



Sinn Féin

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‘Reckless and irresponsible DUP in panic mode’

– Mary Lou McDonald TD

Last week, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) directly threatened the Stormont power-sharing institutions. DUP leader Jeffrey Donaldson announced that unless several DUP demands concerning the Protocol are met, the DUP will bring down the Stormont Executive.

Uachtarán Sinn Féin Mary Lou McDonald TD has branded Jeffrey Donaldson’s comments as ‘reckless, irresponsible and a short-sighted election stunt’.

Mary Lou McDonald TD said:

“The position set out by Jeffrey Donaldson and the DUP is a reckless, irresponsible and short-sighted election stunt.

“They are threatening the stability of the political institutions when we are in the midst of the Covid pandemic, when the Tories are putting families and workers under pressure with more cuts, and when there is big work to do on the issues that matter to people’s everyday lives - on hospital waiting lists, on schools, on housing and on jobs, and on rebuilding our economy.

“The DUP is clearly in panic mode, driven by poor opinion polls they are focused on their own narrow self-interest ahead of the interests of workers, families and local businesses.

“Unionism has lost its political majority, the DUP is in disarray and their vote is in decline.

“We will remind Maroš Šefčovič that the DUP do not represent or speak for the majority of people in the north who opposed Brexit and leaving the EU and are now assessing the merits of re-entry to EU membership through constitutional change on the island.

“That majority believe that issues related to the protocol should be negotiated between the EU and the British Government but should not

impact on the functioning of the Assembly, or the political institutions of the Good Friday Agreement.

“Jeffrey Donaldson and his party championed a hard Brexit along with the Tories regardless of its consequences for jobs, for workers and business.

“The Protocol is a result of this which aims to mitigate the impact of Brexit on business and the people of this island.

“The Protocol was painstakingly negotiated by both the EU and British Government and protects the Good Friday Agreement; all-island economy; and avoids a hard border on the island of Ireland.

“It must be faithfully operated with least disruption, and in a legally operable way which complies with the EU/BG agreement.

“Any challenges must be resolved through the EU/BG Joint Committee, and we support practical flexibility in this regard.

“The Protocol does not change the constitutional position of and explicitly affirms the principle of consent as laid out in the Good Friday agreement.

“The Good Friday Agreement institutions of the Assembly, Executive, British-Irish Council, and North-South Ministerial Council and the participation of Executive parties and Ministers within those cannot be cherry-picked. The Ministerial Code requires Ministers to take part in North-South meetings. To not do so is a clear breach of the Code.

“This is a time for calm and mature political leadership.

“Sinn Féin will continue to provide that responsible leadership, we will continue to work to improve people’s lives, and we hope that other progressive parties will stand with us in doing that in the time ahead.”



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'Latest phase of British brinkmanship over the Protocol is deeply corrosive'

- Declan Kearney MLA



"THE PRIORITIES OF OUR BUSINESSES, FARMING, AND FISHING SECTORS, OF OUR WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, NEED TO BE SECURED. CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP FOR IRELAND, BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH, WITHIN THE EU OFFERS THE BEST STRATEGIC PROTECTION TO DO SO. AND IRISH UNITY PROVIDES THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND DEMOCRATIC WAY TO ACHIEVE THAT OUTCOME" DECLAN KEARNEY MLA

The British government Command Paper in July formalised its objective to seek a renegotiation of the Irish Protocol element of the Withdrawal Agreement with the European Union (EU).

Whilst it stopped short of invoking Article 16, that option has not been removed from the table.

This is the latest phase of British brinkmanship. It is deeply corrosive for geopolitical relations and Britain's reputation.

The Tory government's approach has never been about adapting pragmatically to the new trading or economic realities caused by Brexit; instead, it's been driven by the primacy of narrow English nationalist interests.

Recent weeks have seen several important decisions by the European Commission in an effort to overcome the ongoing disagreements.

Firstly, it agreed to an earlier British request to extend grace periods on the movement of chilled meats across the Irish Sea until the end of October.

Secondly, it suspended legal action concerning breaches of the Protocol by the British, signalling a preference for agreed ways forward.

Thirdly, significant moves have been offered to change EU law and ensure no disruption of British medicines being supplied to the North of Ireland.

Finally, the European Commission replied to the Command Paper by advising it will be carefully assessed as to whether it can assist smooth implementation of the Protocol.

Together these steps help to create an atmosphere for finding solutions. The Protocol itself provides for a Joint Framework within which present challenges can be pragmatically and proportionately addressed.

A time frame exists between now and late September to constructively resolve real and outstanding difficulties caused to the flow of trade



**DECLAN KEARNEY MLA
SINN FÉIN NATIONAL
CHAIRPERSON**

by Brexit on an East/West basis. But political will is required to do so.

So, the immediate focus of this British Government needs to shift towards finding resolutions for genuine concerns of local businesses, rather than disingenuously using these to promote a self-serving, Tory ideological agenda.

