

UNITY NEWS

#TIME4UNITY
#AM LE HAONTAUGHT

NUAHT NA HAONTAHTA

MAY BEALTAINE 2021

POSITIVE CHANGE MUST CONTINUE

The resignation of DUP leader Arlene Foster, as demanded by two thirds of her party's MLAs and others, could have serious consequences for politics in the North and across the island.

It is a right wing coup and a clear indication of the deep resistance to positive change within the DUP and other elements of political unionism. Those who were not fans of Mrs Foster and who might be surprised by these developments should remember that the DUP got rid of Ian Paisley as did the Free Presbyterian Church which he founded.

At every turn of our recent history Unionism has been challenged to come into the modern world. Some find it difficult, if not impossible to do so. The modern world, modern Ireland, cannot wait forever on them. In 1969 Terence O'Neill said Ulster was at the Crossroads. By that he meant Unionist Ulster was at the crossroads. He too was got rid of. So were his successors.

Arlene Foster promised but did not deliver on commitments in the New Decade, New Approach Agreement, including Acht na Gaeilge.

While the necessary focus on tackling the pandemic may have diverted attention from these commitments they have not gone away.

So the new DUP leadership will have to face up to them. The quandary for them is whether they embrace the new dispensation that is emerging, and manage the change with the rest of us, or whether they repeat the folly of recent years, including support for Brexit, rejecting equality and women's rights and the rights of LGBTQ citizens, withdrawing from North South Bodies, failing to fully embrace power sharing or to keep their commitments.

One thing is for certain. The process of positive change must continue, including the possibility and potential for constitutional change as set out in the Good Friday Agreement.

UNITING IRELAND NATIONAL MEMBERS CONFERENCE



The Uniting Ireland Committee will host a National Members online Conference on the Next Steps to a United Ireland on 19th May at 7.30pm.

We will be joined by guest speaker **COLIN HARVEY**, Professor of Human Rights Law in the School of Law, at Queen's University Belfast, and by Sinn Féin Party Chairperson, **DECLAN KEARNEY** MLA, Junior Minister in the Executive.

MAIRÉAD FARRELL TD will Chair the event, which will also be addressed by Uachtarán Shinn Féin **MARY LOU McDONALD** TD and by Leas Uachtarán Shinn Féin **MICHELLE O'NEILL** MLA. A National Uniting Ireland campaign plan is currently being developed and members will hear what initiatives the party intends to deliver over the coming months.

This will be an interactive meeting and although comments can be made from the floor, party members are invited to pre-submit comments or questions in advance to irishunity@sinnfein.ie

Zoom details and links will be sent in advance to members

NATIONAL UNITING IRELAND MEMBERS' CONFERENCE

UNITING IRELAND

The Next Steps

Na céad chéimeanna eile
- a thabharfas Éire Aontaithe i gcrích

Wednesday 19th May @ 7.30pm
on zoom



GUEST SPEAKER
COLIN HARVEY
Professor of Human Rights Law, QUB



POLITICAL BRIEFING
DECLAN KEARNEY MLA
Cathaoirleach Náisiúnta

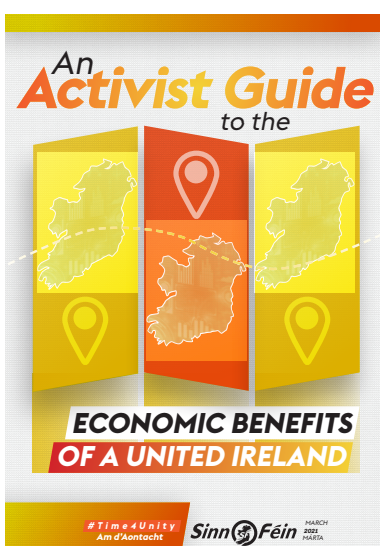


ZOOM DETAILS WILL BE ISSUED
AHEAD OF THE MEETING

#Time4Unity
Am d'Aontacht



#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht



UNITING IRELAND COMHAIRLE CEANTAIR MEETINGS

The Uniting Ireland Committee has recently completed an extensive series of engagements with the party membership through the Comhairle Ceantair structures.

Over the past 9 months a panel of party spokespersons met with every Comhairle Ceantair across the island.

