



OPEN WORLD

SPRING CONFERENCE SPECIAL
EDINBURGH, FEBRUARY 2026



Hello Conference

As we gather at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh for the Spring Conference, it feels particularly timely that Liberal International Scotland is present and active. International politics feels more unstable than it has for a generation. Multilateralism is under strain, alliances are being tested, and the rules-based international order is no longer taken for granted. Yet it is precisely at times like this that liberal values – international cooperation, human rights, the rule of law and democratic accountability – matter most.

LI Scotland exists to keep those values at the heart of our party's thinking. Over the past year we have rebuilt momentum: hosting discussions in Edinburgh and Glasgow, running fringe meetings at conference, and continuing publication of Open World. Our AGM in November confirmed that we are on a steady footing and ready to look outward again. At this conference we are once again running a stall – do come and say hello – and hosting a fringe meeting on Saturday lunchtime exploring Forgotten Conflicts and what they reveal about today's international landscape. We hope it will be a thoughtful and challenging discussion.

Thank you to everyone who supports LI Scotland – through attendance, ideas, writing for Open World, or simply stopping for a conversation at conference. I look forward to seeing many of you over the weekend.

Sally Robertson
Convenor, LI Scotland



The far-right is a real threat to liberal democracy and cannot be ignored, agreed the panellists in our one day seminar in Edinburgh. From left: Lord Jeremy Purvis, Gillian Gloyer, Iain Smith (chair) and Jules Maaten from Friedrich Naumann Foundation.



Ukrainians want lasting peace and freedom, where it's possible to have functioning state institutions, defend human rights and where people can live without fear, agreed our panellists in Glasgow. From left: Alex Cole-Hamilton, MSP and Leader of Scottish Liberal Democrats, Willie Wilson (chair), Dr Laryza Zhdankina and Professor Peter Jackson from University of Glasgow.

THE FORGOTTEN CONFLICTS: SUDAN, DRC AND MYANMAR

Ongoing, unresolved conflicts are pushed aside when the world's attention moves on to the next disaster. Yet, millions of people have to try to survive the intense violence of warring political factions in deadly civil wars as in Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Myanmar. What determines which conflicts remain in the public consciousness, and which quietly fall from view? What is the situation in these countries at the moment? What are the chances of peace?

What does this tell us about diplomacy, influence and the resilience of the international system? Is the UN powerless to act? Does the new, rapidly changing world order and empire building mean that some conflicts will be left to burn on full fire regardless of their humanitarian consequences?

Fringe panel discussion
Saturday 21st February 2026
from 1.20 pm to 2.20 pm
@ Dynamic Earth, OZONE ROOM

Lord Jeremy Purvis of Tweed, Leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords:
Jeremy has a continuing active involvement in Sudan.

Dr Matteo Fumagalli, St Andrews University. Director, Institute of Middle East, Central Asia and the Caucasus Studies (MECACS). Senior lecturer and researcher specialising in identities, ethnic conflict and violence including Myanmar.

Gillian Gloyer, Secretary of LI Scotland: Gillian will speak about the Democratic Republic of Congo. She has updated the latest Bradt's guide to the DRC.

Sir Graham Watson, Chair of Liberal International British Group

*We aim to allow time for audience questions and discussion,
and invite attendees to continue the conversation afterwards at the LI Scotland stall.*

LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL SCOTLAND COMMITTEE 2026

At our AGM in November, members reviewed a year of renewed activity and elected a refreshed committee to lead LI Scotland forward.

We are grateful to Iain Smith for his dedicated service in re-establishing LI Scotland's committee structures and programme of events. Under his leadership the group regained momentum and visibility within the Scottish party.

Would you like to join us? Click the QR code - as easy as that!



Convenor:

Sally Robertson

Secretary:

Gillian Gloyer

Treasurer:

Otti Maattanen-Bourke

Open World:

Otti Maattanen-Bourke

Sally Robertson

Committee members:

Jacqui Bell

Daniel Coleman

John Edward

Douglas MacDonald

Ben Munnoch

Sir Graham Watson

Willie Wilson