

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

### **Land Grabs Event Speaking Note**

- Thank you for your welcome and introduction, it is a real privilege for me to be here today at this event.

#### **Highland Clearances**

- Earlier on I had the chance to visit the Emigrants Statue that was unveiled by the First Minister a few years ago and I was struck by the look of determination on the faces of the people who had just been forced off their lands to make way for sheep.
- The statue is a tribute to triumph in adversity. 200 years ago today through no fault of their own, these people were left devastated after being told to leave the land that they and their ancestors had lived on for hundreds of years. The only reason given was that they stood in the way of profit. Many of them were left with little and yet Scotland's loss was another country's gain as through their hard work and commitment these people forged a new life for themselves across the seas.
- The clearances of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had a devastating impact on the Highlands, but one of the reasons that we

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

are here today as we were hearing earlier is that sadly there are many parts of the world where these things are still happening.

### **Land Grabs in the developing world**

- The facts speak for themselves. In poor countries today, foreign investors have been buying up an area of land bigger than Loch Ness every five hours<sup>1</sup>. In countries like Liberia, Cambodia and Honduras poor people who have lived on the land for generations are being evicted to make way for large scale agricultural developments with little or no thought given to their rights. This should not be happening in our world today.
- It is encouraging to see how people in the developing world have begun to take action to stop this from happening, one example as we saw earlier being the 100,000 people that marched through India to protest about land rights, but we in the developed world must acknowledge our contribution to the problem and we must be part of the solution and stand up for social justice around the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Information from Oxfam

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

### **Social Justice – The Legacy of Livingstone and Fair Trade**

- It is paradoxical that the year the Helmsdale clearances began in 1813 also saw the birth of David Livingstone, a man who dedicated his life to fighting injustice and inequality in Africa. We will be holding a series of events later this month to commemorate his birth and I am pleased to say that it is the spirit of Livingstone that lives on today in Scotland.
- This spirit of fighting injustice was in evidence last week as I had the privilege of announcing that Scotland has now met the criteria needed to be given status as a fair trade nation.
- The award is an achievement that truly belongs to the people of Scotland from the Primary School groups to the pensioners, faith groups and politicians. People throughout this country have committed themselves to giving producers in the developing world a fair price for the goods that they are making.
- Our commitment to Fair Trade has a greater impact than most of us are aware of. At last week's fair trade event, I

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

was honoured to meet Justine Watalunga, a fair trade producer from Uganda and to hear first hand about the difference that fair trade had made to her life and the lives of those around her. There are thousands more producers like her in the developing world who with the extra money they receive are now able to send their children to school, they can afford the hospital bills if they get sick or they can eat better food and so lead healthier lives.

### **The Scottish Government's role in making a difference**

- As a Government, we see the achievement of fair trade status as part of our vision of Scotland's place in the world as a good global citizen, committed to playing our part in addressing the challenge of global poverty.
- The Scottish Government has shown commitment to this vision by doubling the amount of aid we provide to the developing world to £9 million since 2007. The money that we provide is making a real difference to the lives of vulnerable people throughout Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia.

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

- As a government, we are also aware of the injustice of climate change which is one of the key drivers behind land grabs. That those who have done the least to cause the problem in the developing world are being hardest hit by its impacts. That is why, not only have we set ourselves tough targets in terms of carbon emissions, we have also launched our Climate Justice Fund designed to help support people in the developing world deal with the impacts of climate change.

### **IF Campaign – Climate Justice**

- We recognise that there is much more to be done and I would like to thank the coalition of organisations involved in the “If Campaign” for bringing attention to the scale of the challenges that still face us in our world today.
- One of the requests of the “IF” campaign is for additional investment by the Scottish Government in the Climate Justice Fund in order that it matches the International Development Fund by 2016.
- That is a reassuring sign of the success of our Climate Justice Fund and we will give this request full consideration over the coming months. In the short term,

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

my Ministerial colleague Paul Wheelhouse has of course announced our intention to host a major international Climate Justice conference in Scotland in October of this year.

