Plus Group.

In supporting the work of the IPU, the BGIPU shows its enduring commitment to the importance of parliamentary diplomacy and the importance of strengthening dialogue and understanding between parliamentarians across the world. This remains the single most important purpose of the IPU and, as an Executive Committee member, I will work to ensure that current budgetary and administrative pressures facing the organisation do not diminish its attention to this core work supporting inter-parliamentary dialogue, democratic governance, human rights and the rule of law. With the IPU facing a transitional period ahead, with both a new Secretary General and President to be appointed in the course of 2014, there is no more important time for the UK, as a founding member, to play

an influential role on the IPU Executive Committee. I look forward to carrying out these duties and I would welcome the guidance and support of the BGIPU membership in that work.

In addition to IPU Assemblies, as reported on the BGIPU website, we also sent UK delegations to a number of IPU-organised meetings on the Commission on the Status of Women in New York (CSW57), the post-2015 international development agenda, multilateral trade and the WTO, human rights and the abolition of the death penalty.

Regarding our various activities here in the Palace of Westminster, I trust that members have benefitted from opportunities to meet foreign counterparts, attend thought-provoking lectures and participate in other policy events. The efforts of the BGIPU to work more closely with a wider range of All Party Parliamentary Groups, as well as involving key external stakeholders such as the FCO, DFID and UKTI in our work, very much complement our long-standing partnerships with like-minded organisations such as the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. These partnerships serve to give varied dimensions to our work and broaden our engagement across a wide range of international policy issues. We very much welcome the contributions of members in establishing our work priorities and I encourage you to be active in shaping our programme of work in the year ahead.

In closing, I offer my support to the incoming BGIPU Chair and Officers, and I will make every effort to support their work in my new capacity as a member of the IPU Executive Committee. I also look forward to the next Executive Committee taking forward our ongoing efforts to strengthen and modernise the BGIPU to better advance the United Kingdom's standing and influence with counterpart parliaments. In a world where so many local issues increasingly have a global dimension, we cannot afford, as parliamentarians, to be disengaged and disinterested in the world beyond our shores. All of us must make a contribution if we are to ensure that the BGIPU remains an active and influential contributor to global peace and prosperity and to the continuing promotion of the key principles of democratic governance.

Robert Walter MP
Chairman, British Group IPU, November 2013

Director's Report



Mr Rick Nimmo
Director, BGIPU

In reporting on Secretariat activities in 2013, I will address key administrative and organisational issues and report on the functional activities undertaken by the Secretariat in support of the work of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (BGIPU).

As guided by our three-year Strategic Business Plan, endorsed by the Executive Committee in late 2012, the Secretariat has sought to strengthen its overall administrative, financial and human resources functions, building on initiatives undertaken in previous years. This effort to improve our general procedures and management systems is important to ensure we meet fully our obligations under the Financial Memorandum agreed with the House of Commons and the House of Lords in April 2012 and in preparation for a review of this arrangement to be completed in consultation with our funding bodies before the end of 2013.

In support of our 2014-15 Request for Funding submitted in September 2013, I completed a detailed review of achievements against the strategic objectives outlined in the BGIPU Strategic Business Plan. This review highlighted key outcomes for the year including successful consultations with our funding bodies on better sequencing of our 2013/14 funding allocation in line with our uneven patterns of expenditure (primarily to provide a more accurate picture of our reserves), adoption of a new Annual Governance Statement format (replacing the outmoded Statement of Internal Control), the addition of an annual cash flow statement to our financial statements and the mandated review of the BGIPU Risk Management Strategy by the Audit Committee. A particularly noteworthy achievement was a clean bill of health on our external audit with no internal control deficiencies identified as a result of diligent oversight by our Treasurer, Mr Mike Gapes MP, and the exemplary financial accounting skills of our Finance and Administration Manager, Ms Jackie Rhodes.

In terms of meeting core human resources obligations, BGIPU Officers commissioned an external consultancy to undertake a Job

Evaluation and Grading Support (JEGS) review of Secretariat staff positions to ensure we were employing staff broadly in line with House of Commons practice as required by our funding arrangements. The outcomes of this review were adopted by the Executive Committee in May 2013, including the key recommendations to re-band a number of staff positions to a higher level more accurately reflecting assessed job responsibilities. The Executive Committee's decision to appropriately recognise and reward staff's commitment to high levels of professionalism and effectiveness was warmly welcomed by the Secretariat and greatly contributed to staff morale and, importantly, improved our prospects for staff retention over the longer term.

In a project undertaken by the BGIPU's contracted human resources expert, the Secretariat is producing a comprehensive Staff Handbook aimed at ensuring staff can readily access detailed advice on conditions of employment, staff facilities and other procedural guidance governing their work in the Secretariat. On current plans, the Staff Handbook will be finalised and provided to all staff in the near future.

Following adoption of the recommendations of the report of the Modernisation Committee by the Executive Committee, the BGIPU completed in 2012 a major communications project to create and launch a new re-branded BGIPU website. During the course of 2013, we monitored and reviewed the success of electronic delivery of BGIPU information and found significantly increased levels of awareness among parliamentarians and external partners, particularly through our reporting being more current and readily available on the BGIPU website, and extensive use of social media to publicise and report on key activities as they occurred.

Based on observations over this first year of its operation, the Secretariat will introduce some enhancements to the website including more prominent presentation of forthcoming events, dedicated pages for APPG support activities, an improved resources page and a home page Twitter feed. We have also had strong feedback on the usefulness of our regular e-bulletins to highlight our work and upcoming events, in parallel to the traditional publication in the All Party and Associated Parliamentary Group Notice. Greatly reduced publication and stationery costs have been achieved parallel to solid growth in our overall readership which is a particularly pleasing result of this modernisation effort.

In terms of policy-related membership events, we have convened a number of thematic lectures and hosted policy events in 2013 including discussions on Parliaments and soft power diplomacy, multilateral trade and the WTO, the sexual exploitation of children in tourism, a joint BGIPU/FCO Emerging Powers breakfast with FCO Minister Hugo Swire, violence against women in politics and recent developments in the global drug policy reform debate. A key purpose of these events has been to encourage interactive debate among members and to build the BGIPU's cooperation with government and non-government partners outside of Parliament.

In the lead-up to the International Day of Democracy on 15 September, the BGIPU again promoted its activities through a series of BGIPU Week events, including an information stand in Portcullis House which attracted high levels of interest from existing members and a good number of prospective ones. We have also recently reviewed our membership outreach strategy to ensure we attract new membership applications as people enter Parliament through by-elections or taking a seat in the House of Lords. The BGIPU has also continued to maintain close engagement with other inter-parliamentary bodies, particularly the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, including hosting a joint diplomatic function for the State Opening of Parliament in May 2013, in addition to other joint activities.

BGIPU hosted a very successful and well-attended International Parliamentary Seminar on Drug Policy Reform from 28-30 October with participation from some 50 parliamentarians from 30 European, Latin American and West African parliaments providing an inter-regional platform for exchanges on current global policy trends. The BGIPU also consolidated strong engagement with a diverse range of country-based and thematic All Party Parliamentary Groups including in co-hosting policy events. A comprehensive review of the BGIPU Rules for assistance to APPGs in undertaking inter-parliamentary exchanges was also completed resulting in a more streamlined grant application process which has encouraged high levels of interest and usage of funds allocated for this purpose in 2013.

