

## **Quaker South Asia Interest Group (QSAIG) Annual General Meeting**

**Minutes of meeting** held on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2018 (15.00-16.00)

at Selly Oak Quaker Meeting, Birmingham

**Present:** Judith Baker (QPSW staff), Andrew Clark, Gerald Conyngham, Cora Gallagher (Co-Convener), Robert Gallagher, Stuart Morton (Co-Convener/Clerk), Willemina Morton (part time), Alick Munro, Penny Robbins, Anne Smith, Norman Smith, Ginnie Wollaston (part time)

**Prevented:** Erica Cadbury, John Gibbs, Jenny Knox, John McConnell, Stephen Petter, Ram and Stephanie Ramamurthy, Liz and Martin Schweiger, Abu Siddique, Margaret Waterworth

**2018/01 Minutes of AGM 2017** We are in agreement of the minutes of the 2017 AGM with the following amendment 2017/04 Insert "Anne Smith" after "We thank" in paragraph 2.

**2018/02 Co-Convener's Report.** This had been circulated in advance and spoken to at this meeting. This serves as a summary of QSAIG's work in 2017-18. (see Appendix One)

**2018/03 Newsletter Editor's Report.** Robert Gallagher had given his report, as part of our annual meeting, earlier in the day. We thank Robert Gallagher for the excellent newsletter which has included material from Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) –Asia-West Pacific Section Secretary, Ronis Chapman. This helps to strengthen communication between Quaker institutional networks within the South Asia region.

**2018/04 Data Safety Policy** We thank Anne Smith, our Membership Secretary, for her work that will enable QSAIG to fulfil its responsibilities to QSAIG members under the 2018 General Data Protection Regulations. Anne has presented a draft policy document based on research which included material from the Data protection Group at Friends House. She also consulted the data policy document produced by the Quaker Africa Interest Group. It was agreed that we do not need to approach our members for specific consent to hold our list of members and their contact details because we are of the opinion that this comes under the category of 'Legitimate Interests' under the legislation. We need the list for the 'core administrative functions of the organisation [and this would be] reasonably expected by the data subject.' \* Since our meeting the draft has been shared with Friends House

Suggestions for amendments to her draft were noted by Anne and we ask QSAIG officers to agree a final version which should be attached to these minutes. We thank Anne for the detailed work she has carried out on QSAIG's behalf.

**2018/05 QSAIG accounts** We thank Anne Smith, QSAIG Treasurer, for her presentation of the QSAIG accounts which have been accepted at this meeting. Our accounts now work to a calendar year. Anne has presented the already examined accounts for 2017 and explained that the accounts for 2016 had also been examined.

**2018/06 QSAIG as a Quaker Recognised Body (QRB)** We are grateful for the presence of QPSW staff member, Judith Baker, who serves as QSAIG's staff link. She has explained the QRB process partly in response to questions from the group.

**2018/07 Appointment of QSAIG Officers.** As all the present officers are willing to continue to serve, we reappoint them accordingly.

Stuart Morton and Cora Gallagher – Co-Conveners  
Anne Smith – Treasurer and Membership Secretary  
Robert Gallagher- Newsletter Editor  
Martin Schweiger – Website Manager (subject to health)

We thank Alick Munro for his continuing service as the QSAIG link person to the Quaker World Relationships Committee (QWRC) of BYM. As Alick's 6 year term of service on QWRC is soon to end, we hope to receive a QWRC replacement name in due course.

Stuart Morton has asked to be released from the co- convenership role after the 2019 AGM. We thank all our officers for the work they are doing to sustain QSAIG.

**2018/08 QSAIG's Working Groups** We thank Gerald Conyngham for the draft paper he presented on groups that seek to work under the umbrella of QSAIG. A mainly Quaker group has already formed to support the global initiative of Ekta Parishad, the Indian People's movement which has a long association with Quaker work, both through QPSW at Friends House, and after QPSW ended that part of its work in South Asia. This work comes under the present title of JaiJagat 2020 (Victory to the World). Gerald and Ginnie Wollaston have reported on the work of the group at QSAIG today. We have discussed the draft paper and ask QSAIG officers to work with Gerald to finalise a paper that can enable links with QSAIG to be formalised but which also ensures that financial and legal obligations do not fall on QSAIG.

**2018/09 QSAIG's Aims and Activities in the coming year.** We encourage our officers to host a table at the 2019 BYM Groups' Fair. We also encourage the possibility of a Special Interest Group at the same BYM that might cover more than one aspect of QSAIG's links e.g. the Ekta Parishad working link and the work of the Bhopal Restorative Justice initiative.

