

UNITY NEWS

#TIME4UNITY
#AM LE HAONTACHT

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NOW IS THE TIME TO PLAN

– Michelle O'Neill

In a keynote interview on Sky News on 20 February Sinn Féin's Vice President Michelle O'Neill told the broadcaster that a united Ireland is "closer than we have ever been previously."

Michelle O'Neill said: "I think now is the time to plan and that's why we're saying to the Irish government, now is the time for them to make the preparation. Let's not fall into the traps that have been fallen into in terms of Brexit. Make the preparation - let's start to have a healthy conversation about things that matter every day to people.

What does the health service look like in a united Ireland? What does education look like in a united Ireland?

This is a hopeful conversation. If the last couple of years of Brexit has taught us anything, it's that the Tories will never prioritise the interests of people here, whether you are Unionist, Nationalist, or other."

With unionist parties either refusing to say if they will accept a Sinn Féin First Minister or stating their opposition to it the former Deputy First Minister was asked if she thought people are ready for a Sinn Féin first minister. Michelle O'Neill said: "It will be the people to decide who they elect. They will decide who will be the largest party."



The Sinn Féin Deputy Leader also criticised unionist leaders over their stance on Brexit and the Irish Protocol. She said: "I think unfortunately for the unionist people, for that wider civic society, the unionist leaders have actually conflated the issue of the protocol and Brexit, a mess which they single-handedly delivered alongside their friends in the Tories."

"I think now is the time to plan and that's why we're saying to the Irish government, now is the time for them to make the preparation."



Editorial: Building the New Ireland

On 5 May, the anniversary of the death of Bobby Sands in 1981, the Assembly election will take place in the North. This election provides a unique and hugely important opportunity to advance Sinn Féin's primary political objective – a United Ireland.

Making change is difficult but to make it happen we need to build our political strength. A strong Sinn Féin in government North and South will make it possible to build the new Ireland, the shared Ireland, envisaged in the 1916 Proclamation.

Today the island of Ireland is in a process of transition, of transformation. Unity is achievable. It is no pipe dream. This is a time of hope. A time for change. A time for action. Martin Luther King wrote: "When the idea is a sound one, the cause a just one and the demonstration a righteous one, change will be forthcoming."

The demand for change is overwhelming. The Brexit shambles, the DUP's sham fight over the Protocol, its increasingly threatening language and its refusal to recognise the right of Sinn Féin to hold the position of First Minister, if that's what the people vote for, have alienated many and opened up the conversation around a united Ireland in a way not seen since partition.

Many citizens who would have traditionally voted unionist are rethinking their future. The commitment from the EU Commission that Irish Unity will see the whole island within the EU is very attractive to those unionists who voted to remain.

Mike Nesbitt, former leader of the UUP recently gave voice

to this when he said of Brexit: "I do wonder whether Brexit will prove to be the biggest own goal in 100 years from Unionists."

In a message that the Irish government should take note of Nesbitt warned that a unity referendum should not be like Brexit. He said: "Before there's a border poll it has to be spelled out in enormous detail and truthfully, unlike Brexit ... I have to say I know a lot of people of a unionist background who are now thinking the unthinkable and thinking, would I be better off or worse off? (in a united Ireland).

There is an onus on the Irish government to plan for unity – to encourage the necessary conversations needed to reassure those with concerns that Unity is affordable and achievable. That means establishing a Citizens Assembly at which all of the issues of concern can be discussed in a transparent and respectful fashion. It should publish a White Paper on Irish Unity and establish a Joint Oireachtas Committee on Irish Unity to increase preparatory work on Unity. And it should raise this objective internationally and put in place a programme of work to improve North-South cooperation and improve the delivery of the North-South bodies.

Change is by its nature often fearful, even traumatic, particularly for those who perceive change to be to their disadvantage. But it doesn't have to be that way. Constitutional change for the island of Ireland, managed carefully and inclusively and through positive engagement with all those willing to talk, can be positive and hopeful.

Time 4 Unity Am d'Aontacht



SET DATE FOR UNITY REFERENDUM

The British Irish Parliamentary Assembly met in London toward the end of February. The body meets twice a year. Sinn Féin's North Belfast MP John Finucane called on the British and Irish governments to set a date for the unity referendum contained in the Good Friday Agreement.

