Zoroastian APPG Meeting: 25 April 2016

***Faith-based Ethics in Business: The Tata and The Cadbury Way***

Minutes and Transcription

**Gareth Thomas MP:**

It is a privilege to live in Harrow West, the best constituency in the UK, where a large aspect of the Zoroastrian community is based. We thought we needed an APPG for the Zoroastrian community. We have had great events over the last two years and to have our guest speakers, two of whom are from the field of business and His Excellency is wonderful.

Incidentally, public language has been threat by exam boards including Persian. We may well need to return to this issue and ask exam board to think again as part of the APPG.

**Lord Bilimoria:**

Thank you. We are in your part of the building. Thank you for hosting us. We are in Boothroyd Room, named after Betty Boothroyd, a cross bencher who is no doubt a legend. Welcolme to all of you, Shai from Cranfield, Professor Foster who is an expert in the field of catering. Lord Popat, Lord Stone, Virendra Sharma, who is the chair of the Indo-British APPG, Baroness Prashar, Stephen Pound and guest speakers.

I will make some introductory remarks followed by speeches from our guest speakers and a q&a. Right at the outset, I would like to thank Mr Landsman for suggesting this theme. Our last event was a comparison between the Magna Carta in its 800th year with Cyrus Cylinder, which was unique in its comparison. I have just returned from Zoroastrian Everlasting Flame Exhibition – a wonderful initiative. 3 of the exhibitions were sponsored by the Indian government. It started in S0AS and was enhanced by the British Library who sent through documents that had never been beyond the UK. This included the unique contribution of the National Museum and National Centre for Modern Arts and the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre. Between all 3 exhibitions, you had the most impressive, professional and lively presentation that brought to life our entire history.

Last year I was privileged to deliver a speech at the Asian Development Research Institute Lecture. Previous predecessors had been by Professor Stilgitz, my colleague, Meghnad Desai, Dr Amartya Sen. The topic was the role of Jamshedji Tata and role of the Parsis as part of the freedom struggle in India. Jamshedji believed in a free enterprise and did not to see the community as a stakeholder, but the very purpose of its existence.

When he passed away, the tributes paid were remarkable. An excerpt from The Times – this was not a man to bask in the public eye, he was of sturdy character, he was great in his way than most realised. He sought no honour, claimed no privilege, but wanted the advancement of India. People were with him in abiding passion. So with that, I will hand over to the first of our speakers, David Landsman, who is a distinguished diplomat and a graduate of both Oxford and Cambridge. David will speak to us about Tata.

**David Landsman, Head of Tata, UK:**

Thank you very much. I fear of breaking my rules on 1) Never preach 2) Never to talk on an issue that your audience knows more than you do.

What is the house of Tata’s? Not a conglomerate, you can’t buy shares, it is a business house, more than 100 companies – all independent. Over 30 of those companies are listed companies.

What brings it together? At the heart is Tata and Sons. Amongst its role is to guard the Tata brand. In Mumbai there is a Brand Custodian Chief Ethics Officer – how many companies do you know that have such a title in their organisation? It is the Tata code of conduct that binds us together. We will come back to this. There is also a clause about equality and non-discrimination on any grounds. This matches up to best practice globally in outlawing discrimination. We are not talking of a confessional religion. Many colleagues are not Parsi – in fact the majority are not. What does it mean to be a diverse and global organisation, but yet have its origins from a Parsi founder and priest.

What impact has it had and what is its impact today? What does this mean to us in the UK? Neither are most employees Indian, nor are they Parsi – it raises interesting questions. The way we try and do business, whilst at the same time avoid preaching. I won’t read what was given to me about the Zoroastrian faith, as I would be breaking one of my rules.

I would recommend a book by Peter Frankopan called *The Silk Roads*. The thesis is that the West ignores the East at our own peril on how our world has been formed. It also shows the central role the Persian and Zoroastrian culture have played in distinguishing the material and immaterial and the impact it has had more widely. The three tenants of Zoroastrianism: Good thoughts, good words and good deeds – Humata, Hukhta and Huvarshta. Christianity is in quite contrast to this, in relation to the need of confession due to a potential absence of good words, actions and deeds. All this is relevant to running a business. Karan mentioned the values of Jamshedsji. Clear articulation of business, need to put into action. Otherwise you will not be going very far.