**Date of next meeting** – October 12<sup>th</sup> 2019 in London

Stuart Morton

Clerk, QSAIG

### **APPENDIX ONE: QSAIG – Co-Convener's Report for Oct 2017- Oct 2018:**

General Introduction to the year past: QSAIG has a core group of six people who are willing to sustain our Group in its present form. Rob Gallagher, as editor of the QSAIG Newsletter, has improved its quality in terms of presentation and readability and the content remains of interest. It is heartening to see Newsletter content from our FWCC links. It has been uplifting to know that Martin Schweiger, our website manager, has still been willing and able to place QSAIG material on the website despite the his very challenging health issues. Shortly before our annual meeting he will undergo major heart surgery and a number of us continue to hold him, and his wife Liz, in the Light.

This is Cora Gallagher's first year as Co-Convener, and the idea to have an annual meeting that might attract a larger, not necessarily only Quaker audience, is likely to bear some fruit. Because of my (Stuart's) longer connection with the QPSW South Asia work I tend to be the

communications' hub – my use of Email on a daily basis also puts me in a stronger position to carry this work as so much communication is on the internet.

Given the tenuous nature of the QPSW South Asia work, which it is hoped QPSW staff member, Judith Baker can explain more fully in our QSAIG meeting, it feels that this group, in parallel to the Quaker World Relations Committee of BYM, plays a role, albeit in a minor way, in sustaining Quaker relationships with the S Asia region. This feels like quite a responsibility, and for a number of years a former QPS/QPSW staff member (and/or his family) have played a significant part in holding things together.

It may be that one role we can play is to be the holding group for Quakers under concern who involve in work associated with the S. Asia region. In this respect, the concern of Martin Wright seeking a restorative justice approach to the ongoing concerns of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of 1984, might be one example, one that began at last year's annual meeting. The JaiJagat 2020 group will also be asking whether they might work under the QSAIG umbrella. If QSAIG feels this is a role we want to play, we will need to give more thought to any mechanisms that might be helpful to those pieces of work, but also consider what expectations and responsibilities that places on QSAIG. This meeting needs to give this further thought.

If anyone is willing and interested to serve as a QSAIG officer please approach us – we do need new blood and help!

QSAIG activity in past year:

**1.QSAIG became a Quaker Recognised Body on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017 (under Meeting for Sufferings Minute: Mfs/17/10/14 Quaker Recognised Bodies:** The Co-Convener, Stuart Morton, has been in contact with our staff link in Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Judith Baker, who is responsible for the international conciliation work. This included information from Stuart sent in August 2018 that enabled Judith to finalise the annual report to QPSW.

**2. Other QSAIG links with QPSW** Judith Baker had consulted Stuart regarding a request from a very old Quaker link in Hoshangabad, M.P., India. Liz and Mike Watson, friends in Skipton Meeting, were visiting India in January 2018 and managed to visit Friends in that area. The report of their visit can be found in the September 2018 QSAIG Newsletter.

**3. Ekta Parishad (Unity Forum) and its 2020 initiative, JaiJagat,** linked to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is led by Rajagopal P.V. an ally of Quaker South Asia work from 2002 onwards. Gerald Conyngham (QSAIG member) and Stuart Morton have been part of a working group supporting a JaiJagat2020 (Victory to the World) initiative initiated by Ekta Parishad. As part of this, we liaised with QPSW staff in Friends House and about a dozen of them, in addition to Recording Clerk, Paul Parker, attended a meeting with Rajagopal in QPSW offices on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2017. Rajagopal was also introduced to FWCC and met the General Secretary, Gretchen Castle, and Sustainability Communications Officer, Suzanne Mattingly.

**4. Arranging the AGM:** Liaison with Co-Convener, Cora Gallagher, and Membership Secretary, Anne Smith, to arrange and advertise the annual meeting, including the AGM. We have also needed to give some thought to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and its implications for QSAIG.

**5. Newsletter:** liaise with Robert Gallagher, Newsletter editor, and passing on a small amount of material for publication.

**6. Pastoral concern of QSAIG :** seeking to keep in touch with QSAIG members who health is being severely challenged.

**7. BYM May 2018:** we strongly considered taking part in 2018 BYM Groups Fair but withdrew. Anne Smith and Gerald Conyngham had been willing to staff a QSAIG table but as there was a lack of material to put on display and no clear focus to advertise our work/connections it was felt best to cancel the table we had already booked.

Stuart Morton and Cora Gallagher

5<sup>th</sup> October 2018