The DUP leader Jeffrey Donaldson warned the meeting that the Executive will not be restored until the DUP demands on the protocol are met. John Finucane told the meeting that the protocol is a direct result of the DUP championing the hardest Brexit it could get and that it is an international agreement negotiated by the British government.

Finucane challenged Donaldson saying that: "The DUP boycott of the Executive and the North South Ministerial Council amounts to an assault on the Good Friday Agreement itself." He added that Donaldson's comments were "heard by those of us within nationalism as unionism doing democracy on only unionism's terms." The North Belfast MP added: "We hear day and daily.... No Protocol. No nationalist First Minister. No nationalist Justice Minister. No language rights. No abortion rights. No, No, No....! Those who hanker for the past, who disrupt the present and who threaten our future need to realise that there is no going back, only forward. Sinn Féin will not be re-negotiating the Good Friday Agreement or shifting any goalposts to satisfy unionism before or after elections."

John Finucane went on to say: "Huge change is on the horizon. It's already under way ...acceptance of the right to Irish self-determination and full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in all of its parts should be adopted within British government policy. Both governments should set out a proposed timetable of transition which facilitates reasoned, inclusive and respectful discussion.

They should agree a date for concurrent Irish Unity referendums North and South in accordance with the Good Friday Agreement."



Seachtain na Gaeilge

Seachtain na Gaeilge is the biggest celebration of Irish language and culture in the world. The festival used to run for one week but became so popular it was extended. It now runs annually from 1 March to 17 March – St. Patrick's Day. Two years ago before Covid there were over 30,000 events held in Ireland and across the world with an estimated three quarters of a million people participating.

Seachtain na Gaeilge embraces language, music, dance and sport, and increasingly events on social media. Writers too have brought a focus to the language.

This year Sinn Féin will be engaging widely in Seachtain na Gaeilge through our elected representatives in the various political institutions, including the Oireachtas. We will also be encouraging people to use their cúpla focail throughout the few weeks, to practice speaking Irish more at home, with their friends, on the phone, or on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.

Sinn Féin will also be launching a new Irish language policy document in Leinster House.

Irish Unity will be a key theme in all of these activities. Specifically we are asking elected representatives to produce short videos with Irish Unity as the main message.

Finally, on Wednesday 9 March Sinn Féin will be holding a one hour intensive online class as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge.

The meeting link can be found here:

Is í Seachtain na Gaeilge an ceiliúradh is mó den Ghaeilge agus Cultúr na hÉireann ar domhan. Bhí an oiread sin ráchairt uirthi gur síneadh amach chuig coicis í. Bfion sí ar siúl ó 1 Márta go dtí 17 Márta - Lá Fhéile Pádraig, achan bhliain. Bhí 30,000 imeacht ann ar fud na hÉireann agus an domhain roimh Covid agus measadh gur ghlac trí cheathrú milliún duine páirt iontu. Tá an teangaidh, ceol, damhsa agus spóirt mar chuid de Sheachtain na Gaeilge, agus níos mó imeachtaí ná riamh ar na meáin shóisialta anois. Tá aird dírithe ag scríbhneoirí ar an teangaidh anois.

Beidh baint mhór ag ag Sinn Féin le Seachtain na Gaeilge i mbliana lenár n-ionadaithe sna hinstiúidí polaitíochta éagsúla, an tOireachtas ina measc. Déanfaidh muid iarracht daoine a spreagadh a gcúpla focail a chleacht, níos mó Gaeilge a úsáid sa bhaile, lena gcairde, ar an ghuthán, nó ar na meáin shóisialta, lena n-áirítear Facebook, Twitter, Instagram srl. Déanfaidh Sinn Féin beartas nua Gaeilge a lainseáil i dTeach Laighean comh maith.

Beidh Aontacht na hÉireann lárnach sna imeachtaí seo ar fad. Tá muid ag iarraidh ar ionadaithe físeáin ghairide a thairdead le hAontacht na hÉireann mar theachtaireacht ann ach go háirithe.