In 2014, under the recently appointed Cyrus Mistry the vision was rearticulated which sounded modern but continued to instil fundamental values to improve the quality of life that serves the community globally through long term stakeholder value creation and trust. This follows on from the community not being a stakeholder as Jamshedji said. It is to provide things that the community needs and what sustains it and nourishes it. The long term is clear. Quarter results matter – we can’t ignore this, you need your eyes on something longer term – perhaps spiritual. All stakeholders are the community. You got to be trusted in what you do. The code of conduct fleshed out what we expect and showed corporate citizenship is important. Volunteering is also important, 600, 000 employees - aiming to do 1 million hours of volunteering. It has to come from within. You still have to deliver for business – but it is how you do it.

Let us identify key areas that experts in the field of Zoroastrian principles would wish to live by. Integrity, telling the truth. For business academics and the world, the best way of understanding principles is through stories. This is what we have done in past and this is what we would do in the future. Referring to the defunct Tata Finance, Business Senior Executives did things they should not have been doing. What did Ratan Tata do? He said businesses would own up. My colleague who was newly arrived, the Chief Councillor, was given the instruction to report us to the authorities. He probably thought he would be working on what the defence was. Wrongs should be righted. He indeed undertook this and told us no one would lose money as a result of this. Trust was maintained. People invested in the company happily knowing it would be doing right thing.

Those of you have contact with India, Tata started a joint venture with Singapore airlines. It was start of a long dream. The earlier attempt for a joint venture in the 1990s failed because it would not be possible to do this in an ethical way. But later Singapore Airlines came back to us. So in the long term we succeeded. But what would have in the short team may have been seen as unwise and unnecessary produced in the long term.

Other characterises – self-effacing moderation. Leaders have not coveted celebrity status. If you think they are, it is because you think so. They have not gone out looking for it. Good hard word, keeping your promises at all costs – this is common. Also, an aspiration for knowledge and education. There are Tata foundations for education in India . The creation of an Institute of Science, Social Science, The Tata of Fundamental Research and so on. So I think there are a number of things peculating through from religious doctrine, but spared of sectarianism or religious appearance. Values percolate through. Sense of community – you need to return more than you take.

Jamshedji visited Lancashire in the late 19th century – he was impressed by technology, but not the Mill Owners. He vied to treat workers better in India. I suspect this familiar and broad sense of community later on in the discussion.

One element in Britain that we need to understand is the national element in each country, religion and culture. The Tata national element is clear – there is a clear nation building element - what do we need to do to build a free, healthy prosperous India? It explains the choices that Tata makes and the areas it is involved – the car, steel industry. There is a strong sense of swadeshi and national research. Tata is involved in defence industry. We are entirely within an ethical code.

How have we moved into the global sphere since the 1990s?

Most of these values fit nicely – very much universal and it is how you bring people behind them and together. This comes from individual business and a unifying set of values. I think we can thank Jamshedji for this. There is a lot of talk on Tata steel – we appreciate the role these values have to play on current challenges and developments. For example, skills development. There is that long term commitment to the country. Jaguar and Tata are cofounders of the National Automated Centre at the University of Warwickshire – it is large scale and a long term commitment in the UK. It is not just for the quarter, but perhaps more than a century beyond. It has moved from its own space and culture of India. Whilst they are relevant to Tata as a business, these values are credible and universally applicable – special but something for everyone.

**Graham Thomas MP:**

Thank you for the tour de force. It was very admirable how you handled the two gentlemen that left by your side – it wasn’t in protest and but because there was a vote in the Lords. It was very interesting and the notion in the Executive Team protecting the Tata brand. Interesting to see how our second guest speaker discusses brand. You wouldn’t think the car, steel, defence and hotels sit together, but when you walked us through it is easier to understand this. I have had the privilege to hear you the entire way through. We look forward to hearing from Sir Dominic Cadbury.

**Lord Bilimoria:**

Sorry, I had to go and vote. It is a privilege to introduce Sir Dominic Cadbury, I took over as Chancellor of the University of Birmingham from Dominic, who was my predecessor and who served for more than a decade. He is one of the leading distinguished industrialists, and former Chairman of the Cadbury family firm. Sir Dominic Cadbury was educated at Eton and is also a graduate from Stanford University.

**Sir Dominic Cadbury, Former Head of Cadbury and Schweppes**

Thank you, it is great to speak in this marvellous wonderful building. There are many things in common. Both between the Tata’s and the Cadbury’s, but also between Zoroastrian and Quaker values. Cadbury was a big brand in India before the 1920s. It has been so established and successful. Cadbury was taken over by Kraft perhaps because of its stronghold in India.

