



2017 no.3 £6.00 (free to members)

# INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



# **#OneForLeila**

**STOP POLITICAL PERSECUTION!**

# EVENTS

**10-11th March** Scottish Liberal Democrat conference. Dewars Centre, Perth,  
**10th March** Liberal International fringe at the Scottish Liberal Democrat conference. Nick Clegg MP on “The threat to Liberalism from Populism and Nationalism”. Dewars Centre, Perth, 12.45pm  
In conjunction with the Scottish Liberal Club  
**11-12th March** Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru/Welsh Liberal Democrat Spring Conference, Bishop Gore School, Del-la-Beche Road, Swansea.  
**13th March** Rock or Island? LIBG Forum on the South China Sea. NLC. 6.30pm  
**14th March** Pop-Up Politics: Guy Verhofstadt's Brexit & Beyond, Europe's Last Chance – discussion. Hastings & Rye Liberal Democrats. Grand Rue de Pera, 72 Queen's Road, Hastings,  
**17th-19th March** Liberal Democrat Spring Conference, York.  
**25th March** Unite For Europe National March to Parliament. 11.00am London  
**5th April** LIBG Forum on French elections & Populism, co-hosted with MoDem. NLC. 6.30pm  
**12th -14th May** LYMEC congress in Stockholm  
**15th May** LIBG Forum on East Africa. NLC  
**18th-21st May** 61<sup>st</sup> Congress of Liberal International, Andorra. The Congress will mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of LI.

*For bookings & other information please contact the Treasurer below.*

NLC= National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HE  
Underground: Embankment

Liberal International (British Group)  
*Treasurer:* Wendy Kyrle-Pope, 1 Brook Gardens, Barnes, London SW13 0LY

*email* w.kyrle@virgin.net

*InterLib is published by the Liberal International (British Group). Views expressed therein are those of the authors and are not necessarily the views of LI(BG), LI or any of its constituent parties.*

*Comments and articles can be sent to Lockhart & Hastings, Creative Media Centre, 45 Robertson Street, Hastings TN34 1HL, email* lockharthastings@btconnect.com

# CONTENTS

Leila De Lima ‘first political prisoner’ of the Duterte regime in the Philippines.	Pages 3-4
Helen Zille highlights Western Cape achievements.	Page 4
UK Government implementation of UN SDGs - their own damning report	Pages 5-7
The Death of Hong Kong’s Freedoms, by Esther Lam	Page 8
How to Impeach the American President, by Tom Arms	Pages 9-10
A Double First in the Year of the Rooster	Page 11
LI 70 <sup>th</sup> anniversary congress, Andorra	Page 13
Reviews	Page 14
Liberal Democrats Spring Conference 2017 Outline Agenda	Pages 15-16
Photographs: Stewart Rayment, Chinese Liberal Democrats, Liberal International.	

# Leila De Lima ‘first political prisoner’ of the Duterte regime in the Philippines.

As Liberal International hit the headlines for speaking out at the arrest of Filipino Liberal Party senator, Leila De Lima, the Philippines Minister of Justice, Vitaliano Aguirre II, was forced to deny LI’s criticism of politically-motivated charges against Ms. De Lima.

Leila De Lima, a vocal critic of President Rodrigo Duterte’s ‘war on drugs’, which Ms. De Lima says has resulted in thousands of extra-judicial killings, was arrested on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February on dubious charges related to her time as justice minister. Reacting immediately to the arrest, LI President of Honour, Hans van Baalen MEP, and LI Vice-President and Chair of the LI Human Rights Committee, Markus Loening, condemned the arrest and called for MS. De Lima’s immediate release.

In the face of mounting international pressure from the liberals, who expressed concern that the arrest was just the latest evidence of the Philippines descending into an illiberal state, the current Minister of Justice in the Philippines, Vitaliano Aguirre II, told reporters: “That is not true. The Liberal International, Human Right Watch should come to the Philippines to see for themselves the changes, the difference and the good governance being implemented by President Duterte.”



Senator de Lima was arrested by law enforcement agents after charges were filed in court alleging that she received money from drug dealers inside the country's prisons. She is accused of orchestrating a drug-trafficking ring when she was justice secretary during the 2010-2015 administration of Benigno Aquino.

According to numerous sources, President Duterte’s ‘war on drugs’ has cost in the region of 7,000 lives, up to 60% of which have been lost at the hands of unknown assailants. In a letter<sup>1</sup> released since her incarceration, Senator De Lima wrote: “While I’m psychologically prepared for this, my whole being cries out for truth and justice... My heart also bleeds for all other victims of injustice - those who were also falsely accused and now cramped in severely congested jails.”