**DIANCHÚRSA
GAEILGE**

Learn key words
& phrases from the
Uniting Ireland
Campaign

1 HOUR INTENSIVE ONLINE CLASS
9ú Márta 7.30pm
FÁILTE ROIMH CHÁCH- ALL WELCOME

Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022

ZOOM DETAILS:
Meeting ID: 961 6135 6492
Passcode: 741613



#Time4Unity
Am d'Aontacht

<https://sinnfein-ie.zoom.us/j/96161356492?pwd=aEhXZHB2Ni8yTVZ6dTVNYmI0NUZzUT09>
Meeting ID: 961 6135 6492
Passcode: 741613

#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

Time for a National Citizens' Assembly on Irish Unity

There is more discussion at present on the constitutional future of our nation than at any time since the signing of the Partition Treaty in 1921. Irish unity is a topic of conversation in homes, schools and workplaces across the country.

These informal conversations are essential. We all have a part to play in shaping the change which is taking place in Irish society. But there is a special onus on the Dublin Government to convene a forum for structured discussion on the future. It is time for the government to establish a national Citizens' Assembly on Irish unity.

In 2012 the Irish government's Constitutional Convention included representation from the north and the diaspora. The Citizens' Assembly on unity should follow this precedent. Recently Dublin announced that it would hold citizens' assemblies on biodiversity and directly elected mayors.

Sinn Féin's national chairperson Declan Kearney called for the additional establishment of the Citizens' Assembly on unity saying:

"I welcome the Irish government's decision to establish two new Citizens' Assemblies. However, constitutional change and the future shape of the island of Ireland in the 21st century is the defining issue of our generation. "The debate on Irish reunification is growing daily. The momentum for constitutional change on this island has never been stronger. Questions about the future of the health service; the cost implications of unity; an all-island health service; future governance arrangements; taxation; pensions and public services; and the place of unionists within the new Ireland, are among many important issues that a Citizens' Assembly could discuss in an informed environment."

Sinn Féin TDs Mairéad Farrell and Pearse Doherty also raised

the Citizens' Assembly directly with An Taoiseach Micheál Martin when he attended the Dáil Finance Committee meeting in February.

The Taoiseach pointed to the Shared Island Unit, which he established, as a model for engagement with civic society on a range of issues outside the constitutional question and to a €40 million research fund for joint research initiatives between researchers in the South and researchers in the North. While this is laudable and very welcome, as Pearse Doherty stated, the preparations for a unity referendum must begin formally and the questions around what shape the new united Ireland will take must be formally answered also.

The national Citizens' Assembly on unity is the best way to have this national conversation with the resulting reports used to inform government policy moving forward. It would provide the space for those participating to discuss all of the aspects of uniting Ireland from culture, to the economy, health, governance structures, and the necessary engagement with unionist opinion in the North.

The future of our country is a topic that everyone is talking about. People want change, the best way to deliver change is through a united Ireland and the best way to plan is through a national citizens' assembly.

...the preparations for a unity referendum must begin formally and the questions around what shape the new united Ireland will take must be formally answered also.

Citizens' Assembly on Irish Unity raised with An Taoiseach

“*The conversation in respect of our future has progressed...The idea of a national citizens' assembly would be that people from all backgrounds and all perspectives would be able to come together and have this conversation.*

MAIRÉAD FARRELL TD



Citizens' Assembly on Irish Unity raised with An Taoiseach

“*What will our taxation system look like? What will our new health system look like? How will the transition of the Six Counties to the EU take place? What will the economy look like? What will a new constitution look like? How will the identities and traditions of 1 million people who identify themselves as British or unionist not just be recognised but cherished on a new island? All of these tricky and sensitive questions must be asked formally.*

PEARSE DOHERTY TD



Bí amúigh, bí gníomhach
BÍ AG SIÚL
 d'AONTAGHT NA hÉIREANN
 i do cheantar!

Eagraigh do shiúlóid féin

Get out, get active,
GET WALKING
FOR IRISH UNITY
 in your locality!

Organise your own walk

Satharn/Domhnach 26ú/27ú Feabhra **Sat/Sun 26th/27th Feb**

Bain úsáid as #AmdAontacht

#Time4Unity
Am d'Aontacht

Tweet your pictures using #Time4Unity

#Time4Unity
Am d'Aontacht



Huge turnout for Unity Walks

There was a huge turnout across the island for the many Unity Walks held over the weekend of the 26 and 27 February. From Derry to South Armagh, from Waterford to west Belfast, from Galway to Antrim and lots of places in between almost 40 Unity Walks were held to promote Irish Unity. With most areas enjoying bright sunshine, although chilly, many of the walks attracted scores of young and old. The walks were positive events, full of colour, positivity and energy.