I went to India several times for business and holiday. I went to a plantation once – I was told that they were Cadbury trees, but they were cocoa plantation trees. Cocoa transcribed to Cadbury!! Because that is the only thing they went into!! I can’t imagine better branding than this.

I am talking historically, particularly in relation to Quaker values. I have been retired for many years. Whilst it cannot compare with the Zoroastrian history, there are some interesting analogies, particular with what after David said.

The Cadbury company from its beginnings in 1824 up to 1969 when with the merger with Schweppes it became a public company could be characterised as a Quaker family-­‐owned business.

First a brief history of the Quakers. George Fox 1624 – 1691 was the founder of the Quaker movement also known as The Society of Friends.

Fox rejected the established church hierarchy, believing that every individual had an inner light or seed, and a personal direct relationship with God without the need for any priest or bishop to interpret on their behalf.

Making the church hierarchy redundant by his interpretation was ,not surprisingly, going to make him unpopular with the authorities and he was in the course of his life imprisoned no less than sixty times. Fox and his followers were at the extreme end of dissent and their emphasis on a direct relationship between a believer and God went far beyond what even most Puritans regarded as tolerable. They appeared contemptuous of the authorities and mocked their petty regulations.

Despite their punishments the movement grew and by the end of Fox’s life their were reckoned to be about 100,000 Quakers including a number in America and other parts of Europe and the West Indies.

Quakers shared a vision of social justice and reform and a new world in which the poor and needy would be lifted from the ruin of deprivation. In a curious irony the very religion that inspired Quakers to act charitably towards the poor also produced a set of strict business practices and codes which read as relevantly today as when they were published in the 17th century and, which placed a few thousand close-­‐knit families in pole position to generate astounding material rewards at the start of the industrial era.

The Quaker movement attracted artisans, craftsmen, modest merchants in other words an emerging middle class who were industrious, independent-­‐minded, self-­‐disciplined, with rebellious natures and questioning minds. People born to be entrepreneurs.

Prosecution hardened their resolve providing them with a sense of solidarity and bonds forged by friendship, marriage apprenticeships and business Discrimination excluded them from local or national political office, as it also did , including my grandfather, from studying at the universities. The Corporation Act in the time of Charles II kept them out of civic and professional life in corporate cities which explains the growth of Birmingham as the largest city not operating under the Charter of Corporation. Quakers were 5 to 10 times more likely than the general population to be found in business and industry. By the early 19th century 4,000 Quaker families ran 74 Quaker banks and 200 companies. In the early 1700s Quaker Abraham Derby in Shropshire was pioneering the smelting of high-­‐grade iron using coke rather than charcoal. George Stephenson inspired Edward Pease who was a Quaker, a businessman, to finance and build the Stockton and Darlington Railway which became known as the Quaker Line.

And many Quakers became involved in financing and directing railway companies. Even the railway ticket stamping machine was developed by a Quaker Thomas Edmondson and George Bradshaw also a Quaker produced the famous Bradshaw Railway Times. You also find Quakers in pottery and porcelain, like Josiah Wedgewood and in shoes James Clark headquartered and still is manufacturing at Street in Somerset, Reckitts in household goods, Crossfields in soap and chemicals, Bryant & May in matches, Huntley and Palmers biscuits and Allen & Handbury in pharmaceuticals. Sir William Cash MP better known in these houses perhaps than for the name tapes without which no boarding school could have managed and with whom I share Quaker antecedents.

Many of these Quaker businesses and or merchants offered financial services as a sideline to their main trade and because the Quakers were trusted most of todays UK banks have Quaker founders. And so Barclays and Lloyds and many regional banks were all founded by Quakers. Then there is the Friend’s Provident Society of which the name comes from the Quaker Friends who founded it.

The industrial Revolution provided the ideal opportunity for Quaker Capitalism to take off with remarkable success. Because of their prevalence in business and their close connections whereby the failure of one would endanger the reputation of them all protecting the good name of the Society became critically important. Bankruptcy was regarded as a disgrace. Discipline would be severe for any members who were unable to meet the ethical standards required or acted imprudently in their business dealings. Those who repeatedly failed to demonstrate high ethical conduct that was required of a Quaker tradesmen would be disowned by the Society and recognised publically as a thief or a cheat. As early as 1738 Quakers had had a specific set of guidelines for business which endeavoured to apply the teachings of Christ to the workplace. Straight dealing, fair play, honesty accuracy and truth formed the bedrock of Quaker capitalism.