Over the weekend, LI cooperating organisation, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD), under the leadership of Thailand’s former Prime Minister, Abhisit Vejjajiva, adopted a resolution on the ‘creeping authoritarianism’ in the Philippines.

Ahead of the court order for her arrest Senator De Lima said I am prepared to be the “first political prisoner of this regime”. “This arrest is purely political vendetta and has no place in the justice system that upholds the rule of law. This is condemnable”, read a statement from LPP senators on Thursday. It is believed that Senator De Lima has been deliberately targeted by the Duterte regime owing to her investigations into the Davao Death Squads when she was chief of the Commission on Human Rights; Rodrigo Duterte was then the mayor of Davao City.

Since Duterte was elected president, Senator De Lima began investigating the administration’s so-called “war on drugs”, a euphemism to cloak the widespread killings of persons who are suspected to be involved in the drugs trade. Amid the escalation of extra-judicial killings, De Lima called on the International Criminal Court to intervene in the Philippines back in October 2016.

Elevating the rapid decline of basic rights in the Philippines, Hans van Baalen MEP, extended the support of Europe’s Liberal political parties and will raise the issue with the European Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs. “The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats Europe (ALDE Party – LI cooperating organisation) is deeply concerned about the arrest of the Liberal senator Leila de Lima in particular and the

deteriorating human rights situation in general. The Philippines, under the leadership of President Rodrigo Duterte is turning rapidly into an illiberal state, where there is no respect for the law whatsoever. I have asked written questions to HRVP Mogherini in order to see what action the EU can take”, said Mr. Van Baalen.

Chair of Liberal International's Human Rights Committee, Markus Loening, said: "Leila de Lima is a highly respected human rights activist fighting against corruption and for the rule of law when she was the Minister of Justice and now as an elected member of the Senate of the Philippines... The president of the Philippines must respect and defend the laws of his country and human rights. That is his obligation towards his own people. Liberals across the world will stand up for Leila de Lima's immediate release", added Mr Loening. "We reiterate that an arrest based on trumped-up charges is illegal... We maintain that if this warrant of arrest is served, it would be a clear violation of legal proceedings and is therefore a violation of her Constitutional right to due process", concluded the LPP statement.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/leiladelimaofficial/posts/1941303976100148>

## Helen Zille highlights Western Cape achievements.

"After years of effort, by many partners, the Western Cape is beginning to reap the rewards" declared LI Deputy President and Premier of the Western Cape Helen Zille, as she delivered the 9th State of the Province Address (SOPA) last week, highlighting the key achievements of her provincial government and demonstrating that good governance can and does create a domino effect.

"Since we took office in 2009, we have put this Province firmly on the road to the future. And today we assess where we are on that journey. After years of effort, by many partners, the Western Cape is beginning to reap the rewards. Not only have we achieved a full set of financially unqualified audits, and 11 out of 12 clean departmental audits, we have also been top of the Presidency's Monitoring and Evaluation unit's ratings for 5 years running... Our unemployment rate is the lowest in SA... and the Western Cape also has the lowest rural unemployment rate in the country, at just 14%" she said.

Drawing attention to the importance of good governance she reminded that it is crucial "for helping to create a context for the most important priority of all – job creation, which is driven primarily by private sector investment, which is attracted by good governance and public confidence in the future."



Zille further highlighted the R5.9 billion worth of investments made in the Western Cape, through the province's excellent economic development and investment agency, Wesgro and the growing number of green manufacturers who are driving South Africa's status as the fastest growing green economy hub in the world (as cited in a report by Moody's Ratings Agency).

In her concluding remarks, she stressed that many challenges remain not least the lack of skills required to fill key jobs in the economic sector and the need to ensure energy security.

A copy of her full speech can be accessed at.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poxISqVyzFQ>

# UK Government implementation of UN SDGs - their own damning report

*The the International Development (Official Development Assistance) Act 2015 which requires the Government to spend 0.7% of UK GNI on ODA was a significant achievement of the Liberal Democrats in the Coalition. Published around the time when all of us were campaigning for Remain, I had missed this last year but thought it was worth reproducing it anyway. The full Report is available below<sup>1</sup>. This is the summary.*

In September 2015, 193 Member States attending the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Summit in New York adopted a new global development framework: ‘Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’. The Agenda consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (or ‘Global Goals’ as they are popularly known) and 169 targets, which commit all signatory countries to tackle issues as diverse and deep-rooted as gender inequality, climate change, access to quality education and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. The SDGs officially came into force on 1 January 2016 and the UK must now move forward with implementing the Goals at home and supporting other countries to achieve them overseas. Achieving the SDGs will require financial investment of trillions of dollars from a variety of sources.