By continuing our efforts to strengthen the operations of the BGIPU, the Secretariat wants to ensure that all members benefit from unique and valuable opportunities for inter-parliamentary exchanges with international counterparts. Through its work, the

BGIPU provides both the context and contacts necessary for the UK Parliament to make an important contribution to the parliamentary dimension of international relations, particularly in order to advance the strategic, economic and global policy interests of the United Kingdom. Based on our objectives, regular consultations with the Executive Committee and the inputs of members, the Secretariat is well advanced in shaping a forward programme of inter-parliamentary exchanges for 2014-15 which will be submitted to the incoming Executive Committee at its first meeting.

Acknowledgements

I offer my sincere thanks to the Executive Committee for the guidance and support they have provided to the Secretariat. I am particularly grateful to the Officers of the BGIPU, especially the outgoing Chairman, Mr Robert Walter MP, for continued guidance and support. Mr Walter's leadership has been a driving force behind our achievements in recent years and we are very pleased that our work together in promoting the UK's interests in the IPU will continue through his new role on its Executive Committee.

In significant recognition of individual achievement, Ms Dominique Rees MBE was made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the June 2013 Queen's Birthday's Honours List for her outstanding service to BGIPU over the past 15 years. While this was well-deserved recognition of her dedication and professionalism, the entire Secretariat took great satisfaction in this honour as public recognition and reinforcement of the important role the BGIPU continues to play in advancing the UK's national interest through active parliamentary diplomacy.

I would also like to highlight the vital support we receive from many other colleagues in both Houses of Parliament, at all levels. In particular, we value our close cooperation with the Overseas Offices of both Houses and I express my deep gratitude to our budget holders, Mr Rhodri Walters and Mr Crispin Poyser, who remain highly responsive to our needs and fully supportive of the aims and objectives of the BGIPU.

Rick Nimmo
Director, British Group IPU, November 2013

Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting of the British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union Wednesday 5 December 2012

The Annual General Meeting of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union was held in the Attlee Suite, Portcullis House on Wednesday 5 December 2012. The Honorary President, the Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Mr Speaker, was in the chair.

Opening Remarks by Mr Speaker

MR SPEAKER:

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I now call this Annual General Meeting to order, and I extend a very warm welcome to everybody. I hope that colleagues have had a chance to look at the 2012 Annual Report, which was distributed earlier in the month, and hard copies of which have also been placed on seats. Please note that there will be no ballot today, as Officers and Members of the Executive Committee will all be elected unopposed. This matter will be dealt with under item 9.

Apologies for absence

MR SPEAKER:

I will now move on to Item 2, which is apologies for absence. Do we have any?

RICK NIMMO, DIRECTOR:

Yes, we have 47 apologies, an apology from the Prime Minister and also an apology from the Honorary President, the Lord Speaker.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 29 November 2011

MR SPEAKER:

We are now required to adopt the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 29 November 2011. Those minutes are printed on pages 18 to 34 of the 2012 Annual Report. May I please

have a proposer and seconder that the minutes are adopted as a true record of the meeting? (*Proposed by Adrian Sanders MP and Seconded by Baroness Hooper.*)

All those in favour please raise your hands.

Any against? No. Thank you.

I shall now sign the Minutes as a true record.

Matters arising from the Minutes

MR SPEAKER:

Are there any matters arising from those minutes?

DIRECTOR:

No matters arising have been notified.

Adoption of the Annual Report 2012

MR SPEAKER:

I now invite the noble Lord, Lord Wallace of Saltaire, Government spokesperson for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to propose the adoption of the 2012 Annual Report and to speak to it.

LORD WALLACE OF SALTIRE:

Thank you very much indeed, Mr Speaker. I reflected as I came here that I have managed to be in the House of Lords for nearly 17 years without ever going on an IPU delegation. I have obviously failed in all sorts of ways. I did lead two delegations to Russia, one of which also included visiting the Parliament of Tartarstan, which was an interesting experience. It was clearly run by a small group of people who were very loyal to Putin and regarded a Parliament not as a necessary part of Government, but as a useful decorative part of the process. I also remember particularly my visit to Kazan because, on visiting Kazan State University, I discovered to my intense surprise that somebody whom I thought of as a mythical character from one of Tom Lehrer's songs, Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky, about whom I could sing happily, was actually not only a real character, but had been the rector of Kazan State University and was one of the founders of non-Euclidian geometry. As we travel, we learn all sorts of things that we did not expect to learn about before.

The Government's priorities in foreign policy included putting much more effort into coming to terms with Latin American countries; being much more visible and present in the Asia-Pacific region; coping with the problems of Europe's new neighbourhood in South-Eastern Europe, the Eastern Caucasus and the gap between Germany and Russia; and, more recently, coming to terms with the Arab Spring. I am glad to see, in your Annual Report, that the IPU's activities have covered all those areas actively. In particular, there were a lot of visits in both directions to Latin America and quite a number to south-east Asia. I hope that there will be more with the countries emerging from the Arab Spring because, as we are seeing already in Egypt, the question of how you move from a very long period of authoritarian government to attempting to draft a constitution and understand the basics of democracy and how to accept an opposition is a delicate and difficult process, which takes a long time to learn.

You have also done a lot on the Western Balkans, I am very glad to see, and we all know that is a long and hard labour. I am currently watching what is happening in the Southern Caucasus with interest, where in Georgia—a country I know moderately well and have been to many times—there has just been a change of government. The idea that a change of government also involves constitutional changes, acceptance of the normal processes of opposition and treatment of the other government is not something that is entirely understood by either side in that process. There is a great deal to exchange, to learn and to help others to understand.

I am conscious from the travel that I do with the Foreign Office that we often think that our domestic politics is enormously domestic-centred. Our debate about Europe is really about Britain. However, with the Deputy Prime Minister, I spent a full day in Berlin and a full day in Paris. I came away from Berlin, some months ago, thinking that their debate is even more domestically oriented than ours. They find it hard to get above the question of what is happening in Germany and what the next Lander elections are to think about the future of Europe. Again, exchanging ideas among parliamentarians, bilaterally and multilaterally, adds to the British presence in the world, our own understanding of the world and thus helps to build our sense of Britain's soft power in the world.

I will end with one minor criticism of all this. If you are in the

Lords and have to answer questions, you find facing you a number of people who have been involved in politics for a very long time, who have visited an awful lot of countries and know much more about them than you do. It is a constant problem, and as I pop up to answer a question on Georgia next week, I know that six people will be there who were out in Georgia a few months ago and who are much more up to date with some of its domestic politics than I am. My favourite person in the Lords for asking awkward questions, Lord Avebury, always turns out to have just been to that obscure part of the world that you do not begin to understand and not only to have met the Prime Minister, but be able to pronounce his six-syllable name.

I very much welcome this Annual Report. I look forward to the IPU being much more active in the Arab world, as I have said, as well as in the Western Balkans and elsewhere over the next year. All power to your elbow in the work that you do.

MR SPEAKER:

Thank you, my Lord, for proposing the adoption of the Report. That is much appreciated. I now invite to second the 2012 Annual Report no lesser figure than the Rt Hon John Spellar, Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

RT HON JOHN SPELLAR:

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am certainly very much pleased to second the Report, because it gives a picture of a wide range of activities, vital support for development and good practice in a number of countries in the world and—not to be too colonialist about it—the opportunity to learn from those countries and to exchange practice. As we recognise in here, for example, Westminster Hall came from discussions with the Australians about their development of the second Chamber.

A programme that I participated in during the course of this year was a visit to Indonesia. I previously had probably a greater interest than many in Indonesia, but, frankly, it was mainly a geo-strategic sense, arising from its relationship with Australia—a country that I know extremely well. It was a fascinating visit, to see the enormous economic development that is taking place in Indonesia and their fascination and absorption with English premiership football—there

were more giant posters of Rio Ferdinand than you would even see in Manchester—and also their increasing role as a major player in ASEAN and the way in which they are developing it.