Maoliosa McHugh MLA addressed the large crowds who took part in Lifford and Strabane. The West Tyrone MLA said, "Events like the Walk for Irish Unity are an opportunity to demonstrate the demand for reunification that now exists. The conversation on Irish Unity is growing every day- we should all play our part by having discussions with friends, work colleagues and family on this issue."



Huge turnout for *Unity Walks*



#Time4Unity **Am d'Aontacht**

**Celebrate International Women's Day
– Tuesday 8 March**



WOMEN LEADING A NEW IRELAND

Uachtarán Shinn Féin Mary Lou McDonald will host a major conference for women activists on 5th March in Dublin's Gresham Hotel.

The event, entitled 'Women Leading in a New Ireland', begins at 1.30pm, and will be addressed by a number of speakers from across Ireland including Joanne O'Riordan, Dr. Salome Mbugua and Emma de Souza.

The conference, which will also mark International Women's Day, will feature discussion on a variety of themes including 'Breaking the Bias', 'Thinking Nationally, Acting Locally' and 'Active Everywhere'.

Mary Lou McDonald said;

"As we move through the decade of centenaries it is accepted that women were excluded from the construction of the new state. The result of our exclusion can be felt across Irish society today.

Despite the inequalities and fear heaped on us, women have always fought back. Women's record in delivering positive change, not just for ourselves but for Irish society, speaks for itself.

Yet fear of harassment and violence remains part and parcel of our daily lives. We are underrepresented in politics, and over represented in precarious low paid employment. We do most of the caring yet receive minimal state supports. Misogyny remains engrained across Irish society.

All of this must change in a new and united Ireland."

All members have been emailed an invitation for the event with registration instructions, registration is essential for this event.

Other similar events have also been planned in west Tyrone and west Belfast.

West Tyrone Sinn Féin MLA Nicola Brogan will host an online event to mark International Women's Day on Tuesday 8th March at 7.30pm. The theme of this event is 'Women Leading a New Ireland'. Guest speakers include Carál Ní Chuilín MLA and Mairéad Farrell TD. This event is open to all Sinn Féin activists and supporters. Bígí linn!

SAVE THE DATE!
Mary Lou McDonald TD, Uachtarán Shinn Féin, invites you to
WOMEN LEADING A NEW IRELAND
Conference for International Women's Day
Saturday 5th March
Gresham Hotel, Dublin, Registration @ 13:30
International Women's Day
#BreakTheBias #IWD2022

Lá idirnáisiúnta na mBan 2022

Tuesday 8 March | 7.30pm | Online
West Tyrone Sinn Féin invite you to
WOMEN LEADING A NEW IRELAND
Nicola Brogan MLA, Mairéad Farrell TD and Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Meeting ID: 856 7595 4583
Passcode: 940902
#BreakTheBias #IWD2022

Women defending the Republic

On the 12 January 1922 the Executive of the Cumann na mBan met in Dublin. Countess Markievicz chaired the meeting. A resolution opposing the Treaty was passed. It said: "That this Executive Committee of the Cumann na mBan reaffirms their allegiance to the Republic of Ireland, and therefore cannot support the articles of agreement signed in London on the 6th December, 1921." The motion was passed by the Executive by 24 votes to 2 One month later on the 5

February almost 500 women gathered in the Mansion House for a convention of the Cumann na mBan. It was the first of the national organisations to debate the Treaty. When the vote was taken 419 members voted against the Treaty and 63 voted in favour. The six women members of the Second Dáil all voted against the Treaty. They were Countess Markievicz, Kathleen Clarke, Margaret Pearse, Mary MacSwiney, Kate O'Callaghan and Dr. Ada English. Kate O'Callaghan's husband

Michael – a former Mayor of Limerick - had been murdered by the Auxiliaries. In her address to the convention she said: "The women of An Dáil are women of character, and they will vote for principle, not for expediency." Mary MacSwiney, whose brother Terence died on hunger strike, warned that should the Treaty be accepted she would become the Free State's 'first rebel.' Countess Markievicz said: "I am pledged as a rebel, an unconvertible rebel, because I am pledged to the one thing – a free and independent Republic." Republican women took the lead in opposing the Treaty. Sinéad McCooile in her book – No Ordinary Women – publishes the names of 552 women who were imprisoned by the Provisional Government and then the Free State government in Kilmainham Gaol, Mountjoy Jail and the North Dublin Union. The Free State government banned the Cumann na mBan in January 1923. In the decades that followed the Cumann na mBan continued to play a crucial role in the struggle to end partition.



