



Newsletter, January 2023

A Very Happy New Year from the Scottish Council on Global Affairs

Origin, launch and support

- **Page 1: Intro. & launch**
- **Page 2: Team & activities**
- **Page 3: Activities, funding**
- **Page 4: Further afield**
- **Page 5: Looking ahead & future events**

Here at the SCGA we welcome the New Year with gratitude for the support we have received from across Scotland and enthusiasm in anticipation of the exciting events and activities scheduled for 2023.

The Council emerged from collaboration between the Universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh and Glasgow and has moved forward as a partnership between these three institutions. Our overarching aim is to stimulate debate and support research and engagement on all questions related to global affairs, from war and security to global public health, international development, humanitarian aid and human rights.

We have from the beginning been determined to extend our reach much wider to work with policy stakeholders in Edinburgh, Whitehall and beyond. We have already forged excellent relationships with international affairs think tanks based in the UK, Europe and North America. At the same time, we have made good progress in forging collaborative relationships with the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in Scotland.

➤ Among the highlights of the first eight months of our existence was an event to mark the official launch of the Scottish Council at Edinburgh Castle on 27th April of last year. The event was attended by Nicola Sturgeon MSP (First Minister of Scotland), Angus Robertson MSP (Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture), the Principals of the three founding universities, as well as guests from across Scotland. It received wide coverage in the Scottish and national press and generated exactly the kind of ‘buzz’ we hoped to achieve.



➤ Another highlight was the reception to mark our launch hosted by the Scotland Office and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office at Lancaster House in London on 13th June. The event was co-hosted by Scottish Secretary Alister Jack MP and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Minister Vicky Ford MP. It provided an ideal opportunity for us to introduce ourselves to senior policy stakeholders from across Whitehall as well as leading figures from international business and the London think tank community.



The reception was covered widely in the press and provided an outstanding springboard to our efforts to forge collaborative relationships with such key international affairs institutes as Chatham House, the Royal United Services Institute, Wilton Park and The UK in a Changing Europe.



■ Team & activities

Newsletter, January 2023

An important step in the consolidation and future evolution of the SCGA was the recruitment and appointment of a Head of Operations to manage the day-to-day activities of the Scottish Council, working alongside our excellent Administrator, Claire Flanagan.

The SCGA is especially delighted to announce the appointment of Mr John Edward to the post of Head of Operations. John comes to us from his previous position as Director of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools. John's previous roles include work at the European Policy Centre, as policy manager in Scotland Europa and Head of the European Parliament's Office in Scotland from 2003 through 2009. He thus brings a wide range of expertise and contacts that are sure to be important to the next stages of the development of the Scottish Council as we continue to pursue our mission of linking expertise in Scotland to policy stakeholders and providing a non-partisan forum for evidence-based debate on global affairs broadly defined.

Among many other notable events and activities sponsored partly or wholly by the SCGA was the first SCGA Annual Lecture given by Laurence Badel, Professor of the History of International Relations at the University of Paris I (Panthéon-Sorbonne). This event, which took place in Edinburgh on 15th March 2022, was co-hosted by the French Consule Générale, Madam Laurence Païs and held at the Consulate of France. Professor Badel provided a stimulating reassessment of the historical development of European diplomacy over the past two centuries and concluded with what has proved to be a prescient set of judgments about the challenges to European diplomatic practice posed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

➤ SCGA Fellow Rebecca Sutton convened fascinating exploration of Youth Peacebuilding on 28th April 2022 in the National Museum of Scotland. It included welcomed representatives from the Scottish Youth Parliament, the Centre for Good Relations, YouthLink Scotland, Action on Sectarianism, Sense Over Sectarianism, and Beyond Borders Scotland, alongside researchers from a range of Scottish Universities and important first step in forging wider transnational links between young peace activists in Scotland and their peers around the world. Please see the following link for more information on the proceedings of this workshop and ways to become involved in this excellent initiative: <https://scga.scot/2022/06/22/event-write-up-drawing-connections-youth-peacebuilding-scotland-and-the-world/>.



➤ Twin events organised by SCGA Fellows Rachel Chin and Sarah Dunstan examined the questions of British, Scottish and European citizenship in comparative perspective. The first, a series of academic roundtables on 28th June 2022, brought together scholars from across Scotland in the fields of history, international relations, sociology, anthropology, film and public policy. A second, on 2nd September, explored concepts and approaches drawn from the roundtables in a wide-ranging series of Witness Seminars featuring stakeholders from the refugee community as well as expertise from third sector organisations and policy stakeholders. See <https://scga.scot/human-rights/> for more information on this ongoing project.

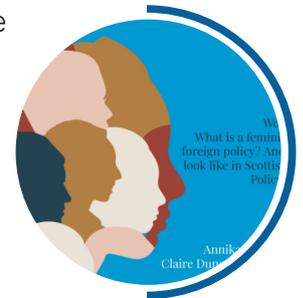




■ Activities, funding

Newsletter, January 2023

➤ Another significant contribution to policy dialogue in Scotland funded by the SCGA was a stimulating roundtable on feminist approaches to foreign policy and global affairs/ This event was organised by SCGA Fellow Claire Duncanson, in partnership with Annika Bergman (Lund University in Sweden) and Caron Gentry (University of Northumbria).



The roundtable was brought together experts on peace and conflict studies in Scotland with Women Peacebuilders from the Global South to consider the questions:

- i) What is a feminist approach to foreign policy?
- ii) What could it look like in Scottish Government policy and practice?

The event was an important success with wide coverage in the national press and substantive participation from Scottish Government officials. The resulting transcript and report can be consulted at: <https://scga.scot/2022/09/29/event-write-up-feminist-foreign-policy/>.