We welcome the International Development (Official Development Assistance) Act 2015 which requires the Government to spend 0.7% of UK GNI on ODA, and recognise that ODA remains an essential part of the financial commitment needed to achieve the SDGs, particularly for Least Developed Countries. Private sector investment will also be essential for countries wishing to make progress towards the SDGs, contributing to the agenda by creating jobs, increasing incomes, providing services and increasing resilience.

***However, where private investment is encouraged in developing countries, through CDC or initiatives such as the Prosperity Fund, DFID and other arms of the UK Government should focus on developing and fragile states and actively consider whether its work will have a positive impact on the achievement of the SDGs.***

We recognise the impact of tax evasion on developing countries’ ability to raise revenues and welcome the Prime Minister’s decision to host the recent Anti-Corruption Summit in London, positioning the UK as a leader in this debate.

***Despite this, we remain concerned about successive governments’ approaches towards international tax cooperation and fairer tax rules. We believe that strong commitment to addressing these areas is essential.***

We welcome the progress made so far. However, we urge the Government to ensure that the overseas territories and Crown dependencies introduce central beneficial ownership registries as soon as possible, in accordance with the Prime Minister’s recent statement. Discussions and decisions on international cooperation in tax matters need to be made within an inclusive body, such as the UN, rather than just the OECD, whose membership includes only developed countries. If there is a need for greater financial expertise, then it could work together with (for example) the IMF, whose membership also encompasses almost the entire globe.

We are addressing this area in more detail in our ongoing inquiry into ‘Tackling Corruption Overseas’. To harness the finance tied up in capital markets, DFID and other relevant government departments should also enter into discussions with the London Stock Exchange and the City of London to explore how they might work together to create better incentives for sustainable development in the capital markets.

The reinvigoration of a ‘Global Partnership’ is one of the central tenets of Agenda 2030. The Government

should take a leading role in communicating the SDGs to a wide private sector audience in the UK, including supporting the newly formed Business and Sustainable Development Commission to devise a comprehensive business case for private sector engagement with the Goals. It should also support the development of international benchmarks against the SDGs, to enable companies to monitor and report on their progress against relevant targets.

Despite concerns expressed by ICAI, and in evidence to our report on DFID's allocation of resources, working through, and in partnership with, multilateral organisations seems logical and beneficial in the context of the SDGs. In the upcoming Multilateral Aid Review, DFID should lay out exactly how its engagement with multilaterals will help it support the achievement of the SDGs.

Civil society organisations—from the global north and global south—also have a vital part to play. With this in mind, ***we recommend DFID looks closely at its civil society funding mechanisms to ensure: small NGOs are not discriminated against, or restricted due to the source of their funding; innovation and collaboration to achieve the SDGs is encouraged, and civil society is able to undertake the important task of communicating the SDGs to citizens across the world so that governments are held to account on progress.***

### **The Government's response to domestic implementation of the SDGs has so far been insufficient.**

We remain to be convinced that responsibility for domestic implementation should lie with the Secretary of State for International Development, who already faces a substantial challenge in working to support international implementation of the Goals. Engagement of government departments will be central to the success of domestic implementation, which also has an impact on making progress on the goals globally.

***As such, we are particularly concerned that the SDGs have not been included in the 2015–2020 Single Departmental Plans of all government departments, which indicates a worrying lack of engagement in the SDGs across Government. Departments should be assigned specific responsibilities for making progress on the SDGs to ensure ownership and clear lines of accountability and these should be laid out clearly in each department's Single Departmental Plan, with specific references to relevant SDGs.***

**We recommend that, if it has not already done so, the Government urgently produces a substantive and fully resourced internal communications strategy on the SDGs to ensure that all departments understand their responsibilities to deliver on the Goals.**

**We are deeply concerned at the lack of a strategic and comprehensive approach to implementation of the Goals.**

Without this, it is likely that areas of deep incoherence across government policy could develop and progress made by certain departments could be easily undermined by the policies and actions of others. It also reflects a worrying absence of commitment to ensure proper implementation of the SDGs across-Government.

***The Government should identify a formal mechanism for relevant Secretaries of State or responsible Ministers to come together regularly to discuss the implementation of the SDGs at the highest political level.***

***The Government should also commit to producing a regular report on policy coherence for sustainable development.***

We have been concerned by the reluctance of the Secretary of State for International Development and the Minister for Government Policy to provide a cross-Government plan for implementation of the SDGs. Although we welcome the Minister's announcement that the Government will produce a report outlining the international and domestic approach to implementation of the SDGs by the end of the year, we are disappointed at the reluctance to call it an implementation plan.