The prevarication must end. Local businesses, traders, manufacturers, and farmers need real stability and certainty. Agreement between Britain and the EU on a SPS deal would make an immediate difference.

Sinn Féin will continue to promote the priorities of our local businesses and the island economy.

Survey: Most NI manufacturers want the protocol to work



Source: Irish News/Manufacturing NI Survey (Feb 2021)

We will continue to ensure that the integrity of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) remains paramount. It is not only our international peace agreement, but also provides the framework for managing the relationship between the north of Ireland with the EU itself.

The Protocol protects the GFA and confers a special economic status on the north. It provides the north with an opportunity to attract new investment and employment opportunities and allows for a unique dual market trade access to the British and EU markets.

Other opportunities arise in terms of access to the EU labour market. This itself could become a

possible new agreed area of cooperation.

The logic of these new realities commends greater, not less engagement between the EU and the north of Ireland.

More streamlined communication should be developed between our political institutions and civic society, and the European Commission. The onset of the new tranche of EU peace funds, Peace Plus, is one key reason for closer engagement.

The logic of representation for the north in EU institutions by virtue of special arrangements merits careful consideration. Precedents already exist. Such an option would guarantee that the actual needs of businesses, workers and their families in this region are properly understood by the EU, and not made hostage to the Tory inspired partisan, ideological and tactical agenda in Whitehall.



Brexit has fundamentally changed the economic and political landscape between the island of Ireland, Britain and continental Europe.

A Tory dominated Brexit Britain has become an outlier in terms of adherence to international agreements and the norms of international diplomacy and good faith.

The priorities of our businesses, farming, and fishing sectors, of our workers and their families, need to be secured. Continued membership for Ireland, both north and south, within the EU offers the best strategic protection to do so. And Irish unity provides the constitutional and democratic way to achieve that outcome.



“THIS IS AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP TOWARDS GIVING THE NORTH A REAL SAY ON MATTERS THAT AFFECT US. A STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR POWER SHARING ADMINISTRATION AND ASSEMBLY WITH THE EU IS KEY TO ENSURING THAT PROTOCOL ARRANGEMENTS ARE DURABLE AND PRACTICAL.”

Sinn Féin National Chairperson Declan Kearney has welcomed the commitments made by the European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič during his visit to the North.

‘European Commission Vice President’s positive engagement in North is welcome’ - Declan Kearney MLA

Sinn Féin National Chairperson Declan Kearney MLA has welcomed the commitments made by the European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič during his visit to the North last week.

The Executive Office Minister said:

“The positive engagements by European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič with political parties, the business community and civic society in recent days have been welcomed by all in the North who want genuine progress on the smooth operation of the Protocol, negotiated between the EU and British government.

“It was particularly welcome that the EU expressed clear commitment to resolving outstanding issues on medicines by outlining the measures it is prepared to take. These build on the EU’s paper at the end of July. The Vice President has also invited our business organisations to submit proposals to the EU on how trade and business can be conducted more smoothly on an East/West basis.

“Now the British Government must demonstrate the political will, and properly engage through the Joint Committee framework with the EU, to contribute towards solutions on the issues which are impacting upon citizens’ lives and businesses in the North as a result of Brexit.

“I warmly welcome Vice President Šefčovič’s expressed support for an inter-parliamentary group between the European Parliament and the Stormont Assembly. It is critically important that our democratic institutions have direct access to Europe in relation to the operation of the Protocol, and on other matters.

“This is an important first step towards giving the North a real say on matters that affect us. A strong working relationship between our power sharing administration and Assembly with the EU is key to ensuring that Protocol arrangements are durable and practical.

“The Protocol provides unprecedented access to both the EU and British markets, and offers our economy and businesses a very unique opportunity to attract new foreign investment and support existing jobs.

“There is no credible alternative to the Protocol. It is not going to be renegotiated. All of our political leaders should be working collectively to fully develop the opportunities that it offers. This is not a time for reckless and irresponsible rhetoric.

“Sinn Féin will continue to work in cooperation, and deliver mature, measured and responsible leadership which ensures that the challenges facing our society arising from Brexit are fully addressed.”

International community needs to help Afghan people - Michelle O'Neill

Sinn Féin Leas Uachtarán Michelle O'Neill has said the international community need to act to help the people of Afghanistan in light of the deepening humanitarian crisis brought about by the country's political upheaval.

Michelle O'Neill said:

"The unfolding political, humanitarian and refugee crisis in Afghanistan is horrendous.

"The people of Afghanistan desire peace and freedom from violence. The international community cannot allow the rights of Afghan women and children to be lost, or rolled back as before under the Taliban.

"The mandate of the United Nations' Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is due for renewal in September 2021, during Ireland's Presidency of the Security Council. The world community cannot abandon the Afghan people.