These meetings were designed to inform activists and to provide space for party members to give their thoughts on the Uniting Ireland project and how we can secure and win the referendum on unity contained in the Good Friday Agreement. Feedback from these meetings has been very positive and sincere thanks must go to the panel of speakers who facilitated the meetings and all those who attended. During this time online meetings were also held to discuss the Economic Benefits of a United Ireland. Currently we are just completing a series of engagements on the Inclusion and Reconciliation in a New Ireland policy paper. And a further series of meetings on the recently published Activist Guide to the Economic Benefits of a United Ireland have just commenced. The next crucial step must be for the party at all levels of organisation to develop their own plans for Uniting Ireland activity. These should be centred around enhancing visibility on this issue, encouraging other political, community, and business activists to join with us in advancing the Unity objective and positively engaging with those who either oppose Irish Unity or those who haven't yet made up their minds.

Uniting Ireland is a doable and winnable political project, it is our responsibility to deliver it.



Let's plan our own Future together

Michelle O'Neill hit the nail on the head in her recent interview on the Late Late Show with Ryan Tubridy. She said: "In the light of Brexit there is a stark choice that has opened up for people. Which Union do you wish to be part of? Do you wish to be part of an inclusive inward looking Ireland? ... There is something better for us to own our future together. Plan it. Find a way to insure that both Irish identity and British identity can live side by side – we have lived apart for far too long. Now's the time to plan something that we all have a stake in and that we are all benefiting from."

She's right and a lot more people than just those who support Sinn Féin believe her. The BBC Spotlight opinion poll published in April asked should the North "stay in the UK today." 43% of people said they would vote for a United Ireland in the Unity Referendum. 49% opposed an immediate poll. The gap between the two positions is remarkably narrow, especially if you consider that there has been no date set for the referendum, no plan discussed, no outline shape of the new Ireland agreed, and the question asks for people's voting intentions on something that is to happen 'today.'

Michelle O'Neill told Ryan Tubridy: "Partition has failed us all. Not just nationalists or republicans. Those from a unionist background. Those with a British identity. So there is an imperative for us to be ready. Have the conversation."

- 🗨️ What does the free Irish National Health Service look like for all of us who live on this island?
- 🗨️ What does education look like?
- 🗨️ What does the economy look like...?

There is no threat in the constitutional change that may come in the future and I personally as a republican and as the Joint Head of government will want to ensure that in any new constitutional position in the new and agreed Ireland that the British identity lives side by side and is protected and there is no threat to anybody's identity."

What should Sinn Féin activists do encourage the conversation and win support for Irish Unity?

- 🗨️ It is critical that we have these conversations now. Sinn Féin activists need to take the initiative in creating opportunities for a dialogue on Unity.
- 🗨️ Discuss this in your Cumann, Comhairle Ceanntair and other appropriate structures within the party.
- 🗨️ Inform yourself about the key points and details on Irish Unity so that you can explain as well as possible why Irish Unity Makes Sense.
- 🗨️ Have the conversation with your family, friends, and work colleagues about Irish Unity.
- 🗨️ Talk to other party activists about holding a public/online meeting in your community. (The UI Committee can help provide speakers)
- 🗨️ Reach out to others in your local sporting/business/arts/ community sectors who see unity as the best future for Ireland and discuss how together you can promote the unity referendum and Irish Unity.
- 🗨️ Join in the debates on Irish Unity that are already being held online and in social media, e.g. groups like Ireland's Future.
- 🗨️ Use social media to promote unity as the best future for Ireland
- 🗨️ Write letters to your local media and national outlets in support of Irish Unity.
- 🗨️ Take an ad in your regional paper
- 🗨️ Lobby those elected representatives who do not have a public position on Unity and persuade them to support it.
- 🗨️ Support the call for a Citizens' Assembly to discuss and debate a new and agreed, united Ireland.

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CHALLENGING SECTARIANISM

Sinn Féin recently published: "Inclusion and Reconciliation in a New Ireland."

The paper sets out Sinn Féin's position on the importance of ending partition, and eradicating sectarianism and sectarian divisions. This is essential for the achievement of an agreed, united Ireland and for national reconciliation.

The paper points to the need to develop progressive thinking on the specific challenges of reconciliation and anti-sectarianism.