***The Government's report must equate to a substantive cross-government plan for implementation of the SDGs.***

To stand the best chance of success, governments' implementation of the SDGs must be aligned to existing national priorities and developed through country-led process with opportunities for democratic engagement by citizens and civil society.

We welcome DFID's emphasis on encouraging national ownership of the SDGs in its priority countries. To ensure a country-specific and holistic response to the SDGs through its bilateral programmes, DFID should assess where its work is likely to make the most impact, potentially requiring country teams to look at all of the areas outlined in evidence to us, such as: where DFID has particular skills and expertise to deliver; where other development actors are not already providing support; where there might be root bottlenecks which, if tackled, could have an impact on a number of Goals; or the Goals where the country is most off track and may need the most support.

**The publication of DFID's Single Departmental Plan, and the broader UK Aid Strategy, have provided little clarity on how the Department will support the implementation of the SDGs agenda overseas.**

Although the SDGs are referenced in both documents, no clear link is drawn between specific Goals and the Government or DFID's policy priorities and it seems clear that the SDGs have not sufficiently informed the Government's overseas aid strategy.

**We recommend that the Government produces a White Paper on International Development to provide clarity on its approach to Agenda 2030. Following the Multilateral, Bilateral and Civil Society Partnership Reviews, DFID and other government departments will be in a position to provide a comprehensive overview of their approach to international development over this Parliament and towards 2030, within the framework of the SDGs.**

The legislative framework determining much of the UK's aid spending is also not fit for the post-2015 development agenda. The Government should use this critical juncture to consolidate and update the four International Development Acts (2002, 2006, 2014, and 2015) into one single Act. This should include: a legal requirement that poverty reduction (including through the provision of global public goods) is the primary purpose of all ODA spending (including by other government departments); a commitment to support the achievement of the SDGs, a requirement for DFID to report regularly on its contribution to progress in its bilateral partner countries; and a legal requirement for more systematic efforts towards, and reporting on, policy coherence across Government in support of the SDGs.

**The UK Government should report annually on its contribution to SDGs progress in all of DFID's priority countries, enabling us, as a Committee, to scrutinise the efforts of the Government to support implementation of the SDGs overseas. The report should include the contributions of all government departments towards progress in those countries, including the positive and negative effects of government policies such as on tax, trade, the environment, migration, and peace and security. We recommend that all House of Commons departmental select committees engage with the SDGs to: push for ambitious national indicators; monitor departmental progress against these indicators, once formulated; and use the data produced annually by the Office of National Statistics to hold departments to account on their performance.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmintdev/103/103.pdf>

*Thanks to Felix Dodds for this.*

# The Death of Hong Kong's Freedoms

## Esther Lam

2017 marks the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule. The freedoms for Hong Kong citizens, guaranteed under the Sino-British Joint Declaration, have been increasingly undermined, with additional concerns now being raised about the abduction of individuals who are not Chinese citizens and which are taking place beyond Chinese borders.

The Liberal Democrat peer, Baroness Falkner chaired a discussion on 8th February on the demise of Hong Kong's political freedoms since the transfer of its sovereignty to China. The event was organised by the Henry Jackson Society at the Palace of Westminster.

The speakers were Joshua Wong (a Hong Kong student and co-founder of the political party Demosisto), Angela Gui (daughter of detained publisher Gui Minhai) and Benedict Rogers (Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission).

Gui's father holds only Swedish citizenship but was kidnapped by the Chinese authorities from his holiday home in Thailand in October 2015 after his part in the publication of books critical about Beijing's leaders. Gui stated that the kidnapping of foreign citizens from foreign territories points to the development of an imperial aspect of Chinese foreign policy where the Chinese government deems Chinese ethnicity, rather than Chinese citizenship, as the source of its authority over certain individuals.

Wong urged the international community to keep a watchful eye on China, stating that Beijing's emphasis on 'prosperity and stability has in reality meant the erosion of political freedoms'. He also stated that 'it was not easy to fight for democracy in Hong Kong when others [were] more interested in business interests' and that they would 'continue to fight until we have it back'.

Rogers argued that the UK was not living up to its responsibilities as outlined in the Joint Declaration and that the UK has 'a right and an obligation to keep checking if China is keeping its side of the bargain'.

The Sino-British Joint Declaration outlined the 'one country, two systems' principle in which the Chinese government promised to uphold fundamental rights including freedom of speech, freedom of press, judicial autonomy and protection from unlawful detention for a period of 50 years beginning from 1997.

