



# British government breaking international law - CONDEMNED!

Sinn Féin President, Mary Lou McDonald TD, has condemned the announcement by the British Government to strip away the Protocol as 'shameless, reckless, and dangerous' while echoing that this move is in breach of international law.

Following the British Government's announcement, during a Dáil debate, Mary Lou McDonald said:

"The British Government published legislation that gives British ministers power to override unilaterally parts of the Irish protocol. This move by the British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, and his government is disgraceful and utterly reckless.

"Mr Johnson's belligerent approach to Ireland is part of a cynical attempt to cling to power in Britain at any cost. It jeopardises so much achieved by so many over such a long period of time.

"It fundamentally undermines the Brexit protections for Ireland that were so hard won, and it risks serious economic and political damage.

"The British Government's plan to strip away the protocol is a plan intentionally to break international law.

"In a supreme act of bad faith, it intends to walk away from its legal obligations and agreements. It is worth remembering that not alone did the British Government sign-up the protocol but, in fact, it was central to designing its content and operation.

"The utter recklessness of this move is underscored by the fact the protocol is, in fact, working. It gives the North access to both the British market and the EU Single Market of more than 500 million people.

"The North's economy is outperforming the English economy; business is growing and new jobs are being created. Of course, cross-border trade has increased significantly, and the all-island economy is thriving. The Tory Government now puts all of this at risk.

"We have heard voice after voice from the business community describe how this unilateral action threatens significant harm to businesses in Ireland and, indeed, in Britain.

"The way to resolve implementation issues



**"Boris Johnson's dangerous move has been strongly condemned in Europe, in the United States, and indeed across the world."**

is to sit down and talk to the EU, but this is something the British have now refused to do.

"Boris Johnson's dangerous move has been strongly condemned in Europe, in the United States, and indeed across the world.

"The actions of the British Government are shameful, reckless and dangerous.

"We must now mobilise all forces in support of the Good Friday Agreement and for Ireland's prosperity to ensure Boris Johnson is faced down."

- ▶ **Vice President at the European Commission Maroš Šefčovič:** "Let's call a spade a spade — this is illegal."
- ▶ **US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer:** "The world is now watching the next moves of the British Government and the onus is on them to honour the agreements they've made and end their attempts to breach international law."
- ▶ **German Chancellor Olaf Scholz:** "A very sad decision made by the British government, ... there is no reason for this."
- ▶ **Spanish Secretary of State for the EU - Pascual Ignacio Navarro Ríos:** "if the legislation goes ahead, which as you know is a long process... but the tabling of the Bill constitutes in itself a breach of the Brexit Agreement. We find this unacceptable."
- ▶ **First Minister elect Michelle O'Neill MLA:** "We know that the Irish Protocol is being used as a proxy for political unionism to undermine the Good Friday Agreement and shift the goalposts as they cannot accept the outcome of a democratic election."

# FIRST MINISTER FOR ALL - Michelle O'Neill



Having received an overwhelming endorsement by the electorate for our positive vision for the future it is now our top priority to deliver for the whole community.

Irrespective of religious, political, or social backgrounds our commitment is to make politics work through partnership, not division.

Our collective mission is to work together to solve the problems facing this society – that is tackling health waiting lists, getting people access to a GP when they need it, funding mental health services, cancer treatment, building affordable homes to meet growing demand, delivering the best education for our young people, and creating decent jobs.

The democratic outcome of the election must be respected.

The majority of MLAs returned on the 5th May support the protocol because it is working. Yes it can work better – but only through joint EU/BG solutions is that possible.

It gives the North access to both the British market and the EU single market of more than 500 million consumers - the biggest and most powerful trading bloc in the world.

There is no cost to us being inside the single market, but enormous costs if we are not.

We know that the protocol is a proxy for political unionism to undermine the Good Friday Agreement because their perpetual veto is gone, because the balance of power has irreversibly shifted, Sinn Féin is the largest party, I am the First Minister in waiting – and so they are holding Boris Johnson down, and holding power-sharing and equality up, because they cannot

bring themselves to accept the new and present realities which we face.