"The Irish Government has a critical role in ensuring that the UN do everything in its power to provide urgently required

Michelle O'Neill MLA



humanitarian aid, and to offer protection of refugees and civilians now and in the time ahead.

"Previously the Stormont Executive welcomed Syrian refugees as part of

the British Government relocation and resettlement scheme. Our party would certainly support such a scheme for Afghans to provide whatever measure of support we can."

Colombia's Ethnic Commission for Peace and the Defence of Territorial Rights - Gerry Kelly MLA

In August, Gerry Kelly MLA attended Colombia's Ethnic Commission for Peace and the Defence of Territorial Rights special conference commemorating the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Havana Peace Accords.

International participants included internationally renowned academic Noam Chomsky, Rigoberta Menchu (Guatemala's Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1992), Dr Jose Ramos Horta (Timor-Leste's Ex- President/1996 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) and Mr Juan Carlos Monge (Deputy Director, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - Colombia).

The North Belfast MLA reflected:



"The topic of discussion was very informative in observing the current political climate in Colombia following the 2016 Peace Process.

"I was invited as a guest speaker at this event to provide reflection on the Good Friday Agreement

through my experiences in comparison to Colombia.

"After 23 years since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement I made the point that issues still needed to be resolved; but what was significant in the implementation of the agreement was the importance of the Irish Diaspora's role globally, specifically in the USA, to ensure support and momentum was behind the agreement.

"Contributions from varying academic and political speakers reiterated the point that, due to the lack of political will, the Havana Peace Accord and its Ethnic Chapter have not been implemented as was agreed in the Framework Implementation Plan.

"It was highlighted that according to the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, a mere ten percent of provisions included in the Ethnic Chapter have been fully implemented. Whilst the particular point was raised that Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Social Leaders are continually assassinated at a rate of one per day, resulting in internal displacement of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian's communities.

"Collectively, international guest speakers condemned the deteriorating peace process and human rights situation in Colombia, whilst contrasting to various alternative paths to peace practiced globally."

Historic moment as Dáil supports Sinn Féin motion on Israeli annexation of Palestinian lands – John Brady TD

Sinn Féin spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Defence John Brady TD described the vote to adopt the Sinn Féin motion on the annexation of Palestinian lands by Israel as an historic moment, a victory for justice, and a recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

The Wicklow TD said:

“I wish to convey my thanks to the members of the Dáil who have voted unanimously for the Sinn Féin motion, to the co-signatories to the motion, the Labour Party, the Social Democrats, and the various independent TDs.

“I also want to express my gratitude to Trócaire, Sadaka, Christian Aid, Al Haq, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, and the other members of the Oireachtas who have worked with us in developing this motion.

“The Irish people have secured an historic victory for the people of Palestine.

“The decision by the members of the Dáil to vote to accept the Sinn Féin motion on annexation reflects the strength of feeling that runs in this country at the treatment of the Palestinian people by the apartheid state of Israel.

“Ireland now stands as the first country in Europe to categorically state without equivocation that Israel has carried out the crime of annexation in the occupied Palestinian Territories.

“The respected international groups, Al Haq, Human Rights Watch, and B’Tselem have placed before the world the undeniable evidence that the state of Israel is guilty of the crime of apartheid.

“I still recall my pride in our country when in the 1980s, the Dunnes Stores Workers took the decision to strike, and run the risk of losing their jobs, rather than handle produce from the apartheid state of South Africa.

“I read an article on Al Jazeera that described this moment as ‘a landmark on the road to isolating an apartheid state as we did in the 1980s’ such is the importance of what has been achieved here.

“But I need to stress that this is more than mere symbolism. Annexation is a crime under international law.

“Such is the importance of what what has occurred, that the United Nations Special Rapporteur for the situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied since 1967, Michael Lynk, felt compelled to write to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney, in advance of last night’s debate imploring the Irish government to



John Brady TD in protest in front of Leinster House.

“THE IRISH PEOPLE, THROUGH THE DÁIL, HAVE STATED THAT ISRAEL IS GUILTY OF THE CRIME OF ANNEXATION.”

act to recognise that de facto annexation has taken place.

“The Irish people have pushed the government over the line. The recognition that de facto annexation has taken place in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is now the formal position of Ireland.

“The Irish people, through the Dáil, have stated that Israel is guilty of the crime of annexation.

“The significance of the victory in getting the Irish government to acknowledge that annexation has taken place is enormous.

“It is now incumbent upon the Irish government to accept the imprimatur of the Irish people and take this motion and press for action in the EU, and for action on the UN Security Council on this issue.

“By shifting the discourse away from the outdated colonial discourse that has been allowed to prevail for decades, and which has been used to give licence to the concept of Israeli exceptionalism, a discourse which is satisfied to allow Israel to attempt to justify its acts of violence against innocent Palestinian civilians, and

to receive a dispensation, an exemption if you like, from the international community for its deliberate targeting of civilians.