However, since 2002 Hong Kong has dropped from 12th to 70th place in the World Press Freedom Index. To date at least five Hong Kong booksellers have disappeared, believed to have been kidnapped, by Chinese agents for selling or printing books critical of Chinese leaders. In 2016 pro-democracy activists, including Wong, were found guilty of unlawful assembly following their roles in the 2014 Umbrella Movement; a verdict which Amnesty International said was a 'chilling warning for freedom of expression and peaceful assembly' in Hong Kong.

*This article first appeared in Lib Dem Voice on 27th February*



*Phil Bennion raises an umbrella in Hong Kong.*



# How to Impeach the American President

## Tom Arms

Imagine this perfect political storm.

Two of the greatest symbols of the most powerful country in the world are destroyed on a beautiful late summer's day by hijacked airliners piloted by Islamic terrorists.

The next fifteen years see long, vengeful, expensive and inconclusive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; the rise of a so-called Islamic State; the greed-based collapse of the Western banking system; the loss of manufacturing business to authoritarian China; a stagnant wage economy and a growing evangelical movement which calls on its followers to reject science and return to the illogical faith-based logic.

Then along comes a spray-tanned, billionaire reality TV star with a long list of easily identifiable scapegoats and simplistic solutions to what every other politician warns are difficult and complex problems. Drain the swamp. Ban the Muslims. Deport rapist Hispanics. Build a wall. Cozy up to the Russians. Raise tariff barriers against the Chinese. Force American companies to manufacture in the US. Destroy Islamic fundamentalists. Rein in the “dishonest media.” Reject the scientifically-proven dangers of climate change and spend billions more on defence and infrastructure while cutting taxes and backing away from established alliances and friendships. All he asks in return is that voters have blind faith in him.

There is only one thing standing between Donald J. Trump and the imposition of his frighteningly simplistic solutions—the law. In particular the US constitution. The law and the constitution exist to protect all sections of society, not just the majority of the Electoral College that voted for a specific candidate. On past and present form, President Donald J. Trump, does not appear to have any great respect for the constitution or the rule of law. It is alleged that he has several times, sexually assaulted women. His company has been twice sued by the Justice Department for failing to rent properties to African-Americans. Trump has avoided paying taxes for many years. He may have accepted help from a foreign power—the Russians—during his presidential campaign. And, finally, it appears he knew that National Security Minister Mike Flynn discussed sanctions with the Russians weeks before Flynn was forced to resign over the issue.

None of this is fake news.

The number of possible crimes that President Trump has committed are mounting—almost daily. And you may rest assured that thousands of intelligence officials, State Department employees, FBI agents, liberal-minded Republicans, Democrats and, of course, journalists from the “dishonest media,” are compiling evidence with the express purpose of starting impeachment proceedings.

Trump has every right to be paranoid. They hate him. They hate the narrow-minded anti-intellectual bigotry which he represents, and they are seriously worried that he is a danger to the stability of the world. So what are the procedures for impeaching an American president. Well, they certainly exist. Founding father Benjamin Franklin insisted at the 1787 constitutional convention that there was a legal procedure for the peaceful removal of “obnoxious” executives. He successfully argued that he historical alternative—assassination—was unacceptable.



***SIGN UP NOW FOR THE FREE WEEKLY  
DIARY OF WORLD NEWS EVENTS AT  
[WWW.LOOKAHEADNEWS.COM](http://WWW.LOOKAHEADNEWS.COM)***

So Article Two, Section Four of the US constitution exists and says that “the President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.”

To date, no president or vice president has suffered this fate. Richard Nixon quit before he could be tried. So did his Vice President Spiro Agnew. Andrew Johnson (the immediate successor to Abraham Lincoln) was acquitted by the Senate as was Bill Clinton. However, 15 federal judges, 13 district judges, one judge from the court of appeals and one Supreme Court Associate Justice have suffered the ignominy of impeachment and removal from office. Actually that is not a bad record for 230 years.

So how do you impeach the president? Well, for a start, you gather the evidence which is usually done whether by a special prosecutor appointed by Congress, a special congressional committee or by private citizens who petition Congress.

The evidence is then heard by the appropriate committee of the lower house—usually the Judiciary Committee. Committee hearings are the first step in determining whether or not there is a case to answer. If—by a simple majority vote—they determine that there is a case then proceedings are referred to a full meeting of the House of Representatives. Two Congressmen called “house managers” are appointed to take on the defense and prosecution roles. If, after listening to the evidence a simple majority think the president is guilty then they vote to impeach.

However, a vote to impeach, does not mean that the president is immediately thrown out of office. When the House votes to impeach it is saying that the president should be committed for a proper trial. The Senate still has to have its say. It is in the Senate where the proper trial takes place. The House of Representatives appoints the prosecutor and the President is allowed to appoint his own legal representative. Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton were acquitted by the Senate.