So how did Quaker customs and practise manifest themselves in the origins of the Cadbury firm and family? Their Quaker connections meant that when Richard Tapper Cadbury arrived in Birmingham in 1794 from his home in Exeter with a letter confirming his good character he was welcomed immediately by the Quaker community which included on e Charles Lloyd of the family who founded Lloyds bank who have been bankers to the Cadbury firm ever since despite apparently refusing my great grandfather a £700 loan. RTC quickly established himself as a silk draper with a shop in Bull Street, Birmingham. He became involved in civic affairs as what was then called a Street Commissioner, and was Chairman for the last 25 years of that body. Apart from building a successful business he was involved in hospitals, railways and the Fire Service and was known locally as King Richard albeit I suspect not to his face.

His son John was the founder of the original Cadbury business in 1824 initially as a retailer of tea and coffee but from 1831 he began the manufacture of cocoa powder which was in those days something of an exotic beverage. He was a minnow in an industry dominated by, among others, Fry’s of Bristol to whom we will return. He was clearly a good marketing man making use of plate glass windows for his displays and gaining the Royal Warrant in 1854. He too like his father was a Street Commissioner, Chairman of the Steam Engine Committee whose aim was smoke abatement and was able to show that imperfect combustion was economically wasteful so reducing emissions saved manufactures money rather than simply preaching the benefits of cleaner air. Socially enlightened like his father he was deeply concerned about the savage indifference to children and at this time boys as young as five were being used as chimney sweeps. He was a total abstainer and supported the Temperance Movement no doubt influenced to some extent by the presence in Birmingham at that time of 593 licensed Victuallers and 975 Beer Halls. Gin shops promised sweet oblivion under the slogan Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for two pence-­‐clean straw for nothing.

However when John’s health deteriorated the cocoa business began to fail and in 1861 his sons Richard and George took over a failing business.

They were young men and energetic and were determined to try and turn the business round but never-­‐the-­‐less would have closed it in time to have paid off their debts. My grandfather George had settled in the event of failure on becoming a tea planter in the Himalayas as his next career. In which case the discussion we are having this evening might have taken place 2 centuries ago!

George and Richard worked all hours to save the business, invested in quality and particularly a cocoa press which they acquired from Van Houghton in Holland. This enabled them to market a cocoa which they named cocoa essence and which they advertised as absolutely pure therefore best. Public concern about food adulteration was growing at that time and legislation was introduced to prevent it, so purity was a competitive advantage. A by-­‐product of the new press enabled them to diversify into chocolate. From then on the business thrived and outgrew the Birmingham factory and then came their momentous decision to move out of Birmingham to a green field site in Worcestershire. Seen as foolhardy by fellow businessmen because at that time in the 1870s no one had ever attempted anything like it. There were both commercial and philanthropic reasons for their decision because they wanted a site where both the work and the workers might have the air and the light to thrive.

Bournville has its name because the site chosen was by a brook called the Bourn and they added on the ville to give it a French and in food terms more stylish connotation.

By the time my grandfather George died in 1922 Cadbury had overtaken and acquired its major competitor Fry’s whose subsequent factory outside Bristol was to cause Kraft much negative publicity following their suggestions of keeping it open. Cadbury was the undisputed market leader in the UK and had begun expansion in the Commonwealth markets. His sons continued the Quaker tradition and Cadbury remained a family company until 1969 when it merged with Schweppes, already a public company, and we became a 100% publicly owned business.

Ownership of the business brought great wealth but while that generation of the family enjoyed comfortable private lives they devoted the vast majority of their wealth to philanthropy for the benefit of the Birmingham community.

There are three common threads running through the links between the family and Birmingham. First they had an impact as employers from small beginnings to becoming one of the largest employers in the city. Second was their involvement in a range of good causes centred around education and health. And third comes their contribution to the planning of the city especially in relation to the provision of open space and of course the building and gift in trust of Bournville Village itself.

My years with Cadbury mainly took place after it had become public as Cadbury Schweppes. It was a different era from its time as a Quaker company when it had been family-­‐owned. We had joined the era of Shareholder Capitalism. To compete with Mars and Nestlé Coke and Pepsi we had to change if we were to successfully meet our obligations to all those with a stake in us, and make the company one to which people were proud to belong as well as retaining our independence. My brother Adrian in setting out what the company needed to become put it this way:

“I find no conflict between the values and characteristics we inherited from the past and the actions we have to take to ensure a successful and independent future.” The characteristics we must cultivate to succeed are summed up in a short statement which we called the character of the company. They consisted of

1) Competitive ability, to succeed our products and services must maintain their identity and edge against the competition

2) Clear objectives, effective competition demands clarity of purpose.