What was also interesting about Indonesia was their recognition of their problems and also some of the areas with which we were able to help them. They are concerned about the integrity of their police force. Britain, the United States, Australia and New Zealand are providing considerable support for a very impressive police training college. It was worth going on the visit just to see that and to know about their infrastructure problems and the opportunities for British companies to become involved. The traffic was probably the worst that I have ever encountered anywhere in the world. How anybody gets round without motorcycle outriders was completely incomprehensible to us.

It is also a country that is in the front line of the battle against extreme Islamism and terrorism. To see them facing up to that has many lessons for other countries as to how they have been able to tackle it. We were encouraged by that, and it therefore gave us better knowledge and information to have debates when we were back home. We have a lot of talk—sometimes, loose talk—about soft power as an alternative to hard power, but they are complementary. But the work of the IPU and organisations, such as the CPA, the British-American Parliamentary Group, the British-Irish Group and others, are a significant part of soft power as well, of our being able to use our influence for the benefit of wider international relations and also, quite frankly, for the benefit of the United Kingdom.

One aspect that we have to be much more robust about is the role of elected Members of Parliament, with due respect to my colleague on the right, Lord Wallace. It is true that the politician can speak unto politician. We understand the nuances. We share the experiences. We understand the language. We can see the context. That is in no way to diminish the work that is undertaken at official-to-official level, or, indeed, by those who work for the Foreign Office and other Government Departments or NGOs. That has a role, but I think that it is enormously important that we defend the opportunity for Members of Parliament to be able both to widen their experience and to engage.

Again, I think—I have seen a number of examples of this over

the years in Parliament—that that can be of huge benefit to the UK and, indeed, even to the established institutions, because there are a number of areas where political engagement is not contradictory, but complementary to the work undertaken by the officials. That requires those of other countries to be able to visit us and us to be able to visit them. We have to be robust against the gutter press who seem to regard it as an affront that Members of Parliament visit other countries. From some of the commentary, you would imagine that their model for the level of engagement that we should have with the outside world is the hermit kingdom of North Korea.

We also have to be frank and robust with the Government, as a sovereign Parliament, as to the value of this because it requires money. The trouble is that, if you cut back too much on the programmes over the years, then you start to isolate yourself from other countries and it becomes much harder to recreate that level of engagement. Clearly, that is not happening in with the activities of the IPU, as you can see from the Annual Report. There is a considerable level of engagement and a lot of good back-up—again, I know from my own experience, and other colleagues here will do also—from the Officers, the Executive Committee and the staff who work for the IPU.

With that, I am very pleased to second the Report.

MR SPEAKER:

John, thank you very much indeed. The 2012 Annual Report has now been proposed and seconded. Is it agreed that we adopt the report?

All those in favour please raise your hands.

Any against? No.

I should note that, since the start of our meeting, we have been joined by Stewart Jackson and then, subsequently, by Mr Andy Love and the noble Lord, Lord Judd. Thank you, and if you went to the other room, do not worry; you were not alone.

Presentation of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2012 by Mike Gapes MP, Honorary Treasurer of the British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union

MR SPEAKER:

Mr Mike Gapes, Member of Parliament and Honorary Treasurer of the British Group of the IPU will present the financial statements. Mike, welcome.

MIKE GAPES MP:

Thank you, Mr Speaker. My voice is not at its strongest today—I have a slight cold—but I hope that you can all hear me.

As the Accounting Officer, it is my honour to present the Financial Statements and Statement of Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2012. These have been published also on the website, but you can find them on pages 37 to 51 of the Annual Report.

The audit was again conducted by Reeves & Co. There have been some changes in the audit personnel with a new audit senior, Kirsty McMeechan, although there are the same manager and partners as in the past two years. The outgoing audit partner was Mike Procter, who has now retired, and I would like to welcome his successor, Peter Hudson, who is here with us, and Anne Carter, the audit manager, who has been with us before.

On page 44 of the Annual Report, the auditors state that, in their opinion, the Financial Statements give a true and fair view of the state of the organisation's affairs as at 31 March 2012 and of the results for the year then ended and that they have been properly prepared in accordance with UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The Audit Committee, chaired by Lord Montgomery, met on 26 June and received the report from our auditors and recommended that the Executive Committee approve the Financial Statements, which were then signed by me and the Chair on 10 July. The Income and Expenditure account is on page 45, and the group received only £378,600 grant-in-aid in the year, compared with £978,000 in the year ended 31 March 2011. The reason for that withholding by the House authorities is to reduce our reserves, which will only be

allowed at a maximum of one quarter of the year's funding under the new Financial Memorandum that came into effect from April 2012.

Other points to note are that bank interest fell from £9,065 in the previous year to £5,175, due to the lower cash reserves and lower interest rates. Subscription income continued to fall as membership charges, which had been suspended by the Executive in February 2011, were formally abolished by the rule change at the 2011 Annual General Meeting.

I now turn to expenditure. Subscription expenses have increased from £436,494 in the previous year to £476,469 in the current year. The majority of this cost relates to the subscription to the IPU, which is invoiced by Geneva in Swiss Francs. That was expected to increase substantially due to the new apportionment formula that was changed to the one used by the United Nations that gives the UK a higher proportion compared with other countries.

The delegates at the Autumn Assembly strenuously resisted the rising costs, and as a result, the change in formula was off-set by an overall cut in the IPU's total budget. The total UK share in Swiss Francs was finally set at only CHF 688,000 for 2012, compared with CHF 704,800 in 2011. However, most of the cost in the year ended 31 March 2012 arises from a 2011 payment, as the IPU subscription relates to calendar years rather than financial years. It also follows that an amount corresponding to three quarters of each year's subscription, payable between January and March, is included under debtors and prepayments in the Balance Sheet. I hope that is clear.

Overall expenditure increased from £1,026,471 to £1,126,984. That reflects an increase in activity compared to the previous year, which was, of course, impacted by the 2010 general election and the International Relations Directorate project, which affected us. Costs of conferences, IPU seminars and outward delegations taken together increased from £107,112 to £192,999. Within that, the main Assembly costs increased from £84,626 from a low figure of £23,943 in the previous year, as there were two main IPU Assemblies in Panama and Bern, fully within the financial year, and another in Kampala that straddled the financial year end, whereas in the prior year there had been the cost of only an Autumn Assembly and a minor fraction of a spring one. The timings are an issue; it is not always possible to have one year and the next in the same way.

Delegates were sent to eight small IPU meetings at a total cost of £17,070. Five outward delegations went ahead during the financial year at a total cost of £91,303. There were six inward delegations and 12 smaller events that could be classed as lunchtime meetings or days in Parliament. They were hosted at a total cost of £84,329. Funding was claimed by 11 all-party parliamentary groups for 10 events during the year, one of which was a joint event, at a total cost of £35,925.

The cost of staff salaries and related expenses has decreased for the second successive year from £341,793 to £304,770, mainly because the post of the General Secretary, who retired in May 2011, was left vacant for the remainder of the year, and the Media Advisor's contract was not renewed on expiry in December 2011.

Printing and stationery costs fell for the second successive year, as there were no further issues of the *IPU Review* after summer 2011 and stationery stocks were run down, while awaiting an office move, the recruitment of the new General Secretary and rebranding to comply with the new communications strategy. Postage and telephone costs also fell for similar reasons. Furthermore, following the office move in October, the Secretariat was transferred to the parliamentary telephone system and no longer had to pay BT for system maintenance and calls.

Publishing and public relations costs have fallen significantly by comparison with the previous year, as no special membership recruitment events were held and the *IPU Review* was discontinued. Audit fees increased slightly in line with inflation and because Audit Committee members now require a representative of the auditors to attend both their half-yearly meetings.