If the president is found guilty by a simple majority of the Senate then he is immediately removed from office and the Vice President assumes control.

At the moment the impeachment lobby is faced with the political fact that the Republican Party controls both houses of Congress, although a growing number of Republican congressmen and Senators are becoming rapidly disillusioned with President Trump.

However, there is a deeper problem. The frustration and anger that started on 9/11 is still there. Trump is the symptom, not the disease.

*Tom Arms is the editor of LookAheadnews.com*



## LIBG FORUM



### **Rock or Island? – Disputes in the South China Sea**

March 13, 2017 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HE

Speakers: Bill Hayton, BBC reporter and author,

Veerle Nuowens, research analyst at Royal United Services Institute

Representatives from the Chinese and Philippine Embassies (tbc).

Chair: Phil Bennion.

# A Double First in the Year of the Rooster

It was the first time that Chinese Liberal Democrats held a Chinese New Year event at the National Liberal Club and a first too for the Club to celebrate the Lunar New Year (since its founding by William Gladstone in 1882)! The event was by all accounts a resounding success.

Never had the Club witnessed the likes of a Chinese lion dance accompanied by the sounds of drums and cymbals, as the Imperial College Lion Dance team kicked off the evening with a spectacular performance. A prancing lion led the way from the foyer up the grand marble staircase to the first-floor members' bar and finally to the magnificent David Lloyd George Room where dinner for over 100 guests was served.

Club Vice-Chairman Rupert Morris welcomed guests who were treated to a four-course meal with Chinese dim sum starters, a hot and sour soup, Chef's special duck with plum sauce, and toffee banana to finish.



Professor Kerry Brown of the Lau China Institute was the key note speaker for the evening sharing his vast knowledge on China and views on UK China Relations post Brexit. Having served as a diplomat in Beijing and written 11 books on China, Prof Brown was cautiously optimistic. He believed that UK remains a key trading and investment partner for China in view of London's importance as a financial centre and the wealth of innovative technologies and businesses in the UK. He took a range of questions from the audience including on the sensitive issue of Taiwan, on China-Russian relations and China's role on the world stage especially in leading on the green front.

The evening ended with an exciting auction with guest auctioneer Tom Brake MP, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs with prizes donated by, amongst others, Sir David Tang of China Tang, artist Albert Kueh and Caroline Pidgeon AM of the London Assembly. All proceeds would go towards the valuable work of the Chinese Liberal Democrats including supporting Chinese candidates in the coming elections: Cllr Tatyana Cheung standing in the Cotswolds, Sarah Cheung Johnson in South Cambridgeshire and Marguerita Morton in Tunbridge Wells.

Co-Chair of CLDs Merlene Emerson MBE, said: "We were delighted to have had a sold out event and been able to introduce Chinese culture as well as the work of Chinese Liberal Democrats to a wider audience.

"Liberal values and aims are more important than ever before with growing threats of xenophobia and intolerance. The Chinese Liberal Democrats will continue to promote an open, tolerant and inclusive society and encourage more to join us and have their voices heard."





# THE MOST INCLUSIVE CLUB IN LONDON

*Join the  
National  
Liberal Club*



For 134 years, the National Liberal Club has supported the Liberal cause. It was founded by Gladstone in 1882 to act as a "home from home" for Liberal activists and supporters – and it still does so today.

With a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, the club is liberal in the broadest sense. The first of the "gentlemen's clubs" to admit women, it is open to political or purely social members. Membership benefits include:

Magnificent dining room and cocktail bar

Debates, lectures & interest circles

Concerts, barbecues & quizzes

Over 150 reciprocal clubs worldwide

Banqueting rooms & business room

Liberal politics & history library



Annual membership is £770, Entrance Fee £385

reduced rates for country/overseas members, and partners

Junior Membership for 17 to 29 years starting from £192.50

Contact Membership Secretary Rosemary Tweddle

on **020 7930 9871** or visit [www.nlc.org.uk](http://www.nlc.org.uk)

National Liberal Club • Whitehall Place • LONDON • SW1A 2HE

# **LI announces 70th anniversary congress in Andorra**

With Liberal International's 70th Anniversary Congress fast approaching, Partit Liberal d'Andorra (PLA - LI full member) and LI met this week in Andorra to finalise the organisation for the event, review the venues and address the Andorran media about the arrival of liberals from around the world.