3) Taking advantage of change. Change is constant in markets, in ideas, in people, in technology.

4) Simple organisation: we must concentrate on the tasks of the business and justify every support activity and every level of authority on the value which they add to the goods and services we sell.

5) Committed people. The company is made up of individuals and its success turns on their collective commitment to its aims.

6) Openness. The principle of openness should apply in all our dealings inside and outside the company.

7) Responsibility. The company recognises its obligations to all who have a stake in its success: Shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, governments and society and seeks to keep its responsibilities to them in balance.

8) Quality: the key characteristic we aim for in every aspect of the company’s activities in quality. An early Cadbury statement of aims reads: Our policy for the future as in the past will be first the best possible quality: nothing is too good for the public.”

In conclusion we recognised of course that our concern for the values we described would not be judged by this statement but by our actions.

**Lord Bilimoria:**

Thank you very much Sir Dominic. That was amazing and to hear the parallels with what David was saying.

From Jamshedpur to Bourneville it shows the same purpose and values. Adrian Cadbury was also a legend who introduced the Code of Governance at Cadbury. I am privileged to introduce HE Mr Navtej Sarna, the Indian High Commissioner, who has been an ambassador to Israel and is the longest serving spokesperson, having served 2 Prime Ministers, 3 Foreign Ministers and 4 Foreign Secretaries. It is wonderful to have you with us.

**His Excellency, Mr Navtej Sarna, Indian High Commissioner:**

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to be here. I will not take too much of your time – as I wouldn’t like to be unfair on the question and answer session. My speech would be longer than both of my predecessors. It seems as though my speech was made by the Tata’s as it seems to have submitted David’s speech – nevertheless I found the guest speaker speeches hugely educative. Both brands are in India, Cadbury and every truck is Tata. On every truck you will see an Okay Tatar- meaning bye – but again it goes back to the brand.

I am particularly honoured to be part of the Zoroastrian aspect, with such an impressive APPG on Zoroastrian affairs. I have a personal weakness to confess – my first salaries were paid by the Tata’s in Mumbai house – a secret which is now out. I did see first-hand, the principles of the Zoroastrians in the industry. The development, code of ethics, philanthropy and this was not just the Tata’s. It is community wide values that are very impressive. Those few months left a deep impact on me – which I am sure you when you belong to it, you can take for granted. For an outsider, it becomes very obvious and brought to the fore it has also kept its culture alive, its food alive. Akuri on toast is a favourite of mine which I had at the Sea Lounge. Also the homemade ice cream which I had in Kalaba.

It is an active and progressive community. You can see how hard it has worked and it speaks of all your strengths. Having originated in Iran, coming to India for refuge over a thousand years ago, where they wanted to express their religion freely – they rightly they landed in India. 1000 years later they have richly paid India back for absorbing into its quilt of religions and ethnicities.

No one would realise Parsis make up only 0.2% of the Indian population – whether you look at the pre or post-independence India . On a gracious tour of the Lords by Lord Bilimoria he showed me a portrait of Dadabhoi Naoroji, the first MP of Indian descent was a Parsi. Other names include Feroze Mehta – this is all extremely impressive. Whatever field you look, be it the freedom struggle or the post-independent movement – in Defence, Chief of Staff, Sam Maneckshaw and of course Lord Bilimoria’s father, and scientists - the father of the nuclear programme, Homi Bhaba , artists including Songdewala and the great Zubin Mehta who celebrates his 80th birthday. He is such a nationalist. Having hosted him several times – he is a great source of pride – here is a man who could have any passport in the world – but he would not leave without his India passport – this is a testament to his nationalism. He carries Indian chillies in his pocket, whether he is eating Italian or a Spanish cuisine he will always takes his chilli box and add it. The only way to put him in a good mood is to tell him the latest cricket score. (‘Maybe not this year’ from the audience). You can always choose the right moment, before Kolhi is out.

The same contribution continues today and in the UK. I am so happy to see Parsis contributing in the UK. You are a powerful part of the connection between the UK and India and to have such a large APPG is great. I will stop here to leave enough time for the question and answer session.

**Lord Bilimoria:**

What I didn’t mention is that H.E. is also a great author and has written a book on the life of Daleep Singh, the last maharaja of Lahore, the son of Ranjit Singh. Zubin Mehta just hosted Andrea Tulle in Mumbai.