No legal and professional costs were incurred, as they had been in the previous year for consultations related to the IRD potential liabilities. Insurance costs remained fairly static, while increased general hospitality costs included the cost of a retirement party attended by staff and IPU members, including the Executive Committee, for Ken Courtenay, the outgoing General Secretary.

Sundry expenses, including bank charges and other office costs, have risen marginally. No giftware was purchased during the year, as stock levels continue to be reduced. The aggregate effect is a deficit

for the year of £742,650, which is due mainly to reduced income because of the reduced grant in aid.

Finally, page 46 of the balance sheet shows net assets, which equate to reserves, which are down from £1,632,107 to £889,457. Fixed assets have fallen slightly in value from £7,513 to £7,136, as a net effect of acquisitions and disposals necessitated by the office move; in particular, the decommissioning of the old telephone system, the replacement of a franking machine and because a home-use Quark desktop publishing licence—I don't know what that is—was written off when the Media Advisor's contract was not renewed.

Current assets have fallen substantially from £1,663,570 to £924,539, and most of that is due to the fall in the bank balances from £1,245,998 to £536,454, due to the reduction of grant-in-aid payments. Debtors of £10,496 comprise debit balances on the creditors' ledger, mostly due to cancelled flights for an outward delegation to Afghanistan, which did not go ahead. The largest portion of the prepayment balance of £377,589 comprises nine months' worth of the 2012 annual IPU subscription fee.

Creditors and accruals have risen marginally from £38,976 to £42,218, and mostly comprise expenses for the recruitment of a new Director and costs related to the 126th IPU Assembly, which straddled the financial year end.

Note 8 on page 51 covers events occurring after the balance sheet date and mentions that, on 1 May 2012, our new Director, Rick Nimmo, was recruited to a position equivalent to that previously entitled General Secretary. In addition, a new financial memorandum was negotiated during 2011-12, which came into effect on 1 April 2012. That will require lower reserves and greater rigour in the submission of budgets, business plans and requests for payment of grant in aid.

Note 9 on the same page—page 51—draws attention to the fact that Financial Statements will in future be published on the website. That website was developed in 2012 and that publication has taken place. That concludes my report, but if there are any questions, I am happy to answer them.

MR SPEAKER:

Mike, thank you for your comprehensive and appreciated report. Are there such? Does a colleague have a question for Mike? No.

MIKE GAPES:

May I just thank Jackie, who did an enormous amount of work on the accounts over the year?

MR SPEAKER:

Thank you, Jackie, and I should have noted also the arrival of Ian Liddell-Grainger, the Conservative Member for Bridgwater, Ann McKechnin, the noble Lord, Lord Dholakia and Ian Paisley—and Andrew Rosindell and Fabian Hamilton, who I think were here at the start. We have a plentiful supply of colleagues, and the noble Lord, Lord Dubs is just coming in on cue as we speak.

Thank you very much indeed, Mike, both for the presentation of the report and all that led up to it. That is appreciated by colleagues.

Re-appointment of Auditors

MR SPEAKER:

We now have to appoint auditors for the current year. It is proposed that Reeves & Co., our auditors, be so appointed. May I have a seconder for that proposition? Indeed. Ian Paisley. Thank you. All those in favour please raise your hands. And against? No. That is unanimously carried. Reeves & Co. are appointed as the Group's auditors for the current year. Thank you.

Proposed changes to the BGIPU rules

MR SPEAKER:

As included in the notice circulated to all members on 7 November, it is proposed that there be amendments to the Rules of the Group. Members were provided along with the notice a track-changes copy of the British Group of the IPU Rules and indications of the amendments. These amendments, rather than bringing substantive changes, are intended to clarify any ambiguity within the Rules of the Group. I will now hand over to the Director to outline these in slightly more detail.

DIRECTOR:

Thank you, Mr Speaker—but only in slightly more detail, as I

will not labour the point. Essentially, these were taken through to the Executive Committee at its last meeting, they were approved for your consideration here today.

There are four main areas. The first is, as we say, no substantive changes. It is basically areas where a removal of ambiguity is needed. An example is the reference to “clear days” in the document. We thought that was more eloquently put as “calendar days”, so there is no debate over what “clear days” means.

Another set of changes relate to upgrades to the language, such as replacing “General Secretary” with “Director”. Also included are references to the 2012 financial memorandum. Additionally, we needed to tweak the numbers around the composition of the Executive Committee, because our requirement to match the composition of the House of Commons sets up some very strange fractions—we cannot have quarters of Members included. We found that the numbers worked better with 26 Members than 25; so, on that basis, we propose to increase the Executive Committee by one. That is included in the changes.

The fourth major change relates to requirements for APPGs. We were setting up a whole bunch of requirements of the British Group that seemed to go across the grade of scrutiny being undertaken since the Straw report into APPGs, where we were seeking sometimes to hold them to greater account than the Commissioner for Standards himself. We propose that we drop all those out; and basically, if the Commissioner for Standards deems them to be appropriately formed as APPGs, we take that as our lead and then it is appropriate for us to consider the funding of their activities. That does not take away our discretion, as the Executive Committee, to consider the merits of each case put forward. It simply takes away us trying to police people, which really is beyond our mandate.

They are the four major sets of changes, and I can go into greater detail if people wish.

MR SPEAKER:

Thank you, colleagues. Are there any questions on the matter? No. Is it agreed that we adopt in the whole these proposed amendments? May I have a show of hands? Yes. Any noes? No. It has been unanimously agreed. Thank you, colleagues. The rules of the Group are now duly amended.

Election of Officers and the Executive Committee for the period of 2012-13

MR SPEAKER:

I have to announce that Helen Grant MP, following her promotion to ministerial office, and the Rt Hon Alun Michael, following his resignation from the House of Commons, have stood down from the Executive Committee. I am sure that this meeting would agree to record its appreciation of all their contributions and their commitment to the British Group. It is also with great regret that I announce that Lord Montgomery of Alamein will be standing down from the Executive Committee. I am sure all members of the Group will join the Secretariat and me in thanking Lord Montgomery for his long years of service to the Executive, to the British Group and to the IPU itself. Thank you.

As I announced at the beginning of this meeting, all the Officers and Executive Committee members who are standing for election are unopposed. These names have already been circulated to members in the letter dated 29 November 2012, copies of which are available today. I hereby declare that those individuals are therefore duly elected. The new list of Officers and Executive Committee Members will be placed in the IPU Room, in the Noes Division Lobby and on the Group's website, following the meeting.

Any other business

MR SPEAKER:

Is there any other business?

DIRECTOR:

There has been no notice under Rule 15 (4)

MR SPEAKER:

There is no additional business under Rule 15 (4). Thank you.

Speech by the Chair of the BGIPU, Robert Walter MP

MR SPEAKER:

I would now like to ask the Chair of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr Robert Walter MP, to take the floor.

ROBERT WALTER MP:

Mr Speaker, Mr President, may I thank you for all your support for the Group throughout the past year? You have taken an interest in our activities, and I know you take a keen interest in some of the activities which we have proposed for the forthcoming year. I thank William Wallace and John Spellar for their proposer and seconder roles here today and for the very kind words that they expressed towards the Group.

Before I reflect on the Group's progress since the last annual general meeting, I should like to thank all of my parliamentary colleagues who have served on the Executive Committee during the past year, particularly the Officers of the Group. I want to express my gratitude also to all those Members who have supported our work by participating in the events that we have carried out during the year, both here and at international meetings abroad.