### **If Campaign – Global Citizenship Education**

- Another ask of the “If Campaign” is for greater investment in Global Citizenship Education for our children and young people. This is something that I am especially passionate about and I am delighted to say that we as a government have put “Global Citizenship” at the heart of a child’s education in Scotland and within the next generation of Scots’ understanding of their place in the world.
- In November of last year the Scottish Government announced funding from the European Commission over the next three years that will go towards supporting the six Development Education Centres that we have in Scotland which serve to promote global citizenship education.
- In raising awareness of global issues in Scottish schools, including poverty and the effects of climate change on the developing world, this funding will support young people’s

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

understanding of world issues as part of Curriculum for Excellence, helping to engage the next generation of Scottish citizens.

- In the last six weeks, I have also had the privilege of addressing large groups of students and staff in both Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities and I was delighted by the enthusiasm and commitment that was on display. It is clear to me that all parts of our education system are inspiring thousands of Scots to play their part in making the world a fairer place.
- Last year we had the fantastic example of Martha Payne, a nine year old schoolgirl whose blog raised thousands of pounds to help people in Malawi. I hope that in the future we will inspire thousands more young Scots like her to take a stand and make a difference in the world.

### **If Campaign – Global Land Hearing**

- The focus of today's event is of course on the land aspect of the "If Campaign" and the specific request that Judith

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

highlighted earlier that the Scottish Government hosts a Global Land Hearing to discuss lessons from our past and how these relate to what is happening today in the developing world.

- This is a contemporary issue that resonates across the world today and it is important that we respond. I'm committed to seeing how we can move forward on the idea of a Global land Hearing.
- In the meantime, it is important to emphasise the work that we are already doing on food security in the developing world in particular through our Sub Saharan projects in Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia all of which are giving people skills to grow more food, more effectively and sustainably helping to reduce malnutrition and hunger.
- The funding we are providing to Oxfam in Tanzania is one example where we are enabling farmers to work together and build storage facilities for their crops so that they can sell their crops at higher prices which will benefit their families.

## **The Constitutional Question**

- A number of the asks of the “IF” campaign are currently outwith the gift of the Scottish Government. Allow me therefore to just briefly say something about our developing thinking on international development with independence.
- The “IF” campaign requests that the UK Government meet its commitment to the 0.7% GNI target. Achievement of this target by the UK has been delayed for over forty years, in contrast to our Scandinavian neighbours who have long met the target – Sweden (and also the Netherlands) in 1975, Norway and Denmark in 1976 and 1978 respectively.
- You may have heard my recent commitment that under an SNP Government an independent Scotland would meet and at least maintain the 0.7% GNI target from the point of independence.

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

- By the point at which independence would occur Scottish taxpayers will be contributing to the UK's achievement of that target through UK Departments - DfID in particular.
- At independence that funding would flow instead through a Scottish development body answerable to an independent Scottish Parliament. This is a quite straightforward proposition.
- It is however important to remember that development is about much more than aid, a point the "IF" campaign makes very clearly.
- Scotland would develop a clear approach to Policy Coherence for Development across Government, building on best practice international examples to ensure that the positive changes which can be brought by aid are not undermined by for example defence, trade or environmental policies which work against those efforts.
- In November I spoke at the Christian Aid tax justice debate. At that event we heard of the huge levels of tax avoidance by multi-national corporations in the developing world, facilitated by a lack of transparency and through tax havens. It is by giving issues such as these at least as

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

much attention as “aid” that we can make the most effective contribution to development, restoring autonomy to our partners in the process.

- Whatever the outcome of next year’s referendum, you can be sure that the Scottish Government will be committed to playing its part in promoting social justice both here and around the world. The question I would like to ask in closing is to ask people here today what will you do to play your part in promoting social justice?
- As I highlighted earlier, the fair trade campaign is a great example of how ordinary people can make a difference. My challenge for you today is how can the “IF” campaign attract the attention of the people of Scotland in the same way and make a real difference around the world? Thanks for listening.