On Tuesday 28th February national media attended the press conference called by PLA to present the Congress to the public. Member of Parliament Judith Pallares, Secretary General of PLA Amadeu Rossell and Alessandro Bilotta, LI Head of Fundraising and Events, explained the importance of the Congress and announced that the LI Manifesto for the twenty-first century will be launched at a time when liberal values and principles are under threaten. In this sense, the media were informed, Andorra holds as well symbolic value with its both northern and southern border threatened rising populism.

The Congress will open its activities on the afternoon of Thursday 18 May, welcoming to Andorra delegates from every continent to debate, vote on the liberal manifesto. The two-year process, which involved consultations from LI's wide liberal network, culminates in the adoption of the document in the plenary session scheduled for Saturday 20 May. This will be only the third manifesto adopted in LI's 70-year history and the first outside of Oxford, UK.

Member parties can find instructions for booking accommodation at the two selected hotels, on the dedicated Congress webpage, with registration set to open on 1st April.

[http://www.liberal-international.org/site/70th\\_Anniversary\\_Congress.html](http://www.liberal-international.org/site/70th_Anniversary_Congress.html)



**Liberal International Scottish Group**



**Fringe Meeting**

**12.45pm, Friday, March 10th**

**Nick Clegg MP**

**“The threat to Liberalism from Populism and Nationalism”.**

**Scottish Liberal Democrat Conference**

**Dewars Centre, Perth.**

**In conjunction with the Scottish Liberal Club**

# reviews

**Return to the Shadows, by Alison Pargeter.**  
**Saqi Books 2016 £16.99**  
**isbn 9780863561443**

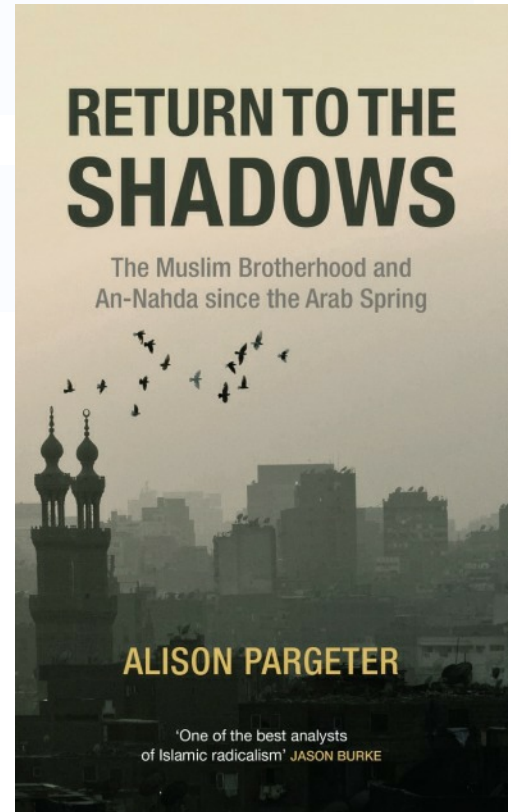
For those of us who monitor developments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, one of the most fascinating aspects of recent years has been the failure of what one might call mainstream Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood to fully capitalise on the so-called Arab Spring. True, in Egypt the Brotherhood triumphed in the post-Mubarak elections and Mohamed Morsi became President, but both he and the Brotherhood proved singularly unfit for the task, leading to his overthrow (a military coup, but with widespread public support).

In Tunisia, the cradle of the Arab awakening, An Nahda did get to have a share of power, but again had largely to withdraw after showing itself not up to the job. And in Libya, the Brotherhood never proved strong enough to be a main contender after Gaddafi's fall from power.

How and why this was the case is the subject of Alison Pargeter's latest book, which uses interview material as well as documentary research, meticulously referenced but put over in a style that will appeal to both academics and general readers alike. The author is particularly strong on the rise and fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, sober but incisive in her analysis and criticism, deftly recounting a story that has certain characteristics of a Greek tragedy.

The sections on Libya and Tunisia are shorter and less powerful, but nonetheless fascinating. Overall, a significant achievement.

*Jonathan Fryer*



**Ireland's Immortals, A History of the Gods of Irish Myth, by Mark Williams.**  
**Princeton 2016 isbn9780691157313**

I've never really got on with the myth cycle of Ireland, possibly because, as Mark Williams explains, there isn't exactly a cycle in the sense as was composed for those of the Greeks and the Norsemen. Then there's getting your tongue around the names – all too much trouble. There is no continuous thread; we start with what monks chose to record, sometimes, or inventing a Christianized perspective. Then later inventions to meet the needs of the Irish zeitgeist of the moment – Lady Gregory, Yeats, AE (George Russell) et al. In



this, and I hope he will take it as a complement, Mark Williams has done for the Irish Gods what Ronald Hutton has done for British folklore. If, as I anticipate, we can expect further volumes – in the main, we're talking Gods here, not heroes. The Táin Bó Cúailnge is necessarily, all but ignored; that would be a book in itself, and one to look forward to.  
*Stewart Rayment*