“We have stated clearly in this motion, and in our commentary on this motion, that we wish to frame a fresh discourse on the conflict, a discourse which focuses on the primacy of international law.

“Under the law there must be accountability.

“And now the international community must be pressured into holding Israel to account for the treatment of Palestinian civilians, and the destruction of their homes and infrastructure.

“The Irish government must act to introduce the Occupied Territories Bill and it must recognise the state of Palestine.

“It must ensure that Israel is held accountable for its action by the international community.

“Hopefully other countries can follow Ireland’s lead, and take this motion as a template to use in their own parliaments.”

Mary Lou McDonald TD holds meeting with ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa

In July, Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD led a party delegation to meet with ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Following the delegation Teachta McDonald said:

“This was an important and productive meeting between our two parties and we look forward to continuing to work together to help in deepening relations between our two countries.

“I led a party delegation to meet with President Cyril Ramaphosa and other senior members of the ANC. This was an important and productive meeting and we look forward to continuing to work together and help in deepening relations between our two countries.

“During our meeting we discussed the growing support for Irish re-unification and the important role that the international community can play in support of a referendum on Irish unity and in encouraging goodwill and support for the planned transition towards a united Ireland.

“There are strong historic ties between our two parties. Irish republicans worked in solidarity with the ANC and the people of South Africa during the struggle against apartheid. The ANC provided significant support to Sinn Féin during the development of the Irish Peace Process.

“Just as the mobilisation of the international community was essential to bringing apartheid to an end in South Africa, so too will progressive international support for Irish unity be important to achieve, and win a referendum on Irish unity, and to assist the process of positive constitutional change in Ireland.”



ABOVE: Mary Lou McDonald TD with ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa.

BELOW: Chris Hazzard MP, Mary Lou McDonald TD, Cyril Ramaphosa ANC and Declan Kearney MLA.



“THERE ARE STRONG HISTORIC TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO PARTIES. IRISH REPUBLICANS WORKED IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE ANC AND THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID. THE ANC PROVIDED SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT TO SINN FÉIN DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRISH PEACE PROCESS.”

UN experts should be invited to the north for legacy talks - O'Neill

Sinn Féin Leas-Uachtarán Michelle O'Neill has called for UN experts to be invited to the north to take part in ongoing legacy talks and speak with victims' families.

Speaking after writing to the British and Irish governments, Michelle O'Neill said:

"The intervention by UN experts and their opposition and rejection of the British government's amnesty proposals is a wake-up call that the international community is now also alert and aware of the cynical intent at the core of these proposals.

"With the jointly convened Irish-British legacy talks ongoing, I am calling for an invitation to be extended to the UN experts to come to the North, to contribute to the legacy talks and to talk with victims' families who have spoken with a consistent voice to reject these proposals.

"I have already urged Brandon Lewis to listen to the voices of victims and their families and withdraw these controversial legacy proposals and instead commit to fully implementing the Stormont House Agreement in a human rights compliant manner.

"Full implementation of that agreement is the best way to ensure that grieving families finally get access to the truth about the deaths of their loved ones."



Michelle O'Neill MLA

"THE INTERVENTION BY UN EXPERTS AND THEIR OPPOSITION AND REJECTION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S AMNESTY PROPOSALS IS A WAKE-UP CALL THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS NOW ALSO ALERT AND AWARE OF THE CYNICAL INTENT AT THE CORE OF THESE PROPOSALS."



Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho

Sinn Féin extends sympathies on the death of Portuguese Revolutionary Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho

Sinn Féin National Chairperson Declan Kearney MLA has paid tribute to Portuguese revolutionary Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, who has died aged 84.

The South Antrim MLA said:

"The republican family in Ireland is saddened to learn of the death of Portuguese revolutionary, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, who led the country's national democratic revolution in 1974.

"Otelo de Carvalho was dedicated to securing people's rights and social justice. His leadership during the peaceful 'Carnation Revolution' brought democratic politics to Portugal, and laid the foundations of a modern social democracy.

"Despite today's ongoing social and economic challenges, Portuguese society continues to be inspired by the vision of the 1974 revolution, which established its democratic institutions and ended Portugal's colonial era.

"Otelo was a progressive internationalist and also a good friend of Ireland. He attended a Sinn Féin Ard Fheis in the late 1970s.

"He was a revolutionary with a strategic capacity, dedication and generosity. His passing is a loss to all of us committed to progressive, internationalist politics; but Otelo's example will continue to inspire.

"Sinn Féin extends sympathy and solidarity at this time to the friends, family, and loved ones of Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho in Portugal, Ireland, and across the world".

"A Luta Continua Companheiro!"



“THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO REFUSE TO HONOUR ITS OBLIGATIONS ON BREXIT AND CREATE UNCERTAINTY FOR BUSINESS.”

Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD briefs Congressional Friends of Ireland Caucus

In July, Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD briefed the Congressional Friends of Ireland Caucus on the British Government’s plan to close down all investigations into the past and their refusal to implement their own agreement on Brexit.

Speaking at the meetings, Teachta McDonald said:

“This British Government has shown contempt for the rights of citizens in Ireland, their obligations under interna-

tional agreements, and the views of US political leaders.

“The proposals by the British Government to close down investigations into their past actions and offer amnesties to their military is opposed by all parties, victims groups, and the Irish Government.

“It is a contravention of the Stormont House Agreement and the rights of the victims.

“The British Government continues

to refuse to honour its obligations on Brexit and create uncertainty for business.

“I thanked the Friends of Ireland Caucus for their continued support for peace and our agreements.

“By working together, we can ensure that the British Government implements in full their commitments.

“The US remains a strong partner for peace, progress and prosperity in Ireland.”

DEMOCRACY, PEACE AND SELF-DETERMINATION: IRELAND TO KURDISTAN - AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANCIE MOLLOY MP

In August, Sinn Féin MP for Mid Ulster Francie Molloy was interviewed by Peace in Kurdistan concerning a range of issues relating to the principles of democracy, peace and self-determination.

The Mid Ulster MP discussed parallels between the lessons that can be learnt from the Good Friday Agreement and the contemporary Kurdish political efforts to achieve a peace process with the Turkish state.

“I think it’s important that we create an inclusive process which everybody takes part in. Dialogue, engagement, discussion and inclusivity is key to any peace process.



Francie Molloy MP being interviewed by Peace in Kurdistan.



“One of the measures within the Irish peace process that was very successful was the release of political prisoners. The case of Öcalan is similar, he should be released; and the prisoners should be released because they

can have a great input in the change that can happen, they’ve been in prison, they understand what needs to be done. Öcalan can play a major part in driving that process across, but it must be inclusive.”

Returning to the political situation in the north of Ireland, Francie Molloy MP noted contemporary divisions within political Unionism, as well as the growth in support for Irish unity.

SINN FÉIN MPS MEET WITH FORMER PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA TO DISCUSS PEACE PROCESS

At the end of June, Sinn Féin MPs, Paul Maskey and Mickey Brady attended an online briefing with the former President of Colombia, Ernesto Samper, and other social leaders based in Colombia. The meeting was hosted by Justice for Colombia and provided an insight into the mounting humanitarian tragedy in Colombia.

Speaking after the meeting Paul Maskey remarked, “It is deeply saddening to hear reports of the deteriorating situation in Colombia, with new violence posing a serious challenge for the peace process.”

Adding that, “Too much time and energy has been invested into securing peace so there can be no rollback on this. New violence emerging in parts of Colombia is cause for considerable concern and we once again call on all sides to cease all armed actions. Ordinary citizens in Colombia are facing a daily humanitarian emergency, with massacres, homicides and forced displacement being a commonplace.”

The meeting specifically focused on efforts to end the humanitarian crises in the regions of Catatumbo (along the Venezuelan border) and Nariño (along the Ecuadorian border). Both these regions are currently experiencing a horrific upsurge in massacres, homicides, and forced displacement.

To alleviate this deteriorating

situation, on 28 August 2020, the Humanitarian Platform of Catatumbo proposed a seven-point ‘Humanitarian Agreement’ to the Colombian government, the ELN (National Liberation Army), and EPL (Popular Liberation Army) insurgents and other non-state armed actors. The ELN, EPL and the FARC-dissidents have expressed a willingness to sign the Agreement. Unfortunately, the Colombian government has yet to respond to this initiative.

In support of this strategy, on 30 April 2021, the Humanitarian Platform of Nariño, proposed a similar eight-point ‘Humanitarian Agreement’ to the Colombian government, the ELN insurgency and other armed groups. So far,

none have responded to this.

Following the meeting, Mickey Brady reflected, “Despite the current situation, it was positive to learn of the humanitarian work and ongoing efforts towards a cessation of violence”.

He also reiterated Sinn Féin’s continued support for a just and lasting peace in Colombia, “As a party, Sinn Féin will be appealing directly to both the Dublin and London governments to use their influence to call on the Colombian government to endorse these Humanitarian Agreements. We also call on the Colombian government to live up its responsibilities and undertakings agreed in Havana in 2016.”



Paul Maskey MP and Mickey Brady MP attending an online briefing with leaders based in Colombia.



**John
Brady TD**

John Brady TD calls on Minister Coveney to clarify if actions of Irish Ambassador to Israel are consistent with government policy

Sinn Féin spokesperson on Foreign Affairs and Defence, John Brady TD, in July called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney, to clarify whether the actions and comments of the Irish ambassador to Israel are consistent with and representative of the views of the Irish government.