It has been a testing year for the Group, and I want to pay tribute to the Secretariat staff for their invaluable service, without which we would not have been able to carry on our work. I particularly want to register my special appreciation to Dominique Rees, who is sitting over there and who stood in as Acting General Secretary and skilfully steered the Group through a difficult and uncertain period. So our thanks to Dominique.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to officially welcome Rick Nimmo to his first meeting as the new BGIPU Director. He has already made a strong impact, and I am looking forward to working together with Rick and the entire team as we build on our achievements over the coming year.

It has been an eventful year. Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Mexico, Cuba and Morocco—those are just some of the countries that we have engaged with since the last AGM, either through hosting parliamentary visits here in the UK or sending our own delegations overseas. We are continuing those bilateral

events and programmes going forward. I had the honour to lead UK delegations to the 126th Assembly in Kampala, in March and April this year, and then the 127th Assembly in Quebec City in October. We debated there an array of global issues with representatives from 120 Parliaments around the world and worked closely with our 12-plus partners—Europe, plus Australia, New Zealand and Canada. We got some resolutions on the agenda from the 12-plus on Syria in Kampala and on the situation in Mali in the Quebec Assembly.

The Annual Report, which you all have, gives a fairly detailed flavour of our programmes, which, I am sure you will agree, were pretty rich and varied during the year. We have been encompassing both long-term issues and emerging themes, and our work enables us to build on some of those existing initiatives and respond to new challenges to democracy.

We have participated actively in the IPU Assemblies, examining, among other things, the impact of social media on democracy, cultural diversity and the Arab Spring, as well, of course, as the ongoing project to promote gender-sensitive Parliaments. We had a conference here less than a month ago on that particular issue—gender and politics—which was very successful and very well attended by quite a number of Parliaments.

These are crucial democratic issues, and they are challenging. They come at a time when citizens' expectations are growing against a backdrop of still serious economic problems and rapid social change. They will require a sustained effort in delivering practical solutions. If we look at the developments this year alone, close to home, we have seen constitutional controversies in Hungary, threats to judicial independence in Romania and fears of emerging autocracy in Egypt, following the Arab Spring—not to mention the ongoing challenges faced by many of the countries that we engage with on the intricate aspects of democratic reform, which, again, are documented in our Report.

We can see that democracy is a fluid and fragile process. It cannot flourish without proper, constructive support. This goes right to the heart of what the IPU stands for, and what we work to achieve. In a globalised world, where problems are more intertwined and responsibilities increasingly need to be shared, I strongly believe that parliamentary diplomacy is a positive and powerful force for

strengthening representative governance around the world and, particularly, for consolidating new democracies, where the needs are greatest.

In turn, the benefits would be mutual. It is in Britain's interest to see stability and democracy prevail throughout the world, so the case for inter-parliamentary engagement—for a thriving IPU—is self-evident. The key challenge for us, however—not least as a family member of the IPU—is to ensure that the IPU continues to serve its essential role as a global body for parliamentary exchange and in helping the world address the many governance demands of the 21st century. These efforts must always be guided by the IPU's key principle of promoting peace and democracy through parliamentary dialogue and draw on its unique experience in creating norms and promoting morals to strengthen representative governance.

Operationally, we have some testing times in store. Continuing financial challenges facing Governments may result in even less funding being dedicated to our mission in future. This could potentially have implications for our work. We may need to consider how the IPU itself might be more effective globally on a straitened budget and how the British Group of the IPU in particular can selectively allocate our own resources for future delegation visits—such as we recently did on a visit to Colombia—where Parliaments that cannot afford to host us would benefit from bilateral exchange. I believe that that would justify extra investment.

Looking forward to the next year, we will be taking part in the 128th IPU Assembly in Quito in the spring and are planning bilateral exchanges with several countries, including Croatia and Saudi Arabia, who tell us that their delegation will include both men and women, because from 15 January, 25% of the Shura Council will be composed of women. We look forward to welcoming them here. We are also planning an exchange with Japan, and there is a proposed joint visit to Costa Rica and El Salvador.

We are pursuing opportunities for capacity-building work with Burma, in which I know that you, Mr Speaker, have taken a very keen interest—we hope to involve you in what we do, and we hope that you might involve us in your plans as well—and with Somalia and Libya. We also hope to develop further our Westminster programme of thematic events and lectures, including co-operation with key external partners and the relevant all-party groups.

My aim, Mr President, is to ensure that all BGIPU members are given relevant opportunities for inter-parliamentary engagement and that together we are able to respond to international developments in line with the United Kingdom's strategic interests. We very much welcome everybody's contributions to establishing our work priorities and to shaping our agenda in the countries that we engage with. The events that we convene and the issues that we discuss are key, and they are owned by our Members and are for our Members to get involved with.

I thank you all for your attendance and for your support over the past year, and I again thank you, Mr Speaker, for your support and that of the House authorities.

MR SPEAKER:

Bob, thank you very much for that speech, both excellent in content and gracious in tone, as ever, which is much appreciated.

Colleagues, I can certainly tell you, as Bob mentioned it, on the Burma front that, at very short notice, a request was put to me only days ago that a group of Burmese parliamentarians should be able to come over here for the purposes of learning, in short order, about our legislative scrutiny process.

You may be interested to know that there is such a thing as the Bills Committee in Burma—I emphasise “the” Bills Committee, not “a” Bills Committee or one of several—which apparently looks at and has a responsibility for all new Bills. I think that it is very heavily tested and that there is a real potential capacity issue there, simply in terms of the legislative flow and how much it can reasonably be expected to accommodate and come to terms with in any meaningful way. Moreover, the point has been made to me, not least by Aung San Suu Kyi, that in Burma they are simply not accustomed to the making of law. Doing so efficiently and effectively, as you will know from your experience in respect of other countries, is a major challenge.

I was asked whether the House could accommodate three MPs coming over before Christmas. The specific spur for this, which is not a secret, is that there is apparently an upcoming Education Bill that will be considered between Christmas and new year in the Parliament. There was a concern that the Members should be better placed to do their scrutiny job than perhaps they might be now. The long and

the short of it is that three of them are coming over, I believe—I am looking in Crispin Poyser's direction in case I am wrong—next week.

CRISPIN POYSER:

Next Tuesday to Thursday, and the BGIPU is involved.

MR SPEAKER:

I think that you will agree that that is very welcome. Those of you who attended Aung San Suu Kyi's address in Westminster Hall may recall that she specifically asked for support from the British Parliament, not just in terms of moral support—although that, of course—but in terms of practical assistance. I certainly and Robert Rogers, as Clerk, committed ourselves to providing that assistance. I am absolutely delighted, although it has involved very considerable pressure and taxation of your time, Crispin, that we are holding good and delivering on our commitments. Thank you very much indeed, and thank you for the involvement by the IPU. If there is further work on that front, including possible visits to Burma, I would certainly want to keep in touch with the British Group about how that work should be taken forward.

Closure of the Meeting

MR SPEAKER:

Colleagues, I think we are done for today. On the back of that excellent concluding speech from Bob, I formally declare that this meeting is closed. Thank you.

Officers and Executive Committee

Following the Annual General Meeting held on **Wednesday 5 December 2012**, the under-mentioned were elected as Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

BGIPU Honorary Presidents

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

BGIPU President

Rt Hon David Cameron MP (The Prime Minister)

BGIPU Vice-Presidents:

Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP
Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP
Rt Hon William Hague MP
Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP
Rt Hon Justine Greening MP
Ivan Lewis MP
Rt Hon the Baroness Boothroyd PC OM
Rt Hon the Lord Martin of Springburn
Rt Hon the Baroness Hayman
Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP
Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP
Rt Hon the Lord Hurd of Westwell CH CBE
Rt Hon the Lord Carrington KG GCMG CH MC DL
Rt Hon the Lord Howe of Aberavon Kt CH QC
Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Rt Hon the Lord Owen CH
Rt Hon Jack Straw MP
Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP
Rt Hon Hillary Benn MP

Meetings of the Executive Committee

Since the last Annual General Meeting on 5 December 2012, the Executive Committee met on Tuesday 15 January, Monday 11 March, Tuesday 14 May, Tuesday 16 July and Tuesday 22 October.

