

# THE NATIONAL

# A declaration for independence

*It is the sovereign right of the Scottish people to determine the form of government best suited to their needs. (A Claim of Right for Scotland, 1989)*

## Guiding principles for a new and better Scotland:

It is the **sovereign right** of the Scottish people to determine the form of government best suited to their needs, now and in the future. In all political deliberations, decisions and actions their interests should be paramount.

Scotland should be an **open and democratic society** in which no individual is excluded, oppressed or discriminated against on account of their race, colour, faith, origin or place of birth, physical or mental capacity, sex, sexuality, gender or language.

Scotland should have a **written constitution** which clearly lays out the rights of its citizens, the country's system of government and the relationships that exist between government, its instruments and powers and the rights of individual citizens.

Scotland should take its place as an **independent country** on the world stage, free to join international organisations and alliances for purposes of trade and commerce, and for the protection and care of the planet's natural environment, without which the human race cannot survive.

Scotland should uphold internationally acknowledged values of **non-aggression and self-defence**, and should refuse to maintain, stock or use, for itself or on behalf of any other power or government, chemical, biological or nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction.

There should be **clear separation** of the powers of the Scottish parliament and government (the executive). The judiciary should be completely independent of government.

Independence will provide an opportunity to review and, where necessary, change the systems of both national and local government, in order to make them **more accountable to the people** and more beneficial to their needs.

Ownership of land, property and natural resources should be subject to open and democratic scrutiny. **The ability of communities, both rural and urban, to own the land** in and on which they exist should be enhanced and extended. There should be total transparency in the way property in Scotland is bought, sold or possessed.

Freedom of speech and action, and the freedom to work, create, buy, sell and do business should adhere to **principles of environmental and communal sustainability and responsibility**. Profit and economic growth should not be pursued at the expense of the wellbeing of the people or their habitat or that of other people or nations.

We affirm the values of **care, kindness, neighbourliness and generosity of spirit** in all our dealings. Such values are the foundation stones of a fair, free and open society where all citizens have the opportunities to lead the best, most fulfilling lives they can.

It is our belief that the best option now open to the Scottish people is for **Scotland to become an independent country**.

The alternative is to accept that Scotland's fate would remain in the **hands of others** and that the Scottish people would relinquish their right to decide their own destiny.

## TOP CULTURAL FIGURES SIGN THIS STATEMENT DECLARING SCOTLAND'S BEST FUTURE IS AS AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY

Signatories: Iain Anderson, broadcaster; Peter Arnott, playwright; Neal Ascherson, journalist and writer; Aly Bain, musician; Margaret Bennett, folklorist and singer; Robert Black QC, Professor Emeritus of Scots Law; Christine Borland, visual artist; Stuart Braithwaite, musician; Calum Colvin, visual artist; Roddy Buchanan, visual

artist; Stuart Cosgrove, writer and broadcaster; Brian Cox, actor; Robert Crawford, writer; Sir Tom Devine, Professor Emeritus of Scottish History; Lari Don, writer; Jenni Fagan, writer; Rt Rev Richard Holloway, writer and broadcaster; Robert Hodgins, musician; Kathleen Jamie, poet and writer; Jamie Jauncey,

writer; AL Kennedy, writer; Liz Lochhead, poet, playwright, former Makar; Val McDermid, writer; Jamie MacDougall, singer and broadcaster; Lorraine Mackintosh, actor and singer; Dr Dolina MacLennan, writer and broadcaster; Aonghas MacNeacail, poet and broadcaster; Dr Ann Matheson, literary historian; Karen

Matheson, singer; Alexander Moffat, artist; Jemma Neville, writer; Andrew O'Hagan, writer; Aidan O'Rourke, musician and composer; Don Paterson, poet; Karine Polwart, musician and writer; Eddi Reader, singer; Prof Alan Riach, poet and academic; James Robertson, writer; Donald Shaw, musician, composer and

producer; Ross Sinclair, visual artist; Donald Smith, storyteller; Elaine C Smith, actor; Alan Spence, writer; Will Storrar, minister and academic; Gerda Stevenson, writer and actor; Sheena Wellington, singer; Prof Gary West, broadcaster and musician; Ruth Wishart, journalist and broadcaster