It details proposals and recommendations for community, political and legislative action that seek to address sectarianism in particular and the pursuit of a reconciled society in general.

The importance of this policy development is such that over the new few editions of Unity News we intend carrying extracts from the document. Tackling Sectarianism and Sectarian Segregation

Sectarianism and sectarian segregation remain major barriers to building a better future.

They represent significant blockages to achieving a future defined by respect, inclusion and equality.

For as long as we fail to successfully address sectarianism and division, then intolerance, bigotry and fear will continue: The potential for instability and conflict will be ever present.

Sinn Féin is absolutely committed to challenging sectarianism in all its manifestations and ensuring the development of a culture of respect for all identities, cultures and traditions.

We believe an integrated strategy is required which protects and values places of religious and cultural significance. Issues which must be addressed by wider society include:

- ▶ Physical walls of division and societal segregation
- ▶ The erection and flying of flags in the public space
- ▶ Contentious bonfires

The intolerance, bigotry and fear which perpetuate sectarianism and sectarian segregation will not be wished away.

Sinn Féin calls for agreement on a new legal definition of sectarianism, entrenched in law and with force of legal sanction against actions which are motivated by sectarianism, and including robust incitement to hatred provisions.

This would draw on the provisions of existing Scottish legislation, and the experience and practice of the Scottish 'Nil by Mouth' charity which exists to challenge sectarianism and promote a society where cultural and religious diversity is respected and celebrated by everyone. All cultural celebrations and expressions should be governed by the principles of respect, equality and parity of esteem.

The allocation of all public funds for cultural celebration must be disbursed fairly and proportionately, and on the basis of mutual respect and sensitivity for the identities and aspirations of all others.

Mutual respect for all traditions should be the benchmark for progress towards a shared society.



DUL I NGLEIC LE SEICTEACHAS AGUS SCARADH SEICTEACH

Tá seicteachas agus deighilt sheicteach fós ina mbacainní móra ar thodhchaí níos fearr a thógáil.

Is ionann iad agus constaicí suntasacha maidir le todhchaí a bhaint amach sainithe ag meas, cuimsiú agus comhionannas.

Fad a theipeann orainn aghaidh a thabhairt go rathúil ar sheicteachas agus ar dheighilt, leanfaidh éadulaingt, biogóideacht agus eagla: Beidh an poitéinseal éagobhsaíochta agus coimhlinte ann i gcónaí.

Tá Sinn Féin tiomanta go hiomlán do dhúshlán a thabhairt don seicteachas ina cuid léirithe uile agus forbairt chultúr meas ar gach féiniúlacht, cultúr agus traidisiún a chinntiú.

Creidimid go bhfuil gá le straitéis chomhtháite a chosnaíonn agus a luachálann áiteanna a bhfuil tábhacht reiligiúnach agus chultúrtha leo.

I measc na saincheistanna nach mór don tsochaí níos leithne aghaidh a thabhairt orthu tá:

Ballaí fisiciúla deighilte agus deighilte sochaíoch Bratacha a thógáil agus a eitilt sa spás poiblí Tinte cnámh conspóideacha

Ní dhéanfar an éadulaingt, an tromóchas agus an eagla a chuireann an seicteachas agus an deighilt seicteach i gcrích.

Iarrann Sinn Féin comhaontú ar shainmhíniú dlíthiúil nua ar seicteachas, atá fite fuaite sa dlí agus le fórsa smachtbhanna dlí i gcoinne caingne a spreagann seicteachas, agus lena n-áirítear gríosú láidir ar fhorálacha fuatha.

Tarraingeodh sé seo ar fhorálacha reachtaíocht reatha na hAlban, agus ar eispeireas agus cleachtas an charthanais Scottish Nil by Mouth atá ann chun dúshlán a thabhairt don seicteachas agus sochaí a chur chun cinn ina bhfuil meas agus ceiliúradh ag gach duine ar

éagsúlacht chultúrtha agus reiligiúnach.

Ba cheart go mbeadh gach ceiliúradh agus léiriú cultúrtha faoi rialú ag prionsabail an urraim, an chomhionannais agus na cothroime meas.