Officers & Executive Committee 2012 - 2013

Chair:

Robert Walter MP

Vice-Chairs:

Stewart Jackson MP

Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP

Treasurer:

Mike Gapes MP

Executive Committee:

Conservative Party

Conor Burns MP

Gareth Johnson MP

Ian Liddell-Grainger MP

Tim Loughton MP

Andrew Rosindell MP

Rt Hon Sir John Stanley MP

John Whittingdale OBE MP

The Baroness Hooper CMG

Rt Hon the Lord Jopling DL

The Lord McColl of Dulwich CBE

Labour Party

Dave Anderson MP*

Hugh Bayley MP

Jeremy Corbyn MP

Fabian Hamilton MP

Ann McKechin MP

John Robertson MP

Rt Hon the Lord Anderson of
Swansea

The Lord Dubs

Liberal Democrat Party

Rt Hon Malcolm Bruce MP

Rt Hon the Lord Dholakia OBE

DL

Minority Party

Ian Paisley MP

Cross Bench

The Earl of Sandwich

The Viscount Montgomery of
Alamein CMG CBE**

* Denotes that Member was elected to fill a vacancy on 11 March 2013

** Denotes that Member was co-opted following the AGM 2012

Membership of the British Group

As of November 2013 there were 801 Members of the British Group, comprising 300 Members of the House of Commons, 335 Members of the House of Lords, 164 Associate Members and 2 Honorary Members.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Year ended 31 March 2013

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

Annual Governance Statement

Governance framework

The British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (BGIPU) is an unincorporated association¹ comprising members of both Houses of the UK Parliament united in their support for the aim of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) as the focal point for world-wide parliamentary dialogue. Governance of the BGIPU is exercised through a 26-member Executive Committee, appointed annually by its entire membership. The Executive Committee approves and oversees the implementation of a Forward Programme of engagement with counterpart parliaments, the principal organs of the 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 Chairman, two vice-Chairs, Honorary Treasurer and the Director. The Officers exercise financial authority on behalf of the Executive Committee on a day to day basis. The Officers meet formally as required, usually in advance of any Executive Committee meeting. All decisions taken by the Officers are duly reported to the full Executive Committee at its next meeting. They are supported by a Secretariat, led by the Director and senior staff comprising a Deputy Director, Finance and Administration Manager and well-qualified and appropriately experienced international programme management and administrative support staff.

The Honorary Treasurer as Accounting Officer is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the aims and key objectives of the BGIPU whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets in a manner that is consistent with the Financial Memorandum (FM) issued by both Houses of Parliament for the use of the BGIPU's grant in aid. The Honorary Treasurer is also responsible for ensuring such internal control measures are fully implemented in compliance with relevant Treasury and other guidelines. In particular, the role seeks to ensure that all resources are used economically, efficiently and cost-effectively

¹ 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

including that the Executive Committee take financial considerations into account in making operational and policy decisions.

The Director is responsible to the Officers and the Executive Committee for the implementation of their decisions and for the administration of the organisation and its Secretariat; ensuring that appropriate personnel management policies are observed. The position is also responsible to the Honorary Treasurer for ensuring that effective procedures are in place to control the expenditure of the organisation, to maintain a record of losses, special payments or write-offs, to calculate the budget required to carry out the organisation's authorised activities, and to submit the annual request for grant in aid. The position, previously titled General Secretary, was vacant from May 2011 until May 2012, when a new Director was appointed. During this period of absence, the Deputy Secretary took over the responsibilities and acted in lieu of the General Secretary.

The full Executive Committee considers the preparation of the organisation's forward programme of activities and facilitates through Selection Committees the identification of the most appropriately qualified delegates for Assemblies of the IPU 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 IPU. It also promotes membership of the BGIPU and has overall control of the Group's funds. The Executive Committee is also responsible for formal correspondence with the Secretariat of the IPU, consideration and adoption of the BGIPU Strategic Business Plan and authorisation of the appointment of the Director of the Secretariat.

Under the authority of the Executive Committee, the Audit Committee gives advice to the Honorary Treasurer on the adequacy of audit arrangements and on the implications of assurances provided in respect of risk and control in the organisation. The Committee regularly reviews the organisation's Risk Register and, when necessary, draws to the attention of the Honorary Treasurer and the Executive Committee any additional measures needed to control risk, or if the scope of the external audit needs to be adjusted.

Arrangements for funding inter-parliamentary groups in the UK Parliament have evolved over many years. While funding of the BGIPU originally came from member contributions, and later the

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Treasury, in recent years the funding has been provided directly by both Houses of Parliament with 70 percent from the House of Commons and 30 percent from the House of Lords.

The FM between both Houses and BGIPU was first produced in 2009 to underpin this funding relationship. The current FM requires the preparation of a detailed annual business plan, including estimated costs of programme and non-programme expenditure, regular quarterly reports of outturn figures and an overall commitment to meet recommended limits on reserves. BGIPU is also required to follow specific administrative, financial and human resources policies, analogous to those operated by the House of Commons, albeit proportionate and relevant to BGIPU's own unique character and circumstances.

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

Work of the Executive Committee

The BGIPU Executive Committee has met on five occasions during the 2012-13 Financial Year. It convened on Tuesday 22 May 2012, Tuesday 10 July 2012, Tuesday 30 October 2012, Tuesday 15 January 2013 and Monday 11 March 2013. The Audit Committee was convened on Tuesday 26 June 2012 and Tuesday 12 February 2013. The BGIPU AGM took place on Wednesday 5 December 2012.

Under the guidance of the Executive Committee, the Director has undertaken detailed reviews of BGIPU objectives and operations and implemented a number of measures to improve the organisation's effectiveness through a sharper focus on BGIPU's strategic priorities. As required by the FM, this included the adoption by the Executive Committee of a 3-year Strategic Business Plan and a detailed forward planning budget for the next three financial years. This is

the first multi-year business plan prepared by the Group and it is intended to provide a more strategic focus on the rationale for its inter-parliamentary exchanges and international relations work.

In preparation for the 2012 AGM, the Executive Committee also reviewed existing BGIPU Rules in an effort to remove inconsistencies and ambiguities, including recommending a more streamlined approach to interaction with All Party Parliamentary Country Groups (APPCGs). These amendments were subsequently adopted at the AGM.

To ensure BGIPU continues to meet its obligations to staff, the Executive Committee endorsed the Secretariat placing under contract a specialist human resources expert to assist in a comprehensive review to ensure it employs staff broadly in line with the practices of the House of Commons as required in the FM. There is also a comprehensive review of policies, practices and regulations underway to produce a revised Staff Handbook. Aiming to achieve equity and consistency of employment conditions, all members of staff previously employed on fixed-term contracts were transferred to permanent contracts.

Following adoption of the recommendations of the report of the Modernisation Committee by the Executive Committee, the BGIPU completed a major communications project to create and launch a new rebranded BGIPU website, including increased use of social media and other electronic means to make the Group's work more accessible and promotional activities more cost-effective. Recognising the need for professional and personal development, there has also been an emphasis on staff training including boosting information technology and communications skills, a first aid course, financial management and budget training, encouragement of international relations policy skills and support for specialised language training.