Teachta Brady said:

“Last month the Irish ambassador to Israel Kyle O’Sullivan, in what can only be construed as an apology for the actions and decision making of the Dáil, and by extension the Irish People, on the issue of the rights of the Palestinian people, penned an opinion piece for the right-wing Israeli newspaper the Jerusalem Post.

“In his article, Ambassador O’Sullivan described Israel as a country based ‘on the rule of law, on democracy, and on respect for human rights and human dignity’.

“These comments were made just over a month after Minister Coveney felt compelled by the slaughter being inflicted on civilians in Gaza by Israeli Forces to summon the Israeli ambassador to Ireland, Ophir Kariv, in order to reprimand him for what Minister Coveney described as the ‘completely unacceptable’ killing of civilians.

“International NGOs have accused Israel of the crime of apartheid. The illegal seizure of Palestinian lands continues unabated. Palestinians are being shunted onto Bantustans, following the forced demolitions of their homes, which in many instances the Israelis force them to pay for themselves.

“In May of this year, the Dáil unanimously passed a motion brought forward by Sinn Féin recognising the reality of the illegal annexation of Palestinian lands by the Israeli government. Which in effect sets out Irish government policy on this matter.

“Minister Coveney needs to clarify if Ambassador O’Sullivan’s remarks contradict the stance of the Irish government. At the very least this government need to learn to speak out of one corner of their mouth at the one time.”

'Today's pardon of Catalan prisoners is only the first step' – Chris MacManus MEP

SINN FÉIN MEP CALLS FOR AN END TO ALL LEGAL PURSUITS AGAINST ORGANISERS OF THE INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM

Sinn Féin MEP Chris MacManus in June welcomed the pardoning of nine Catalan political prisoners by the President of Spain, Pedro Sanchez.

MEP MacManus, speaking from Brussels commented:

"I am pleased nine of the leaders seeking Catalan Independence will soon be returning home to their families. Their criminalisation for taking part in the 2017 referendum on Catalan independence has represented a stain on European democracy.

"The Council of Europe assembly called out this injustice, as recently as yesterday, when it demanded the Spanish State reform its penal laws. This was in relation to the Spanish Judiciary supporting a cynical inter-



Chris MacManus MEP

pretation of their law on rebellion so as to include peaceful protest. They then utilised this problematic interpretation to imprison those pro-independence Catalan leaders.

"It is however important to note, today's decision does not go as far as to deliver the required general amnesty for all those fac-

ing legal implications for their involvement in the vote.

"For example, over 40 officials of the Catalan administration, at the time of the vote, are dealing with criminal prosecutions, and a number of citizens have been or may be convicted for their participation in mass protests during polling day".

MacManus concluded by outlining his party's ongoing commitment, "Sinn Féin supports the right to self-determination for Catalonia and

rejects this blatant use of judicial repression to resolve a political conflict. The Spanish Government must build on today's progress, to enter a dialogue based on mutual respect. This is the only way to guarantee a lasting solution".

Sinn Féin reaffirms solidarity with Cuba - Declan Kearney



Declan Kearney MLA with Cuban Ambassador to Ireland Hugo René Ramos Milanés.

Sinn Féin National Chairperson Declan Kearney in July, reiterated solidarity with the Cuban people and continued support for the Cuban Revolution.

The South Antrim MLA said:

"Since the onset of COVID-19 our global society has been faced with many challenges.

"During this dark period the Cuban people have outstretched the hand of international friendship, support and solidarity through the work of the heroic 'Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade'; and this whilst still enduring the effects of the pandemic in Cuba; as well as continued imposition of the US blockade.

"Over the past 24 hours, online videos and literature have appeared calling for governmental change in Cuba, with protesters apparently demonstrating under the slogan of 'Libertad'.

"Sinn Féin firmly believes that the liberty of the Cuban people and sustainable economic growth on the island needs to be secured by lifting the US sanctioned economic blockade of Cuba, which has repressed Cuba's economy and society for over 60 years.

"It is remarkable that despite continued use of these unjustified economic and political sanctions, the spirit of the Cuban people and the revolutionary Cuban Government remains resilient.

"President Biden's administration should politically engage with the Cuban government and follow the lead of President Obama by renormalising diplomatic and economic relations between the US and Cuba.

"The Cuban people have stood with the international community throughout our global health emergency; we should now reassert the primacy of international law and stand in solidarity with Cuba".

GERRY ADAMS: Keir Starmer's Irish policy a dead loss ...

Writing in his Belfast-Media.com online blog in August, former Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams made comment on British Labour leader Keir Starmer's recent partitionist revelations:

The internal machinations of the Labour Party in Britain are a matter for that party but the policies it adopts and advocates in relation to Ireland have for decades adversely impacted on the lives of citizens here. A month ago the current British Labour Party leader Keir Starmer visited the North and provided a valuable insight into the double-think that has long been at the core of the British Labour Party's attitude to Ireland.

