



March 2024

Greetings.

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Scottish Global Dialogues.

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Message from our Executive Director, Peter Jackson



The past twelve months have been a very busy time for everyone connected with the SCGA. The number and scope of our activities have both increased dramatically as we have forged new partnerships and participated in exciting collaborative enterprises with governments and cognate institutions in the UK, Europe and beyond.

Our various programmes of research have come on stream, delivering an exciting range of events and outputs that have secured a voice for the SCGA on some of the most pressing international questions of 2024.

There is much work to do. Yet, thanks to the efforts of everyone connected to the SCGA, we have made an excellent start in pursuit of our mission to support world class evidence-based research, to place it at the disposal of policy stakeholders and to lift the level of public discourse and understanding in the realm of global affairs.

Among the highlights of the past six months is the exciting suite of public or stakeholder events either organised or co-sponsored by the SCGA or made possible by SCGA support. Events such as these showcase the expertise on global affairs in Scotland. They also illustrate the growing convening power of Scotland's first global affairs institution.

collaborations



Events & Conferences

Beyond Borders

On 24 August 2023 the SCGA collaborated with Beyond Borders Scotland to co-sponsor a lecture on the Current Environmental Crisis by John Kerry, the United States Special Envoy for Climate.

<https://scga.scot/2023/08/28/john-kerry/>



The lecture, which inaugurated the 'Scottish Global Dialogues' series, was held at the Signet Library in Edinburgh and was given to a packed house that left with a better understanding of the scale of the challenge confronting humanity and the pressing need for international cooperation to meet this threat.





Conference on Contemporary Deterrence

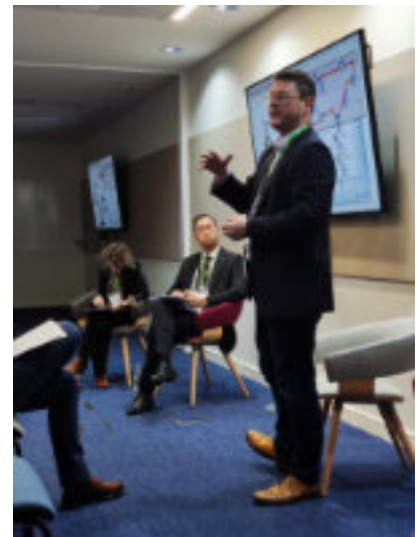
Another major event in the SCGA calendar was a three day Conference on Contemporary Deterrence that took place 14-16 November 2023 and was co-organised with the UK Ministry of Defence (Strategic Command and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory).

<https://elemendar.com/escalation-in-focus-the-uk-deterrence-and-assurance-academic-alliance-daaa-conference/>

This event brought experts from across Europe, North

America and Australia for debate and discussion with the wider aim of linking the next generation of deterrence experts with UK defence and foreign policy stakeholders.

Deterrence, including nuclear deterrence, is once again playing a prominent role in the strategies of major powers and in international discourse. This conference was therefore especially timely.



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More recently, the SCGA collaborated with the United States Consulate in Edinburgh to convene a panel of distinguished diplomats and academics to assess the current state of the War in Ukraine.

The aim of this roundtable event, chaired by SCGA co-Director Julie Kaarbo and held at the Scotsman Hotel in Edinburgh, was to consider what the future holds in a conflict that has been raging for more than two years and has caused incalculable devastation and loss to Ukraine's hard-pressed population.

A large and very engaged audience listened to international experts such as Sir Hew Strachan; the Minister Counselor for Political Affairs in the US Embassy in London, Joseph Pennington; Dr Michelle Burgis-Kasthala from the SCGA and Consul Andrii Kuslii of the Ukrainian Consulate in Edinburgh.

Discussion ranged from the present state of the war to the vital need for continued western political and financial support for Ukraine to the challenge facing European states in the efforts to assume responsibility for the security of the European continent.



Headline Research Programmes

The continued success of SCGA initiatives to support research and engagement in global affairs is another highlight of the past half year. The SCGA's funding scheme has two central pillars. The first focuses on 'Headline Programmes of Research' and includes financial support for research initiatives that the SCGA identified as strategic priorities for 2023-2024:

1. 'Feminist Approaches to Foreign Policy' led by scholars from the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow.
2. 'A New Security Architecture for the Wider North' led by scholars from the Universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh and Glasgow.
3. 'Scottish Attitudes to Foreign Policy' led by colleagues at the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Strathclyde.

All three of our Headline Research Programmes generated important and exciting new insights that were disseminated in stimulating events ranging from round tables and

seminars with key stakeholders to public events that stimulated widespread interest and attracted large audiences.

Among the results of this investment were a report on [Scottish Attitudes toward Foreign Policy](https://scga.scot/2024/03/19/foreign-policy-attitudes) based on a wide-ranging survey database by Claire Duncanson (SCGA and Univ. of Edinburgh), Tom Scotto (SCGA and Univ. of Glasgow) and Timothy Gravelle (Bain & Co.) (<https://scga.scot/2024/03/19/foreign-policy-attitudes>).