Risks

The mechanisms and procedures of BGIPU 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. The system is based on an ongoing process designed

to identify and prioritise the risks for the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The process of risk management in the BGIPU is based on the authority of the Executive Committee, which includes the advice of the Director. As far as possible, BGIPU staff are encouraged to take full ownership of their work and be responsible for their part of the risk control process. All staff are appropriately trained to manage risk relevant to their particular responsibilities, including close attention to ensuring appropriate probity and care in the expenditure of public monies. A working environment which encourages teamwork and dialogue and regular staff meetings provide an effective process for the identification and dissemination of best practice and lessons learned. Feedback to the Secretariat is provided by the Officers and Executive Committee of the organisation 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.

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 2013). The Executive Committee have delegated authority to the Audit Committee to regularly monitor and scrutinise the Risk Register and to take appropriate action where necessary. The Audit Committee reports back to the Executive Committee on a regular basis to ensure any issues are fully discussed. Risk management is embedded in the organisation by all activity being approved by the Executive Committee, by staff reporting and commenting upon good practice and by constant review of expenditure and regular scrutiny of the Risk Register by the Audit Committee.

Most residual risks are low. The generic risk priorities for the organisation are in the areas of effective project management, which in turn depends upon the professionalism and motivation of staff, a coherent trail from policy decisions to project delivery, and the promotion of best practice. Structural weaknesses in having only one

staff member occupied with finance and administration tasks has been addressed by the recruitment of a Finance and Administrative Assistant. The other risk priority is the maintenance of the provision of grant in aid from both Houses of Parliament on which the BGIPU is wholly dependent to fund its activities. New requirements under the FM, including limits on reserves, may have risked access to regular allocation of financial resources but this is being mitigated by regular and detailed consultation with Finance Managers in both Houses. The overall risk that funding might be reduced or otherwise reallocated is also mitigated by the quality and success of BGIPU activities and the degree to which they advance the core objectives of the Group as established and endorsed in the Strategic Business Plan.

Review of Effectiveness

It is a significant enhancement to the Group's overall corporate governance that the Executive Committee adopted in October 2012 a multi-year Strategic Business Plan, governing the period 2013/14 to 2015/16. This mechanism allows the Group to be in a stronger position to assess its effectiveness with key objectives, which are now closely defined, and expected outcomes clearly identified. The inclusion of an indicative annual programme also allows the Executive Committee to better judge the scope and level of inter-parliamentary activity, in addition to ensuring the impact of key outcomes in meeting the Group's goals.

While notionally independent of the management arrangements of both Houses of Parliament, the fact that the BGIPU is entirely dependent on external funding from Parliament requires it to maintain the full confidence and support of its funding partners. This requires close attention to the provisions of the FM and sufficient transparency and probity to ensure that funding levels are sufficient for implementation of the programme activities being planned. If funding is reduced or withdrawn, there could be insufficient resources available to meet core elements of the Forward Programme and this places at risk the BGIPU's ability to meet its key objectives. 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.

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 FCO and other relevant government bodies, I assess that the Executive Committee and Secretariat are undertaking the key roles and responsibilities of the BGIPU to an appropriate level of effectiveness. This includes with regard to its cost-effective use of public monies, its employment responsibilities to staff and its management of operational risk.

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

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

(Signed)
M Gapes MP
Honorary Treasurer

Statement of the Executive Committee's responsibilities

Under the BGIPU's rules, the duties of the Executive Committee of the BGIPU include control and expenditure of the organisation's funds. It is also required to ensure that financial statements (duly audited) are prepared. The Executive Committee of the BGIPU has accepted responsibility for the preparation of these financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013 which are intended by them to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the organisation and of the surplus or deficit for that period. The Executive Committee has accepted that the financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In preparing these financial statements, the Executive Committee has:

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

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

Disclosure of information to auditors

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

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

We have audited the financial statements of British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for the year ended 31 March 2013 set out on the following pages, which comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared for the reasons and on the basis set out in note 1 to the financial statements.

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

Respective responsibilities of the Executive Committee and auditors

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

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

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

We read the other information contained in the Annual Governance Statement and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. We consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. Our responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the organisation's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the members; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the organisation's affairs as at 31 March 2013 and of its results for the year then ended and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Opinion on Annual Governance Statement

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

(Signed)

Reeves & Co LLP

Statutory Auditors & Chartered
Accountants

Third Floor

24 Chiswell Street

London

EC1Y 4YX

Date: 19 July 2013

Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March 2013

	Note	2013 £	2012 £
Income			
Grant in aid	1	1,266,000	378,600
Subscriptions/ Donations received from members	1	211	441
Interest receivable	1	3,113	5,175
Other income		52	118
		1,269,376	384,334
Expenditure			
Subscriptions		477,449	476,469
Conferences, IPU seminars and outward delegations		255,755	192,999
Inward delegations, BGIPU seminars and days in Parliament		124,783	84,329
All party groups		17,294	35,925
Salaries, national insurance and other staff costs	7	309,388	304,770
Printing, stationery and publications		4,311	6,681
Postage and telephone		487	2,708
Publishing and public relations		8,220	4,751
Audit fee for the audit of these financial statements		6,660	6,553
Insurance		5,172	4,976
General hospitality		473	1,275
Sundry expenses		3,842	3,507
Depreciation of fixed assets	2	4,200	1,847
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	2	65	194
		1,218,069	1,126,984
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	5	51,307	(742,650)

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

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those passing through the income and expenditure account.

Notes 1 to 11 form part of the financial statements.

Balance sheet

at 31 March 2013

	Note	2013		2012	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	2		12,755		7,136
Current assets					
Debtors		4,842		10,496	
Prepayments and accrued income		362,303		377,589	
Cash at bank and in hand	3	<u>627,864</u>		<u>536,454</u>	
		995,009		924,539	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	4	<u>(67,000)</u>		<u>(42,218)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>928,009</u>		<u>882,321</u>
Net assets			<u>940,764</u>		<u>889,457</u>
Financed by:					
General fund	5		<u>940,764</u>		<u>889,457</u>
			<u>940,764</u>		<u>889,457</u>

Notes 1 to 11 form part of the financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the undersigned and authorised for issue on 16 July 2013.

(Signed)
M Gapes MP
Honorary Treasurer

(Signed)
R Walter MP
Chairman

**Cash flow statement
at 31 March 2013**

	Note	2013	2012
		£	£
Net cash flow from operating activities	8	98,181	(713,055)
Returns on investments	9	3,113	5,175
Capital expenditure	9	(9,884)	(1,664)
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		<u>91,410</u>	<u>(709,544)</u>

**Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds at
31 March 2013**

	Note	2013	2012
		£	£
Increase/(Decrease) in cash in the year		91,410	(709,544)
Movement in net funds in the year		<u>91,410</u>	<u>(709,544)</u>
Net funds at 1 April 2012		536,454	1,245,998
Net funds at 31 March 2013	10	<u>627,864</u>	<u>536,454</u>

Notes 1 to 11 form part of the financial statements.

Notes forming part of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013

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 Basis of preparation

The British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union acts as an autonomous body within Parliament and is an independent parliamentary association. As such it 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 UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out below and historical cost accounting rules.

1.2 Fixed assets and depreciation

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

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

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

1.3 Pension costs

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

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

1.4 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 2013 of £1,266,000 (2012: £378,600) has been provided by the House of Commons and the House of Lords; contributing 70% and 30% respectively.

1.5 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.