During his two-day visit Starmer asserted his support for the Good Friday Agreement and the 'principle that the decision, in the end, is for the people of the island of Ireland.' On this he is absolutely right. The Agreement specifically states that: "It is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively and without external impediment, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given ..."

But then in stark contradiction to this Starmer stated his willingness to stand "very much on the side of Unionists, arguing for Northern Ireland to remain in the UK". Why? Because he says: "I believe in the United Kingdom".

What part of; "it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone" and "without external impediment" does he not understand? Has Starmer no understanding of the divisive, negative, inept, condescending, violent contribution that successive British governments, including Labour governments, and successive British politicians, including Labour



GERRY ADAMS

politicians, have had in Ireland for generations?

After partition Labour leaders adopted a policy of non-intervention in issues related to the North. For them, and the Tories, this convention meant that the governance of the North was the responsibility of the Unionist

Regime. In the early 1960s the Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ) began exposing the extent of discrimination against Catholics and advocating for reform. In August 1964 the Labour opposition leader Harold Wilson wrote to the CSJ: "I can assure you that a Labour government would do everything in its power to see that infringements of justice are efficiently dealt with."

Wilson became Prime Minister in October of that year. The convention did not change. Despite a significant lobby of Labour MPs who were members of the Westminster-based Campaign for Democracy in Ulster (CDU), the Labour government failed to achieve any meaningful reform. Why? Because according to Wilson's Home Secretary Jim Callaghan, they were determined "not to get sucked into the Irish bog." Instead the Labour government looked to the Unionist Prime Minister Terence O'Neill to introduce reform.

That approach failed when the Stormont Unionist regime resorted to violence to oppose the civil rights campaign and its demands for civil rights.

It was a British Labour Government which deployed the British Army on the streets of the North in August 1969. They should have faced down Ian Paisley and forced through civil rights reforms. Labour's failure to do this marked the beginning of decades of conflict. In the summer of 1970 Labour was replaced by the Tory government of Ted Heath. They continued to pander to unionist ex-

tremists and introduced internment. After Bloody Sunday they prorogued Stormont.

Four years later Labour was back in power and backing repression. Merlyn Rees was appointed Secretary of State. Under his control political status was ended, the H-Blocks were built, the criminalisation and Ulsterisation policies were ruthlessly pursued and the conveyor belt system of torture, special Diplock courts, and changes to the rules of evidence, all began to take shape.

In April 1976 Rees was replaced by Roy Mason. Working closely with the RUC and British Army Mason was determined to break the republican struggle. Harassment, brutal beatings in the interrogation centres, house raids, arbitrary arrests, plastic bullets, shoot-to-kill operations, state collusion with unionist death squads, all became commonplace under Mason. Infamously he claimed in 1978: "We are squeezing the terrorists like rolling up a toothpaste tube."

Mason was wrong as the events of the following years were to prove. Labour, like the Tories failed to learn one of the many lessons of Irish history – repression leads to resistance. Historian and writer Dorothy McArdle remarked that after the Act of Union was passed in 1801 Ireland was governed almost exclusively throughout the 19th century by a succession of Coercion Acts, which "made every expression of national feeling a crime."

Did these coercion laws pacify Ireland? Of course not. Not then. And not in our time.

And even after Labour was no longer in power and Thatcher entered Downing Street, its leaders continued to provide support to her and the Tories. Let us forget on this year of the 40th anniversary of the 1981 hunger strike it was a British Labour representative Don Concannon who visited the hunger strikers on 1 May 1981, four days before Bobby Sands

died. Concannon carried a message from the Labour leader Michael Foot telling the prisoners that Labour supported Thatcher's intransigence and that the men should abandon the hunger strike. When he met Francie Hughes in his cell in the H-Blocks, Francie asked him did he support the prisoners' five demands. When Concannon said 'No', Francie told him to 'close the door after you.' Francie died 11 days later.

Tony Blair brought a new style to Labour and to its Irish policy. He was still a British unionist but was prepared to take risks for a peace process that the Tories had squandered. Jeremy Corbyn was for a United Ireland. And he was prepared to state that.

The current Labour leader – Keir Starmer – has now stated his preference and his willingness to ignore the principles of the Good Friday Agreement and interfere in any referendum campaign. He has failed to raise any concerns around the many aspects of the Agreement that have still not been implemented almost a quarter of a century later. And worse he is choosing to ignore the growing and widespread democratic debate currently taking place around the unity referendum and the prospect of a united Ireland.

Is Starmer intending to imitate the Tories narrow brand of English nationalism by wrapping the Union flag around his party and adopting the same little Englander strategy of Johnson?

Or is it a new version of Callaghan's not wanting to the "sucked into the Irish bog?"

Starmer's opinion that a united Ireland "is not in sight" is not shared by many in Ireland.

Moreover, the future of this island and of how we as an island people share it together in peace, equality and inclusivity in the future, is our decision, not his.

That should also be the position of the British Labour Party."