*Across the shining water rode Mananaan MacLir.*  
AE - George Russell. c.1910 reproduced by permission The Board of Trinity College, University of Dublin. **George Russell@150 runs at Armagh County Museum, Armagh 10<sup>th</sup> March to 22<sup>nd</sup> April.**

## Friday 17 March

Time	Theme	Location
15:00-17:30	Consultative session: <b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Economy</b>	Novotel Hotel
15:00-17:30	Consultative session: <b>Education</b>	Novotel Hotel
15:00-17:30	Consultative session: <b>Rural Communities</b>	Novotel Hotel
16:30	Registration open	York Barbican, Main Reception
16:30	Exhibition open	York Barbican, Sports Hall
16:30-18:15	Consultative session: <b>Britain in the World</b>	York Barbican, Lendal Room
17:15-18:00	Civic Drinks Reception	York Barbican, Ground Floor Foyer
18:30-19:30	<b>The Rally</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
20:15-21:30	Fringe Events	Novotel Hotel
22:15-23:30	Lib Dem Conference Quiz ( <i>pre-booked tickets only</i> )	Novotel Hotel

## Saturday 18 March

09:00	Registration open	York Barbican, Main Reception
09:00	Exhibition open	York Barbican, Sports Hall
09:00-09:10	Conference open: <b>Baroness Sal Brinton</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
09:10-09:30	Party business: <b>Reports of FCC and FPC</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
09:30-10:30	Policy motion: <b>A Rational Approach to Harm Reduction</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
09:30-12:30	Training Sessions	Novotel and Hilton Hotels
10:30-11:15	Policy motion: <b>Tackling Overcrowding in the Prison System</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
11:15-11:35	Speech: <b>Baroness Featherstone, Spokesperson for Energy and Climate Change</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
11:35-12:40	Emergency motion or topical issue: <b>Britain and the EU</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
12:40-14:20	Lunch break	
13:00-14:00	Fringe Events	Novotel and Hilton Hotels
14:20-15:20	Policy motion: <b>The Crisis in Health and Social Care</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
14:30-17:30	Training Sessions	Novotel and Hilton Hotels
15:20-16:05	Q&A session: <b>Tim Farron MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
16:05-16:25	Speech: <b>Baroness Kramer, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
16:25-17:40	Policy motion: <b>Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
17:40-18:00	Party business: <b>Reports of Parliamentary Parties</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
18:15-21:00	Fringe Events	Novotel and Hilton Hotels
22:00-02:00	Glee Club	Novotel Hotel

## Sunday 19 March

09:00	Exhibition open	York Barbican, Sports Hall
09:00-09:30	Emergency motion or topical issue	York Barbican, Auditorium
09:30-09:50	Party business: <b>Reports of FB and CGB</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
09:50-11:05	Policy motion: <b>The Role of Faith in State-Funded Schools</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
11:05-11:45	Policy motion: <b>Associate Citizenship of the European Union</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
11:45-13:00	Speech: <b>Tim Farron MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats</b>	York Barbican, Auditorium
12:00	Exhibition close	York Barbican, Sports Hall
13:00	Conference close	York Barbican, Auditorium

Full details of all sessions will be available in the Spring Conference 2017 agenda/directory

## Q&A sessions

There will be a series of Q&A sessions during conference, where you can come along and ask questions of our spokespeople. A fantastic opportunity for members to find out more about what our Parliamentarians are up to.

Saturday 18 March	11:30–12:15	<b>Education with John Pugh and Sue Garden</b>	York Barbican, Lendal Room
Saturday 18 March	12:30–13:15	<b>Housing with John Shipley and Kath Pinnock</b>	York Barbican, Lendal Room
Sunday 19 March	10.00–11.00	<b>Brexit with Tom Brake, Sarah Ludford and Nick Clegg</b>	York Barbican, Lendal Room

## SPRING CONFERENCE EVENT



## BREXIT AND BEYOND: WHAT NEXT FOR BRITS IN THE EU?

18 March 2017 18:15 – 19:15  
Riverside Room, York Novotel

Alistair Carmichael MP, Member of the Commons Select Committee for Exiting the EU  
Sue Wilson, Chair, Remain in Spain  
Roger Casale, Founder & CEO, New Europeans  
Chair: Laura Shields, Brussels & Europe Lib Dems (BELD)

Brussels and Europe Liberal Democrats  
[www.uklibdems.eu](http://www.uklibdems.eu) / @Brusselslibdems