#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

UNITING IRELAND EASTER EGGS- PREORDER NOW



The Ard Chomhairle sub-committee which is focused on the issue of Irish Unity periodically produces weird and wonderful uniting Ireland themed items like St. Patrick's Day Cards or Christmas Cards and Jigsaws or Valentine Cards.

The purpose is to get people talking about Irish Unity. Last year we made up a very limited number of Easter Eggs. They sold out within hours. The bag and wrapping they came in are now one of those fond keep-sakes that people hold on to.

This St. Patrick's Day there will be cards aris and Easter eggs will also be available.

Pre-orders can now be made for our Limited Edition Uniting Ireland Easter eggs.

These will be available from An Fhuiseog, Belfast and the Sinn Féin Bookshop, Dublin.

Orders can be made online, in store on by phone.

There are only a limited number available so get your order in now!

Belfast- <http://thelarkstore.ie/> 028 9024 3371

Dublin- <https://www.sinnfeinbookshop.com/> +353 872301882

REGISTER TO VOTE - BUILDING A UNITED IRELAND

The Assembly election in the North takes place on 5 May – a date republicans mark each year as the anniversary of the death on hunger strike of Bobby Sands.

The importance of this election cannot be overstated. The DUP and UUP refuse to state whether they will accept a Sinn Féin First Minister. 100 years after partition and almost a quarter of a century since the Good Friday Agreement, unionist leaders continue to treat nationalists as second class citizens.

Whether it is in their opposition to Irish Language legislation or to a Sinn Féin First Minister, unionist leaders still believe they can deny nationalists our basic

human rights. This is not acceptable. Those days are over, gone, done with. The sectarian bullying of the past has to be consigned to the past. However hard some elements try to stir up sectarian tensions, attacking



academics or lawyers or other professionals on the sole basis that they are Catholic, they will not succeed. The day of inequality and second class citizenship is finished.

The Assembly election provides a once in a generation opportunity to transform and fundamentally change the direction of travel.

Constitutional change is now at the top of the political agenda. A United Ireland is on the horizon and is achievable if we collectively apply ourselves. It is important that this opportunity is grasped. You too can be a change maker. But only if you are registered to vote.

It is important that young people especially who are either not registered or are not inclined to vote. You can make a real difference. You have until 14 April to Register to Vote. <https://www.eoni.org.uk/Register-To-Vote/>



IRELAND'S FUTURE PLANS MAJOR CONFERENCE FOR DUBLIN

In a significant stepping up of its campaign for Irish Unity Ireland's Future announced in February its intention to launch a 150 page "vision document" for the future of the island of Ireland at a major conference in the 3 Arena in Dublin. The group anticipate an audience of 10,000 people. The conference – Preparing for a New Ireland – will take place on Saturday 1 October. The group also expects well known figures from the USA, Europe and Ireland to attend. As part of its overall approach Ireland's Future is focussed on reaching out to the Irish diaspora. In this context it will be holding a conference in Philadelphia on 12 March and a second in New York on 14 March.

This future planning follows on from the meeting Ireland's Future held in the Clayton Hotel in Limerick on the 24 February. That very successful event was chaired by broadcaster Vincent Browne. Other contributors included Dr. Ruan O'Donnell, Sinn Féin TD Maurice Quinlivan, Sandrine Ndahiro, Cllr Uruemu Adejinmi and Fianna Fáil TD Cathal Crowe. The group also plans a meeting in Louth in March.

As Ireland's Future has attracted more and more public interest the personalised attacks on one of its main spokespersons Prof Colin Harvey has grown. The DUP blocked his appointment to an expert committee established to draft a Bill of Rights for the North and several unionist spokespersons. Ruth Dudley Edwards wrote in her Newsletter she found Ireland's Future; "just the mention of his self-righteous organisation makes me groan." Since its establishment several years ago Ireland's Future has published position papers on the economy and citizenship. Its vision document will cover issues like the economy, the unity referendum and health.

