

Moderator uses Women of Scotland Luncheon speech to call for action in Nigeria



The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Right Reverend Lorna Hood, has spoken of her shock and anger at the kidnap of over 200 schoolgirls by the militant group Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Mrs Hood addressed the issue at the 'Women of Scotland Luncheon' in Glasgow yesterday afternoon.

In her speech Mrs Hood urged successful women to use their power and influence to affect positive change when it comes to women's rights at home and across the world. The Moderator acknowledged she herself had been too complacent about the importance of women making themselves heard before her year in office. Her experiences in the past twelve months have made her realise the power of women to effect change is something which cannot be taken for granted.

She admitted that her year in office had brought her closer to the kind of discrimination she had managed to avoid in the past.

Mrs Hood stated: "Perhaps we here have overcome discrimination or perhaps we have never really fully felt its force or had to struggle in our progress, but how can we say the world is getting better when 200 girls are kidnapped in Nigeria and it takes three weeks for the international community to act?"

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, an African partner to the Church of Scotland, has painted a terrifying picture of the

situation in the country in recent reports.

The Moderator Reverend Professor E.M. Uka has described brutal and repeated attacks on police and army stations abductions in schools, Christian churches and, more recently, mosques.

Mr Uka wrote: "Nigerians are distressed, depressed and frightened out of their wits. Boko Haram has the singular aim of rendering the nation un-governable."

✘ Other guests at the Women of Scotland Luncheon included Lothians MSP Alison Johnstone and new Edinburgh resident crime author Val McDermid who both gave entertaining and enlightening speeches on the theme of 'Independent Women' to the 300 ladies present.

The lunch this year raised funds for Bobath Therapy Centre in Glasgow which treats children and adults who have cerebral palsy. Former TV presenter Viv Lumsden was Guest Chair.