**Malcolm Deboo, the President of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds for Europe:**

I think all of us would agree that since dawn of time humans have tried improving conditions of fellow human beings and especially for those of faith - it is not only important what we do today, but the idea of immortality, in that what we do will survive the test of time. From what he have heard today, amongst both Tata and Cadbury is the background in their faith. This is not only unique to Cadbury and Tata.

We have the Co-Chair of the Interfaith Network, Bishop Richard CoE, Vivian, the former chair of the Board of Deputies from the Jewish faith. Faith plays an important role – as it leaves something for immortality. What is pertinent is Cadbury and Tata came back in excess of capitalism. It was the dawn of the industrial revolution. Why do I mention this? After the fall of the Berlin Wall – we now have further excesses. Again I would say, what they were practicing is also pertinent today. The legacy from Cadbury and Tata shows what was being practiced in terms of business ethics is just as pertinent today. What I was struck by was when Sir Dominic Cadbury was speaking, many popular households names have faith-based origins.

Some years ago, as part of my work with Faith-based Regeneration Network, we did research and had a seminar on faith and frontiers on enterprise and faith-based societal entrepreneurship. In the workshops we carried out across the country, we were amazed to see how many were faith-based initiatives. Many sadly shied away from this. Whilst we should not preach, we should not forget our origin and ethics. If we forget this, we know we may go astray. We pull ourselves back. If we know our ethics our brand name will also be recognised by all of us.

**Lord Bilimoria:**

I would also like to thank Malcolm as our Secretariat and the ZFTE for its support and incidentally we also have Maurice Ostro, the Founder and Head of Faith Forum with us this evening.

**Baroness Prashar:**

Thank you Karan. I would like to pay tribute to Sir Dominic Cadbury from this audience. Whilst we discussed business practices, I do want to say he was the founding trustee of Runnymede which was founded in 1968. He was a moving spirit – I had the privilege of being the Director and working with him for 7 years. The national impact has been clear.

**Michael Wade:**

Such a fascinating account of business and ethics. How would your brother look at the Tata governance as it is almost opposite to Cadbury governance code, this is not a criticism of it either. It would be great to get your comments.

**Sir Dominic Cadbury:**

I am not familiar with the Tata governance structure in terms of governance terms to what Adrian’s committee drew up.

**David Landsman:**

When I am asked what this entity is, I have to ask do you have 5 minutes or a couple of weeks to explain this? It is a unique structure. Holding company Tata and Sons, which is two thirds owned by the Charitable Trust set up by previous generations of the Tata family. Wealth has been left to the foundation and the rest is private entity.

We then have over 100 companies within the group that are all publically listed – abide by the rules of the Indian Companies Act and they are equated on the Mumbai and US stock exchange. The group is a unique structure and the holding company is private. So it is a different way of doing things.

It is not easy to squeeze in to the same set of rules as a single listed company. Clearly, with the code of conduct, as a bare minimum, we must obey the rules of the country that you are operating at the same time to adhere to your own code of conduct, so it is quite a challenge.

**Lord Bilimoria:**

A point to make HERE is that the Tata trust donate a hundred millions of funds to charity, which is quite remarkable. Could I please also ask David’s predecessor Anwar Hassan to stand up. It is wonderful to have you here, as David Landsman’s predecessor. He is also a close friend of my uncle Shapoor Toorkey.

Thank you to our speakers, taking the time, preparing so well and communicating these messages and how it all came together as I think we may have predicted in relation to the similarities between the Quaker and Zoroastrians. Your Excellency, you conveyed so wonderfully well from your sentiment from your own experiences and the revelation that you actually worked for Tata and are a former alumnus of Tata. I am proud to say that I came to the UK, I came as a Tata Scholar – I am always grateful for the support they gave me as a young teenager.

Dominic, thank you for doing this. You are an inspiration to me. When Dominic was Chancellor of the Birmingham University he raised over £160m for Birmingham University. Here is a copy of the Zoroastrian Flame Exhibition Book which I discussed earlier, which I would like to present to our guest speakers, David, and Sir Dominic. Your Excellency, your predecessor was regular attendee and we look forward to welcoming you again. Thank you very much.

At last a surprise presentation, one of our members of the Zoroastrian Parsi community, is the first ethnic minority, let alone the first Zoroastrian in the world, to win the annual lifetime achievement award from the British Psychological Society, Professor Mrs Zenobia Nadirshaw. Congratulations. Thank you very much for attending and we look forward to welcoming you again at our next event.