Time 4 Unity **Am d'Aontacht**

Crann na Saoirse

HAVE YOU PLANTED YOUR FREEDOM TREE YET?

Local areas continue to plant Crann na Saoirse. Some in memory of comrades and others as a reminder of the key importance of Irish Unity to the future freedom and prosperity of the Irish people.

Easter is only 6 weeks away. If you haven't planted a Crann na Saoirse yet why not plan to plant a freedom tree for Easter Sunday 17 April. Dublin Mid - West Sinn Féin activists came together on his first year anniversary Saturday 12th February to plant a commemorative Unity tree for Tommy Grant.

Tommy was a Trade Unionist and a lifelong republican who was known and respected for his activism not only across Dublin but across Ireland. He was extremely committed to the pursuit of a United Ireland.

It was a fitting tribute therefore that his wife Doreen planted a Unity Tree as a symbol of Tommy's dedication to the cause.

As the tree grows we remember Tommy and take pride in the fact that it will be growing in an equal and just United Ireland. Eoin O Broin TD described Tommy as our foundation, our backbone and our guiding light. No job too small, no challenge too big. We owe him so much he will be forever in our thoughts, words and deeds.

Ní bheidh A Leithéid le feiceáil Arís



Crann na Saoirse at the Davitts



Falls Crann na Saoirse planted at Hunger Strike memorial on the Falls Rd by Pat Sheehan MLA and Fra McCann & comrades



Waterside, Derry

Flying the flag for Irish unity...

David Jones is the local area representative for the Kinnegad Lea in Westmeath. He works alongside Johnny Guirke TD and Sorca Clarke. He is taking the message of Irish Unity on to Lough Ennell just outside Mullingar, Co. Westmeath



In the Cooley mountains...

... up on the mountains of Cooley...

... and at our games!



UI banners at the Antrim v Dublin hurling match at the weekend

#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

**UNITING
IRELAND**

**UNITING
WORKERS**

PUBLIC MEETING



**BUILDING A NEW
AND UNITED
IRELAND AFTER
COVID**



GERRY MURPHY
INTO



MARGARET MCKEE
UNISON



FIONNUALA
NÍ BHRÓGÁIN
CWU



PADDY MACKEL
BELFAST
TRADES COUNCIL

7.30PM
WEDNESDAY
30TH MARCH

ÁRAS UÍ CHONGHAILE
374 FALLS ROAD
BELFAST

Building a new and United Ireland after Covid

Trade Unionists for a New and United Ireland will hold a public event later this month to discuss their vision for the country following the pandemic. The discussion will focus on what demands the trade union movement should be advancing in a New and United Ireland, including an All-Ireland NHS, climate action and workers rights. The event will be chaired by former ICTU President Gerry Murphy, while former President of Unison Margaret McKee and Paddy Mackel of the Belfast Trades Council will speak. Other panellists will be announced in the coming days. Building A New and United Ireland After Covid will take place at 7.30pm on Wednesday 30th March in Áras Uí Chonghaile, 374 Falls Road. All trade unionists are welcome to attend.

Begin planning for unity referendum says former Alliance leader

The demand that the Irish government begin planning for the Good Friday Agreement provision that allows for a unity referendum has won the support of former Alliance Party leader and Fine Gael MEP John Cushnahan. Speaking at a debate in Cambridge University - Revisiting the Good Friday Agreement and the conditions necessary for holding a Border Poll - Cushnahan said that "prior to any border poll taking place, we must ensure that the electorates in both parts of Ireland are fully informed beforehand, and I don't mean on the eve of the poll itself - the process of educating them should take place now."

The former Fine Gael MEP also urged greater university and academic involvement in providing greater analysis of the "political/institutional/constitutional options" open to citizens. He added however that the main area of consideration should be an all-Ireland constitutional arrangement and he detailed these as a unitary state, federal state, and confederate state. Caoimhe Archibald MLA welcomed Cushnahan's suggestions and encouraged universities across Ireland to "step up the academic momentum that is gathering pace around the debate on a new and united Ireland." She pointed out that Sinn Féin has been consistently urging the Irish government to begin

the process of planning for Irish Unity. "It is vital that in advancing the objective of constitutional change the Irish government does not make the same mistake the Conservative government made in 2016 in failing to properly inform public opinion during the Brexit referendum."