Caithear leithdháileadh na gcistí poiblí go léir le haghaidh ceiliúradh cultúrtha a íoc go cóir agus go comhréireach, agus ar bhonn meas frithpháirteach agus íogaireachta maidir le féiniúlachtaí agus mianta gach duine eile.

Ba cheart go mbeadh meas frithpháirteach ar gach traidisiún mar thagarmharc don dul chun cinn i dtreo sochaí roinnte.

What can Activists do to promote Inclusion and Reconciliation as we move towards a New Ireland?



- ✔ Inform yourself of the content and proposals for inclusion and reconciliation in this document.
- ✔ Discuss these proposals with comrades.
- ✔ Engagement is key. Be proactive!
- ✔ Be proactive in challenging sectarianism whatever its source. Republicans should have a zero tolerance for all discriminatory language.
- ✔ Develop your own local public anti sectarianism campaign.
- ✔ Create platforms for calm and reasoned exchange of views.
- ✔ Could your area arrange an online panel discussion on anti-sectarianism?
- ✔ Continue to reach out and engage with those from a unionist/loyalist background.
- ✔ Hold meetings with trade unionists; and defined religious organisations, Protestant and Catholic; members of business organisations like the CBI and traders' bodies and those sporting organisations who are interested to discuss the issue with us.
- ✔ Reach out to your local faith groups, local Chambers of Commerce & business organisations, sports organisations, youth and community groups. Actively seek their opinion on this policy, current circumstances and the prospects of change.
- ✔ Consider Council motions in relation to this policy.
- ✔ Circulate the policy to other elected representatives, invite discussion on the document.
- ✔ Use Social Media to promote inclusion and reconciliation and inform others of Sinn Féin's proposals.
- ✔ Take out adverts and write letters to your local media on this topic to inform the public.

Sinn Féin's South and East Belfast Comhairle Ceantair hosted an online "Workers Rights and Irish Unity" public meeting last Friday. Speakers included Minister for Communities Deirdre Hargey MLA, Seanadóir Paul Gavan and Christy McQuillian from Trade Unionists for a New United Ireland.

The meeting was a local initiative timed to coincide with May Day weekend. It was well attended with many discussing a Worker's Bill of Rights and ending zero-hour contracts. This initiative was built on the success of the 'Economics of Irish Unity' event that took place on the April 15th with Caoimhe Archibald MLA and a 'Woman rights and Irish Unity' which occurred on March 9th with Carál Ní Chuilín MLA and Kathleen Funchion TD.

Covid 19 has meant we have had to reconceptualise how we spread our message and engage in conversations as activists with others. The popularity of zoom means we can reach out and share ideas with each other more easily than before. Hosting Irish Unity events around popular days like May Day and International Woman's day also gives us the opportunity to spread our message in practical forms that showcases our relevant and rooted republicanism.

Comrades should follow the example set by South and East Belfast. Given the ease of access to zoom holding online discussions is a relatively simple process. So, wherever you are why not see if you can do the same as South and East Belfast in promoting the Uniting Ireland objective, or indeed any issue of importance.

WORKERS RIGHTS AND IRISH UNITY



ONLINE EVENT

HOSTED BY SOUTH AND EAST BELFAST SINN FÉIN

WORKERS' RIGHTS AND IRISH UNITY

Friday 30th April @ 7pm on Zoom

WITH DEIRDRE HARGEY MLA,
Sen. PAUL GAVAN
AND A SPEAKER FROM TU4UI



Ag obair go dícheallach ar do shon **WORKING HARD FOR YOU**



DEIRDRE HARGEY MLA

Sen. PAUL GAVAN

IRISH UNITY - AN INTERNATIONALIST DEMAND

Trade Unionists for a new and United Ireland held an online conference to mark International Workers Day on Monday May 3rd at 7pm.

The event had a line up of Trade Unionists from five countries including Scotland, Germany, Palestine, Canada and the United States. The discussion addressed the potential of building more international support for Irish Unity and what lessons can be learned from independence and unification campaigns in other countries.

Among those who contributed to the event was Florian Wilde, a German trade union historian, who examined the impact

of German Reunification. Trade union leader Larry Flanagan, Educational Institute of Scotland, gave an update on the IndyRef2 and Claire Delisle from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and Colleen Boyle from LiUNA discussed what the labour movement in North America can do to support for Irish Unity.

