



The Rt Hon The Lord Provost of Glasgow  
Councillor Jacqueline McLaren

Dear Members,

Delighted to send good wishes to today's Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) Further & Higher Education Forum, chaired by Dr Yonah Matemba, in my capacity as Lord Provost and Hon Co-President of the SMP.

As Dr Matemba recently described in his Scotland Malawi Partnership lecture on Decolonising the Curriculum, some of Glasgow's street names and buildings are connected to the City's historic links with slavery. It's essential that we learn from the past, and I was honoured to host a Civic Reception in September for the Coalition for Racial Equality: Black History Month Launch event when we heard from Professor Emeritus Sir Geoff Palmer and other key academics, artists and activists.

One of 'Glasgow's sons', Dr David Livingstone, was of course central to links between our two nations and we recognise that this is the 150th anniversary of his death. Not many miles from here in Blantyre, Scotland, I know that the Livingstone Birthplace have rightly done a great deal in the museum to recognise the Malawians and nationals of other African countries who did so much to support Livingstone's travels and the collective nature of the effort.

As the national civil society network coordinating, representing and supporting the many people-to-people links between our two nations, it's that spirit of collective effort which is at the heart of the Scotland Malawi Partnership's work. The SMP is all about bringing people together to encourage collaboration, reduce duplication of effort, provide a space for the sharing of lessons learned and offers of support and peer-to-peer learning.

Malawi-led and member-led, the SMP creates opportunities to celebrate the collective successes of members and their partners for mutual encouragement, (recognising that there are many challenges in both nations). Forums such as this one are characterised by participants leaving egos and logos outside the door, in favour of a collective effort.

It's exciting that, as part of today's meeting, we have a combination of long-standing members with deep roots in both nations, as well as participants relatively new to the FEHE Forum, including Malawian post-graduate students who are studying here in Scotland. This is a brilliant mixing pot of perspectives, bi-lateral, multidisciplinary and multigenerational expertise, energy and experience, importantly with an approach which has at its essence friendship between people.

I know that the SMP is also as committed as ever to meaningful, equitable and dignified school partnerships between our two nations. I'm extremely proud that (in spite of the pressures on teachers and learners brought by Covid), Glasgow schools continue to be very much involved in partnerships with Malawi and look forward to working yet more closely with the SMP in 2024 in this area.

My thanks and respect to all of you working in Further and Higher Education, (with its multiple demands) - continuing to protect space for your incredibly important and impactful work in these dignified, people-to-people relationships between Scotland and Malawi. Thanks and best wishes,

The Right Hon. The Lord Provost of Glasgow  
Cllr Jacqueline McLaren