Another key output was the Insight Report 'Implications of the Russo-Ukraine War for Security in the "Wider North" of Europe' (<https://scga.scot/2024/03/07/round-up-security-in-the-wider-north-of-europe/>). The Report was prepared by Phillips O'Brien (SCGA & St Andrews) and Minna Ålander (Finnish Institute of International Affairs).



Research & Engagement

The SCGA also funds an Open Call for Research Proposals that has resulted in an impressively diverse range of projects on global politics. This scheme has produced a host of reports, policy-briefings and public-facing, all of which are available on our website.

Among the highlights was a report entitled 'Localizing Sustainable Development' presented to an audience of more than 100 civil servants this past February by Bernhard Reinsberg (Univ. of Glasgow) and Sebastien Dellepiane (Univ. of Strathclyde) in February (<https://scga.scot/2024/02/22/scga-insight-localizing-sustainable-development/>).

Another funded project managed by Adam Bower (SCGA & St Andrews) resulted in the SCGA Insight Report 'Commercial Space Systems and Foreign Armed Conflicts' (<https://scga.scot/2024/03/11/scga-insight-commercial-space-systems-and-foreign-armed-conflicts/>).

This year the SCGA is supporting no less than twelve world-class projects

by researchers in Scotland. This exciting array of research programmes ranges from a study of 'Feminist Faith Engagement with Foreign Policy' (Anupama Ranawana, Christian Aid) to 'Co-operation in the High North between Scotland, Norway and the Arctic Council' (Jessica Schechinger, Univ. of Glasgow) and 'Energy Transitions and Local Knowledge: co-creating policy strategies in Climate Change affected mining regions' (Sam Spiegel, Univ. of Edinburgh).

Especially topical at the moment is a project entitled 'The Next 100 years of Peace in the Greater Middle East' (Iliia Xypolia, Univ. of Aberdeen).

For a full list of our funded projects please visit (<https://scga.scot/funded-projects/>).



The Scottish Council attaches tremendous importance to its role as a source of expertise for government stakeholders. Members of the SCGA Team provided both oral and written evidence before Scottish and Westminster Parliamentary Committees of External Relations and Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security. We also collaborated with Scotland's International Development Alliance in the publication of the 'Scottish Government Report on a Feminist Approach to Global Affairs' (<https://scga.scot/2023/06/15/report-feminist-global-affairs/>).

This autumn we organised briefing sessions on questions ranging from practices of para-diplomacy to the future direction of Chinese foreign and trade policy.

An interesting example of the possibilities of this kind of engagement is a report on 'Regulating Ransomware Through International Law' prepared for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office [FCDO] and prepared with input from financial experts from the insurance sector in the UK as well as senior officials from the UK security establishment and the FCDO's international legal team (<https://scga.scot/2024/02/27/scga-report-regulating-ransomware-through-international-law/>).

We also partnered with the Festival of Politics in the organisation of two events, the first on the question of Scotland's role as a 'Global Citizen' (<https://scga.scot/2023/08/21/video-festival-of-politics-2023-scotland-a-good-global-citizen/>) and the second asking 'Is the West in Decline?' (<https://scga.scot/2023/08/09/video-festival-of-politics-2023-is-the-west-in-decline/>)

The SCGA co-sponsored a major international conference on the colonial and post-colonial practices of partition in treaty making. The event produced important insights into the contemporary legacies of these practices in the Mediterranean and in the Arab world more widely (<https://scga.scot/2023/07/14/partition-machine/>).

These events complemented a series of public lectures on key issues in global affairs sponsored by the SCGA. Among these lectures was 'Europe beyond the Watershed: how to turn fear into hope', given by former Belgian Prime Minister and first president of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy. Another high profile public lecture, sponsored by the SCGA, was given by UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, Francesca Albanese on the subject of 'Human Rights Under Occupation in Palestine'.

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wrapping up & looking forward

A final key development was the launch of the SCGA's Podcast Series 'Global Conversations' (<https://scga.scot/tag/podcasts/>).

The series debuted in September with a discussion of the implications of the Russo-Ukraine War for the Wider North and was hosted by Phillips O'Brien (SCGA).

This episode was followed by episodes on 'Migration and Scotland', the Scottish Human Rights Bill, 'UK-EU Relations after Brexit', 'Commercial Space Systems and Armed Conflicts', the return of Nuclear Deterrence, 'The Human Rights Convention in Practice', 'Equity in Global Health Law' and our most popular podcast to date 'Never Again? The Genocide Convention after Seventy-Five Years'.

There is much work left to do, but we are proud of the contributions to debate and discussion on international affairs that the SCGA has been able to make over the past few months. And we are grateful to our many partners and collaborators who have made these contributions possible.

The year 2024 is set to be one of the most tumultuous in the recent history of world politics. The SCGA stands ready to lend its expertise to the local, national and global dialogue in fulfilment of its core aims of supporting the formulation of public policy and lifting levels of public understanding of world events.

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