1.6 Interest

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

1.7 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 Tangible fixed assets

	Paintings	Commemorative bell	Office equipment	Computers & software	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At beginning of year	3,183	890	2,377	14,440	20,890
Additions	-	-	376	9,508	9,884
Disposals	-	-	(340)	(1,330)	(1,670)
At end of year	3,183	890	2,413	22,618	29,104
Depreciation					
At beginning of year	-	-	946	12,808	13,754
Disposals	-	-	(340)	(1,265)	(1,605)
Charge for year	-	-	347	3,853	4,200
At end of year	-	-	953	15,396	16,349
Net book value					
At 31 March 2013	3,183	890	1,460	7,222	12,755
At 31 March 2012	3,183	890	1,431	1,632	7,136

3 Cash at bank and in hand

	2013	2012
	£	£
Interest earning bank deposit accounts	617,206	535,852
Non-interest earning bank deposit accounts	10,230	500
Cash in hand	428	102
	627,864	536,454

4 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2013	2012
	£	£
Trade creditors	5,319	1,800
Accruals	54,522	35,522
Social security and other taxes	7,159	4,896
	67,000	42,218

5 General fund

General Fund

	£
Balance at 1 April 2012	889,457
Surplus for the year	<u>51,307</u>
Balance at 31 March 2013	<u><u>940,764</u></u>

In accordance with HM Government accounting rules, the annual grant in aid income awarded to the organisation is not paid to the BGIPU until the funds are actually required to meet expenditure budgeted for the year. The BGIPU declares to the funding provider surplus funds from the previous year before grant in aid is 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.

6 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.

7 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 7 (2012: 7).

8 Net cash flow from operating activities

	2013	2012
	£	£
Surplus/(Deficit)	51,307	(742,650)
Depreciation on tangible fixed assets	4,200	1,847
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	65	194
Interest received	(3,113)	(5,175)
Decrease in debtors and prepayments	20,940	29,487
Increase in creditors and accruals	24,782	3,242
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	<u><u>98,181</u></u>	<u><u>(713,055)</u></u>

9 Analysis of cash flows for the adings netted in cash flow statement

	2013	2012
	£	£
Return on investments		
Interest received	<u>3,113</u>	<u>5,175</u>
	2013	2012
	£	£
Capital expenditure		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	<u>(9,884)</u>	<u>(1,164)</u>

10 Analysis of changes in net debt

	1 April 2012	Cash flow	31 March 2013
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>536,454</u>	<u>91,410</u>	<u>627,864</u>

11 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.

IPU
HEADQUARTERS

Executive Committee of the IPU

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

Members	Expiry of term
<i>Ex-Officio President:</i>	
Mr. A. Radi (Morocco)	October 2014
<i>Vice President of the Executive Committee:</i>	
Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay)	October 2015
<i>IPU Vice-Presidents:</i>	
Mr. R.M.Kh. Al Shariqi (United Arab Emirates)	April 2017
Mr. F.M. Drilon (Philippines)	October 2015
Ms. N. Motsamai (Lesotho)	October 2015
Mr V. Senko (Belarus)	October 2017
<i>To be confirmed (12+)</i>	
<i>Members:</i>	
Ms. N. Assegaf (Indonesia)	April 2014
Ms. F. Diendere Diallo (Burkina Faso)	October 2015
Mr. K. Dijkhoff (Netherlands)	October 2017
Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda)	October 2015
Ms. S. Moulengui-Mouélé (Gabon)	October 2014
Mr. D. Oliver (Canada)	October 2014
Mr. M.R. Rabbani (Pakistan)	October 2015
Mr. Ph. Tanbanjong (Thailand)	October 2017
Mr. D. Vivas (Venezuela)	October 2016
Mr. R. Walter (United Kingdom)	October 2017
<i>Vacancy (Germany)</i>	October 2015

Liaison with the International Secretariat

The BGIPU Secretariat has maintained regular and constructive contact with the IPU Secretariat in Geneva on a wide range of issues on the IPU agenda. In addition to one Secretariat member participating in the Information Seminar on the Structure and Functioning of the IPU in Geneva from 11-14 June 2013, the BGIPU Secretariat has also hosted three visits by IPU staff to London during the course of the year.

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 has maintained a strong record of cooperation with the international Secretariat. The contacts details for the Secretary General of the IPU are:

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

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

E-Mail: postbox@mail.ipu.org

Website: www.ipu.org

National Groups of the IPU

As of October 2013 there are 163 Members and 10 Associate Members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

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

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

Associate Members

Andean Parliament

Central American Parliament

East African Legislative Assembly

European Parliament

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

Latin American Parliament

Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States

Parliament of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Arab Parliament

**AFFILIATED
PARLIAMENTARY
GROUPS**

Details of funding granted in support of All Party Parliamentary Group Activities in the period December 2012 to November 2013.

Each year, the BGIPU provides financial assistance to affiliated All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs). An APPG is an informal cross party grouping of parliamentarians from both Houses who have an interest in the affairs of a specific country. Funding for this activity is included within grant in aid received from the two Houses. The current maximum is £5,000 in total grants per APPG per financial year.

The approved budget for assistance to APPGs in 2012-13 was £30,000. For the Annual report, the reporting period is the year between Annual General Meetings, rather than the Financial Years. Detail of support given since December 2012 until time of writing follows:

Iceland APPG

Assistance totalling £350.65 was provided for a lunch in Parliament organised by Fabian Hamilton MP welcoming the Speaker of the Icelandic Parliament to the UK on 5 February 2013. A full report is published on the BGIPU website.

Slovenia APPG

Assistance totalling £565.33 was provided in support of an inward visit of Slovenian parliamentarians hosted by Neil Parish MP from 12-14 March 2013. A full report is published on the BGIPU website.

Serbia APPG

Assistance totalling £2,367.06 was provided to assist with the costs of an outward delegation of five MPs to Serbia led by Karen Lumley MP from 12-15 March 2013. A full report is published on the BGIPU website.

Great Lakes APPG

Assistance totalling £3,798.00 was provided for an outward delegation of six MPs led by Lord McConnell to visit Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 23-29 May 2013. A full report is published on the BGIPU website.

Latvia APPG

Assistance totalling £4,335.04 was provided for a parliamentary delegation from Latvia hosted by Christopher Pincher MP from 12-15 May 2013. This was a reciprocal visit following an outward visit undertaken by the APPG to Riga in 2012 as reported on the BGIPU website.

Vietnam APPG

Assistance totalling £5,000.00 was provided to assist with the costs of an outward delegation of five MPs to Vietnam from 26 May-1 June 2013 led by the Rt Hon George Howarth MP. A full report is published on the BGIPU website.

Macedonia APPG

Assistance to a maximum of £5,000 was committed to an outward delegation of four MPs to Macedonia later in 2013 to be led by Karen Lumley MP.

South Sudan APPG

Assistance to a maximum of £5,000 was committed to an outward delegation of four MPs to visit South Sudan to be led by William Bain MP.

Ethiopia and Djibouti APPG

Assistance to a maximum of £5,000 was committed to an outward delegation of up to six parliamentarians to visit Djibouti from 20-26 November 2013 to be led by Laurence Robertson MP.

THE SECRETARIAT OF THE BRITISH GROUP IPU

	Position	Commenced
Mr Rick Nimmo	Director	May 2012
Ms Dominique Rees MBE	Deputy Director	March 1998
Ms Jackie Rhodes	Finance & Administration Manager	January 2010
Ms Gabriella Liberotti	International Project Manager	June 2008
Ms Charlotte Holloway	International Project Manager	August 2009
Ms Stephanie Kenyon	International Project Manager	August 2011
Ms Sophia Ostler	International Project Manager	August 2011
Ms Moyosoré Shodipo	Finance & Administrative Assistant	March 2013

Contact details of the Secretariat of the British Group IPU

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