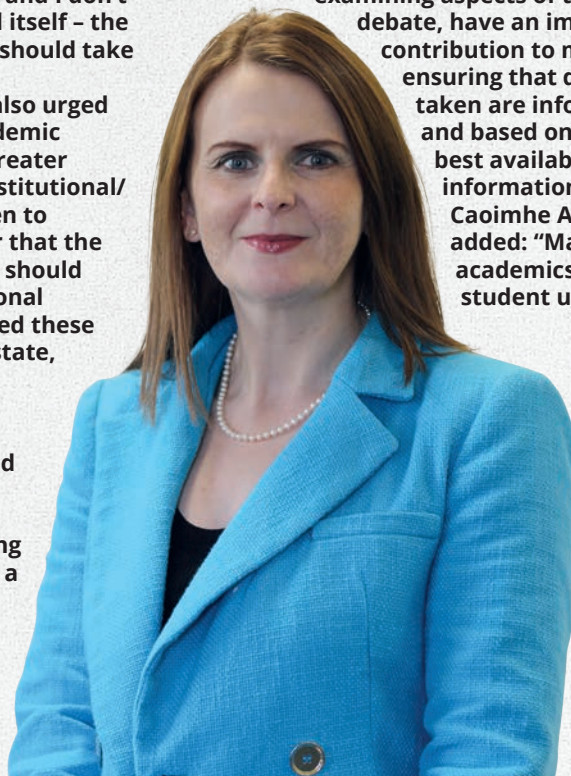
The reality is that preparation and planning are essential in charting a new constitutional path for the island of Ireland. Academics and universities, many of whom are already involved in examining aspects of the unity debate, have an important contribution to make in ensuring that decisions taken are informed and based on the best available information.

Caoimhe Archibald added: "Many academics and student unions'

are already involved in the debate on constitutional change, including discussing constitutional protections, rights of citizens and the date for the unity referendum. Dublin City University, Queens, New University of Ulster, Liverpool University and University College London have all produced detailed reports on these issues.

As the conversation continues to grow, the input and expertise that universities can bring to key areas of governance like law, the economy, health provision and much more will be crucial in setting out how a new Ireland can be inclusive, based on equality and will work for all our citizens.

The momentum for constitutional change on this island has never been stronger. Discussion is taking place everywhere. Now is the time for the Irish government to establish a national Citizens' Assembly on constitutional change to allow people to have their say."



"The momentum for constitutional change on this island has never been stronger. Discussion is taking place everywhere."
- Caoimhe Archibald, MLA

#Time4Unity Am d'Aontacht

Demand grows for Irish Passports

In the debate over Irish Unity and as anger mounts over the detrimental impact of Brexit on the North, more and more citizens in the six counties are ignoring past political loyalties and choosing to opt for Irish passports when travelling.

Sinn Féin's Leader in the Seanad Niall Ó Donnghaile has constantly raised this issue with the Irish government. Specifically he has called on it to open a much-needed Irish Passport Office in the North to meet the growing demand. Niall Ó Donnghaile recently pointed out that there is "a clear, demonstrable and identifiable need" for a passport office that can relieve the huge pressure on passport office staff in Dublin.

In 2019 there were over nine hundred thousand applications for Irish passports, with over 94k coming from the North and Britain. That figure has increased in the last two years. Currently more than 400 passports are being issued every day to citizens living in the six counties. It is estimated that if this continues that by the end of the year more than 150,000 Irish passports will have been issued to citizens living in the North.

Department of Foreign Affairs statistics also reveal that in the last ten years 660,427 Irish passports were issued in the North and the demand is increasing not slowing down. At the same time there has been a decline in the numbers applying for British passports.

Undoubtedly the fact that an Irish passport allows for easier movement



DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS STATISTICS ALSO REVEAL THAT IN THE LAST TEN YEARS 660,427 IRISH PASSPORTS WERE ISSUED IN THE NORTH AND THE DEMAND IS INCREASING NOT SLOWING DOWN. AT THE SAME TIME THERE HAS BEEN A DECLINE IN THE NUMBERS APPLYING FOR BRITISH PASSPORTS.

with the EU and this is very attractive to business people and those going on holiday. The commitment from the EU that a United Ireland will automatically rejoin the EU is clearly a positive in the debate around the advantages of Unity.

An tAontas Eorpach
European Union

ÉIRE
IRELAND



Pas
Passport



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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