Our economy is now outperforming England which is evidenced by the British government's own economic data, local businesses and producers are flourishing and filling gaps in the market and All-Ireland supply chain, which is sustaining jobs, and creating new employment.

Boris Johnson and Brandon Lewis are giving the DUP cover and let's be clear – the political stability of the North cannot be a hostage to the Tory-in fighting, Westminster chaos and continued DUP disruption.

Those who hanker for the past, and attempt to disrupt the present and threaten the future must realise that this society is moving forward and we won't be dragged back.

Our focus is on the future and on

the future of our young people.

To move forward also means dealing with the past, and the British Government abandonment of the Stormont House Agreement and their introduction of amnesty legislation amounts to a judicial blackout with the denial of truth and justice for scores of families impacted - this has been characterised by the Human Rights Commission as "fatally flawed".

We will stand with all victims and survivors of the conflict and continue to campaign for their right to truth and justice.

If those elected to serve fail to restore the democratic institutions then it is not a case of Direct Rule from London on the cards, but Joint Authority from Dublin and London.



# The DUP and Tories are using a wrecking ball against the GFA, Declan Kearney MLA

Speaking about the political crisis in the North of Ireland Sinn Féin National Party Chairperson Declan Kearney said: "It's now six weeks since the northern Assembly election when the political landscape changed dramatically. Sinn Féin emerged as the largest political party. A female republican leader Michelle O'Neill is the First Minister elect. Positive, progressive politics are in the ascendency.



Declan Kearney MLA

The election results reaffirmed the loss of political unionism's electoral majority in 2017. Responding to the DUP's refusal to form a Stormont Executive the Sinn Féin Chairperson said, "there is no evidence that the DUP is committed to proper power sharing, unless it is on DUP terms" This present Tory government in London acted last week to unilaterally break international law, by effectively tearing up the Protocol and, by extension, Britain's Withdrawal Agreement with the EU. The Tories are giving cover to the DUP for running the power sharing institutions into the ground in the north; and the DUP's stance provides cover for the Tories in its 'cold war' stand-off with Europe. The Tories have malevolently inflamed that idea and spun the lie that the Protocol is an economic disaster. The combined false rhetoric, lies and spinning is a mirror reflection of the fake news and 'Project Fear' agenda associated with the Brexit Referendum

in 2016." The South Antrim MLA went on to say, the latest Tory proposal to derogate from the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) within its jurisdiction, would dismantle the core rights framework of the GFA. "The DUP and Tories are using a wrecking ball against the political and legislative foundations of the GFA. They are attempting to hollow out the fundamental, underpinning principles of the peace settlement in Ireland. That is not lost on the international community, which is becoming increasingly engaged with the unfolding political and economic situation in Ireland. The discussion about the prospect of Irish unity is growing in momentum and the mechanism exists to bring it about peacefully and democratically. The political momentum for Irish reunification both north and south is increasingly associated with re-entry to the EU, conferred with the status of an international treaty lodged in the United Nations. The foundations and primacy of international law and treaties are being fundamentally challenged and undermined. The days of the DUP and unionist extremists dictating the terms of democracy, power sharing, or implementation of the GFA are long finished.

**We have arrived at a new historic moment. It is time to begin planning for the next phase of the peace process, and preparing for a new, agreed Ireland."**



You can read the full text of Declan Kearney's blog here: <https://www.anphoblacht.com/contents/28344>

## German minimum wage increase shows what can be done to tackle cost of living

- Louise O'Reilly TD



Sinn Féin spokesperson on Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Louise O'Reilly TD, has said that moves in Germany to increase the minimum wage to €12.00 per hour from October 1st show what can be done by a government willing to help support workers in the face of a cost-of-living crisis.

Teahcta O'Reilly reflected that the Irish government should take a leaf out of their book and follow suit by delivering a Living Wage, the Deputy said:

"Germany's lower house of parliament approved an increase in the minimum wage of 22 percent in an effort to tackle the cost-of-living crisis in the country.

"The moves will see the

minimum wage increase immediately from €9.82 to €10.45 from the start of July, and a further increase to €12.00 per hour from 1st October.