Jamal Juma, a well known Anti-Apartheid activist, writer and grassroots organiser spoke about the Palestinian struggle and their support for Irish independence.

For more information contact tradeunionists4ui@gmail.com



IRISH UNITY - AN INTERNATIONALIST DEMAND

3rd May 2021 @ 7pm



Zoom meeting ID: 951 8451 2116



Chair:
MICK HALPENNEY



Speakers
FLORIAN WILDE
German trade union historian



LARRY FLANAGAN
General Secretary Education Institute of Scotland



CLAIRE DELISLE
Canadian Union of Postal Workers



COLLEEN BOYLE
The Laborers' International Union of North America



JAMAL JUMA
Grassroots organiser and anti-apartheid activist Palestine

Time 4 Unity Am d'Aontacht

DERRY AND STRABANE COUNCIL ESTABLISH WORKING GROUPS ON IRISH UNITY

Every major political party and commentator on this island, including the DUP's Gregory Campbell, now acknowledge that a referendum on Irish unity is inevitable. There is a duty therefore on all elected institutions to begin to prepare and plan for this in a way the Fianna Fáil/ Fine Gael coalition Government is refusing to do at moment.

Sinn Féin Councillors in Derry and Strabane District Council adopted a different approach to the issue of Unity from their comrades in Belfast. They successfully passed a motion proposed by Cllr Conor Heaney last week establishing a Working Group within the Council on Irish Unity. Its remit is to begin a consultation exercise with citizens in their Council on a new Ireland and what it should look like. This proposition could be replicated in every Council district where Sinn Fein has representatives.

Derry and Strabane Council is already working closely with Donegal County Council in building a North West City Region approach however to prepare for the ending of partition we must go much further than that.

There are those who say that 'now is not the time'. This is irresponsible and risks repeating the mistake the British made in relation to Brexit. To prepare and to plan as a Council and to begin facilitating and engaging in the discussions about what ending partition might look like, is the sensible and responsible thing to do.

The Working Group on Irish Unity will look at the structural and practical changes that might be needed in the event of Irish Unity. It can also provide a Forum for citizens to feed in views about what they want to see in a new Ireland. And it can consult with key stakeholders on what practical and preferred steps would be needed so that we can best exploit the opportunities that the ending of partition would bring.

Sinn Fein Council teams across Ireland should consider rolling out this initiative.

BELFAST COUNCIL BACKS SINN FÉIN MOTION ON SHARED ISLAND UNIT

Sinn Féin Councillors in Belfast successfully passed a motion at April's full Council meeting proposing that Belfast City Council engage with the Irish government's Shared Island Unit. It was overwhelmingly passed by 49 votes to 19 at April's monthly Council meeting.

The Council will now write to the Irish Government and ask to make a presentation to the Unit on matters including, but not limited to, the Economy, the Belfast to Dublin Economic Corridor, Brexit and the Irish Protocol, and an All-Island approach to the climate crisis.

The Council also agreed to establish a working group of Councillors to explore how Belfast can establish and foster stronger social, economic and political linkages on the island of Ireland. The working group will examine how best to maximise for Belfast citizens the benefit opportunities that potentially exist and how can meet the challenges arising from Brexit and other related matters.



Sinn Féin Councillor Ciarán Beattie welcomed the cross party support for the motion. He urged Sinn Féin Councillors in Councils across the 32 counties to reach out to Councillors from other parties and Independents to bring forward a similar motion where they believed it was possible to have it passed.

He said: "Belfast is the second largest city on the island of Ireland. It is central to the economic prosperity of our island and I welcome that our council will now

increasingly work on an all-island basis to actively explore opportunities to attract further investment and create more jobs. This includes an all-Ireland economy post-Brexit, the Belfast to Dublin Economic Corridor, investment in high speed rail and our response to the ongoing climate emergency.

"The social and economic prosperity of our island will be maximised by eradicating the unnecessary barriers created by partition and working collaboratively as an island to deliver for all citizens."



RESOURCE FOR ACTIVISTS

All of the recent articles and significant contributions on the United Ireland theme are available on the Sinn Féin website.

Log in to www.sinnfein.ie/irish-unity for all of the news on uniting Ireland.

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