Gerry Adams full blog can be found online at [BelfastMedia.com](https://www.belfastmedia.com)



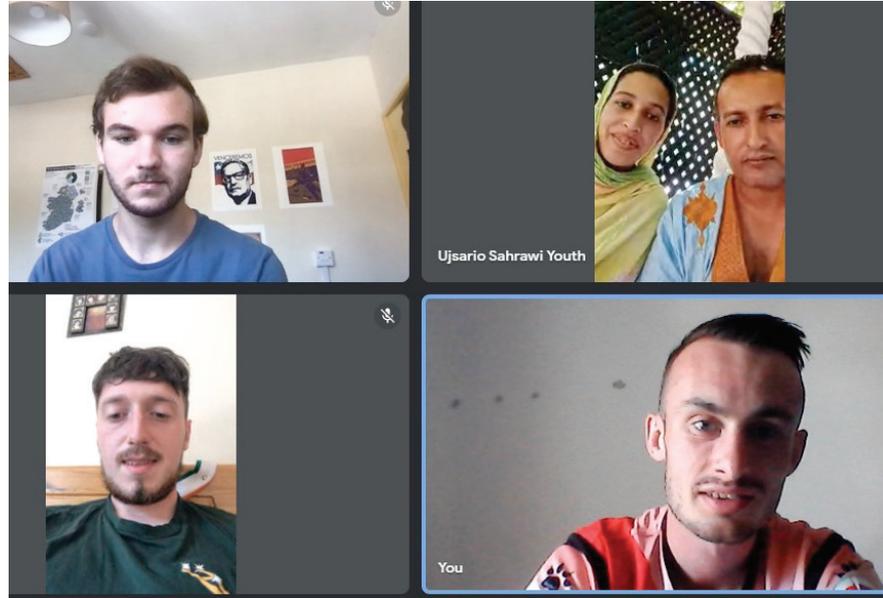
WESTERN SAHARA: Ógra Shinn Féin & UJSARIO meeting

In July, Ógra Shinn Féin members held an online meeting with comrades from the Sahrawi Youth Union (UJSARIO), the youth organisation of the Western Sahara Polisario Front. UJSARIO operates from Sahrawi refugee camps in Tindouf (Algeria) where a portion of the native Sahrawi population has lived following the 1975-91 Western Sahara War. Ógra and UJSARIO discussed a range of contemporary issues regarding Irish and Sahrawi affairs as well as discussing future programmes of engagement between both groups.

Ógra Shinn Féin International Officer Ciarán Ó Meachair, commented:

“We were delighted to speak with our comrades from UJSARIO. The Sahrawi people continue to face many challenges, living through occupation and repression at the hands of Moroccan state.

“Our shared history of resistance and struggle for freedom gives both Sahrawi and Irish people a good perspective of each other’s experiences. There are many things we can learn from our Sahrawi comrades and vice versa, and we look forward to Ógra continuing our relationship with UJSARIO into the future.”



Ógra Shinn Féin members Liam Kiernan, Adrian Gallagher and Ciarán Ó Meachair speaking with UJSARIO

CUBA: SINN FÉIN VIRTUAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY



Mary Lou McDonald TD

To mark the 68th anniversary of the start of the Cuban Revolution, Sinn Féin organised a virtual day of solidarity to express continued support to the Cuban people and their government.

As part of the celebrations, Sinn Féin’s virtual online programme featured contributions from:

- Uachtarán Shinn Féin Mary Lou McDonald TD
- Sinn Féin Foreign Affairs and Defence spokesperson, John Brady TD
- Nicola Brogan MLA
- Chris Hazzard MP
- Ógra Shinn Féin
- Terry (Cruncher) O’Neill signing “Ché Guevara’s on the road again”

To mark the anniversary, Mary Lou McDonald TD remarked: “We send our ongoing message of support and solidarity to the Cuban people and to their President Diaz-Canal. Your cause is just and the blockade of your country is unfair, unjust, and must end.

“Sinn Féin urges all international leaders, but particularly those in the United States of America to end the sanctions, end



the blockade and to allow the Cuban people to breathe again and to live freely.

“We send to you our greetings from Ireland and we send our greetings on behalf of Sinn Féin. We acknowledge in particular the work of the Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade throughout the COVID crisis – you have been outstanding ambassadors for Cuba and for all humanity. Venceremos!”

#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

CLIMB4UNITY event

On 17th July 2021, Sinn Féin activists across Ireland took to the hills to highlight the growing campaign for Irish Unity



BRAY HEAD



CARNOGHER SOUTH DERRY



BENBRADAGH



CNOC CHAMAIR CONAMARA



KNOCKAVOE, STRABANE



DOWNPATRICK HEAD, MAYO



CAVE HILL, BELFAST



MOUNT GABRIEL WEST CORK



LOUGHCREW & PATRICKSTOWN, CO. MEATH



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