"The move to a €12.00 per hour minimum wage is a 22 percent increase on the current rate and it shows what can be done when a government is willing to stand up for the lowest paid workers.

"The Irish government should look carefully at what is planned in Germany and prepare to follow suit and implement a Living Wage to help alleviate the cost-of-living crisis for workers here.

"The Living Wage Technical Group has calculated that

a Living Wage of €12.90 per hour needs to be delivered to ensure that workers are not living in poverty.

"There is general agreement across the political spectrum that we need a Living Wage to tackle low pay and the cost-of-living crisis. Indeed, Sinn Féin has a published plan outlining how a Living Wage can be introduced whilst also protecting financially vulnerable businesses.

"I would call on the government to work with Sinn Féin and all those committed to a Living Wage and begin preparations to deliver for workers and help tackle the cost-of-living crisis."

**"The Living Wage Technical Group has calculated that a Living Wage of €12.90 per hour needs to be delivered to ensure that workers are not living in poverty.**



Senator  
Paul  
Gavan

## UNITED EUROPEAN LEFT PRESIDENT HEARS CASE FOR IRISH UNITY

The second part of the ordinary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) took place on the week beginning 25 April.

There was a great deal of interest about Sinn Féin's progress in Ireland. The fact that the Irish government has taken over the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers from May until November has added to the focus on Irish politics.

On 31st May, President of the Parliamentary Assembly Tiny Cox travelled to Dublin and held an important meeting with Sinn Féin President, Mary Lou McDonald TD.

President McDonald gave an update of political developments including the recent success of Sinn Féin in the north's Assembly elections, the challenges of getting a new Assembly established and overcoming British government intransigence on the Protocol.

The Leader of the United European Left in PACE, George Katrougalos, also held a meeting with Mary Lou McDonald. As well as exchanging political updates there was real interest in George's role as rapporteur in an upcoming report and debate on 'The impact of Brexit on Human Rights on the island of Ireland'.

George hopes to complete the report by the end of the summer and hopefully see it scheduled for debate and adoption during the October PACE Session, which will still be under the Irish Presidency.

Reflecting on a very busy few weeks in PACE Paul Gavan said:

"There is a renewed interest across member state delegates about what is happening in Ireland and especially the significance of Michelle O'Neill being designated as First Minister of any new Assembly in the north.

"There is also a much greater understanding of why Irish unity is such an integral part of our political project to build a new republic."

# PARLAMENTO DE GALICIA

**'RIGHTS,  
GUARANTEES,  
ALTERNATIVES  
AND A BETTER  
FUTURE FOR  
IRELAND'**



## Martina Anderson in Galicia

Speaking in Galicia, at a BNG conference discussion event on 'Rights, Guarantees, Alternatives and A Better Future for Ireland', Sinn Féin's Representative to Europe, Martina Anderson, said:

"The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) while not a political settlement, levelled the political playing field in the north of Ireland.

"The people of Ireland, north and south, voted overwhelming for a "guaranteed" legal right to determine our own constitutional future.

"The rights of the people of Ireland are reflected in international law and within the domestic legal orders of both the Irish and British states. For the first time, Ireland can be reunified, democratically.

"Thursday 5 May was the day that Assembly Elections in the north of Ireland saw the unionist electoral majority eclipsed again by the popular support for Sinn Féin.

"The guarantee of implementing the outcome of a democratic election - which resulted in Sinn Féin securing the position of First Minister - has been undermined by the DUP's refusal to establish a power-sharing Executive.

"The DUP is using the Protocol to demolish the GFA, an agreement it never supported, and the British government is using the Irish Protocol to demolish the Brexit

Withdrawal Agreement.

"For years, this British government and the DUP have driven an anti-GFA agenda, wrapped up in pro-GFA rhetoric.

"Whilst Ireland's peace process is irreversible and the impetus for even greater political and societal change is unstoppable, the resistance of the British government and DUP to ongoing democratic transformation remains relentless.

"The DUP is unwilling to adopt to the changing political landscape, unwilling to accept democracy and unwilling to respect the outcome of an election that did not go its way.