Funding exciting research and public engagement initiatives in Scotland related Global Affairs broadly defined is a core element of the SCGA's work. We took the decision to divide up the funds we have available for supporting research excellence in Scotland into two broad categories. Half of our resources will go towards 'Strategic Initiative' fund that is earmarked for supporting research and engagement related to two headline issues: a feminist approach to foreign policy and security and defence in the 'High North'.

The other half of our research and engagement support was devoted to an open 'Call for Proposals' for funding. Three types of funding awards are available: Insight Awards (up to £7500), Connections Awards (up to £2500), and Engagement Awards (up to £2500). The competition for these awards closed in October and funds have been awarded to exciting projects ranging from a survey of Scottish attitudes towards Foreign Policy', to 'Pathways to International Justice in Iraq' and the 'Scottish Approach' to Global Health. Funding such important research and outreach work is a privilege as well as a responsibility for the Scottish Council.

In late September the SCGA co-sponsored a two-day symposium on the Ukraine War. convened by Professor Sir Hew Strachan, co-chair of the SCGA Advisory Board, in partnership with the British Academy, the Institute for the Study of War and Strategy (University of St Andrews) and the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace (Queen's Belfast). It brought together world-leading experts from Ukraine, Poland, the United States and the United Kingdom to discuss the origins and dynamics of the conflict as well as prospects for an end to hostilities. Participants ranged from former senior defence practitioners to defence experts from the press, think tanks and from universities in Europe and North America. For more information, please see <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/events/british-academy-conferences/the-russo-ukrainian-war/>.



■ Further afield

Newsletter, January 2023

This past autumn saw delegations from the Scottish Council visit the capitals of the United States, Canada and the European Union. A visit to Washington DC by Phillips O'Brien, Mateja Peter and Stephen Gethins engaged in a series of events with local think tanks, policy-makers and members of the diaspora as well as events with the Scottish Government Office and British Embassy. Events included a roundtable with the Atlantic Council on the future of European security in the aftermath of the war in Ukraine; a lecture by Professor Phillips O'Brien at Johns Hopkins University; an evening reception, hosted by the Scottish Government, with US stakeholders from business, academia and government as well as the Scottish diaspora. These events provided an excellent opportunity to brief leading think tanks, the DC media and officials from the State Department and Pentagon about the work of the Scottish Council and our plans for the future.

A visit to Ottawa on 10-11th November by Peter Jackson, Stephen Gethins and Claire Duncanson was similarly fruitful. A roundtable event on 'Scotland in a Changing World Order' hosted by the Centre for International Policy Studies at the University of Ottawa provided an opportunity to introduce the SCGA's work to a diverse range of students, current and former policy practitioners from the Canadian government and academics (please see <https://scga.scot/2023/01/11/peter-jackson-scotland-in-a-changing-world-order/> for further details).

Meetings with officials from the Prime Minister's Office and Global Affairs Canada laid the foundations for exciting future engagement. An evening reception at the British High Commissioner's Residence organised with the support of the excellent Scottish Government team in Ottawa was another highlight of this visit.

➤ Early December saw another SCGA delegation visit Brussels for a Policy Dialogue roundtable co-hosted by the European Policy Centre [EPC] entitled 'The International Response to Russia's War in Ukraine'. Participants in this 7th December event included Iryna Yefremova, Ambassador and Deputy Head of Ukraine's mission to the EU, David McAllister (Chairman of the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee), Aivo Orav (Estonian Ambassador to the EU), Martin Johnson (Director of Scotland House in Brussels), Fabian Zuleeg (Chief Executive of the EPC) and Rick Holtzapple (US Deputy Chief of Mission to NATO).



Discussion was moderated by SCGA Director Julie Kaarbo. The core issues considered ranged from the financial assistance military hardware Ukraine requires to resist Russian aggression to the challenges of rebuilding Ukraine after the war ends as well as Europe's place in the new political and security order emerging as a result of the conflict. The event also marked the SCGA's first time in Brussels, opening the door for future collaboration with the European Policy Centre and other actors in the EU and NATO.

In addition to the above events, the SCGA welcomed Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office Minister Rehman Chishti to Glasgow for a roundtable on 'The Global Challenges facing the United Kingdom'. We also co-hosted a roundtable in Glasgow University's 'Future Global Shocks' series devoted to 'Lessons from the Pandemic on Civil Liberties and Social Justice' available for viewing here: <https://scga.scot/2022/11/26/event-catch-up-lessons-from-the-pandemic-on-civil-liberties-and-social-justice/>.



■ Looking ahead & future events

Newsletter, January 2023

The New Year has begun just as interestingly for the SCGA. Just this past week we hosted two major events in London and Edinburgh. The London event was a roundtable on dimensions of the threat posed by ransomware that brought officials from the FCDO and UK Government together with academics from the fields of computer science, information security, strategic studies and international law. The event in Edinburgh was co-sponsored with the International Studies Association to consider the challenges and possibilities of policy-oriented IR scholarship as a support to formulation of international policy.

Looking forward, the SCGA will build upon the hard work and achievements of the past months. A membership scheme will be launched over the coming year. Planning is underway for further research and outreach activity from within the two strategic initiatives. This will include a gathering of the 'High North' research group in Orkney in partnership with the Scottish Whisky Association to a consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of Scotland's potential role as a peace-builder organised in co-operation with Scotland Beyond Borders.

Please keep a look out for future Newsletters and updates on our website for information on these other activities as the Scottish Council on Global Affairs consolidates its position and expands its reach and activities in Scotland, the UK and internationally.



The **Scottish Council** on **Global Affairs**