"Maybe the British government and DUP think that Europeans do not care enough about what happens in Ireland nor the consequences of their actions.

"Democrats across Europe have rejected the British Tories' intention to unilaterally break international law on a Brexit Withdrawal Agreement that Boris Johnson agreed, signed, sealed, and delivered.

"If democracy, if rights, if guarantees, and if alternatives are to be equally upheld and if our right to decide our constitutional future is to be protected, Europeans must continue to stand strong against the toxicity of this British rogue state."

## SPANISH MINISTERS CONDEMN BRITISH GOVERNMENT PROTOCOL MOVES

In the Spanish Parliament, Basque EH Bildu Senator, Gorka Elejabarrieta Díaz, questioned two separate Spanish Governmental Ministers in response to the British Governments expressed intentions to abandon the Protocol.

To the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, José Manuel Albares Bueno, Senator Elejabarrieta Díaz questioned the Spanish Government's 'assessment on the impact a British Government unilateral modification of the Protocol could have on the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), and what measures it will take to support the GFA'.

In response, Minister Albares Bueno, outlined: "The Spanish Government will not accept the renegotiation of the Withdrawal Agreement or the Protocol, and in this we are united with all partners in the European Union.

"I have also conveyed this to my British counterpart, Liz Truss, when I saw her, when she mentioned to me the possibility of the UK introducing unilateral legislation, I have conveyed to her my strongest rejection of this.

"Dialogue, constructive spirit with the United Kingdom, between the Commission and the United Kingdom, but also strength in the defence of the withdrawal agreement and the Northern Ireland protocol, because it is undoubtedly the best guarantee of the validity of the Good Friday Agreement".

In echoing the same questions to Minister Albares Bueno, Senator Elejabarrieta Díaz also asked Spanish Secretary of State for the European Union, Minister Pascual Ignacio Navarro Ríos, what the Spanish State's position is on the situation:

"The Spanish position is, similar to that of all other member states, one of complete support for the European Commission.

"Agreements must be fulfilled and even more so when this is such an important and essential agreement for relations between the UK and the EU.

"So we denounce this move, we fully support the Commission and we fully support Ireland.

"The UK accepted this, the UK Parliament agreed to this and they must fulfil the agreement."



Senator Gorka Elejabarrieta Díaz



## MacManus and Sinn Féin Leadership meet with Commissioner Šefčovič and EU Group leaders

Sinn Féin MEP hosts Mary Lou McDonald and Michelle O'Neill for 'positive' EU visit in Brussels

# Brussels leadership visit

On 1 June, Sinn Féin's EU team in Brussels welcomed both our Party President and Vice-President, Mary Lou McDonald TD and Michelle O'Neill MLA, to the European Parliament.

Throughout the day the Sinn Féin team held briefings with leadership figures and members of various political groupings including Renew Europe, Socialists & Democrats and The Greens/EFA.

It was refreshing to hear that across political parties, party groupings and various member states there was a strong eagerness to understand and assist in all areas of developments in Ireland especially towards the implementation of the Protocol and the protection of the Good Friday Agreement.

Quite possibly the most significant engagement of

the day was a meeting in the European Commission with Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič who was briefed on the Assembly elections and how a majority of MLAs returned want the Protocol to work and are opposed to unilateral action by Boris Johnson.

During the discussion, we spoke of the importance of the resumption of talks between EU and the British government based on good faith and joint solutions.

The Sinn Féin visit concluded with a briefing of the Co-Chairs of UK Contact Group, where again the central topic was post-election developments in the north, the implementation of the Protocol and the need for constructive dialogue between the European Commission and the Westminster government.

This was an important visit as it assists us in maintaining and developing the relationship between Belfast and Brussels. It is our responsibility to keep our colleagues in the European institutions keenly aware of every development in the north of Ireland.

The recent election victory was a seismic moment and there is a sense that our friends in Europe understand fully the historic nature of Michelle O'Neill's election to the position of First Minister Designate.

The significance of the change happening on the island of Ireland is certainly causing a stir at an EU level. I believe the leadership visit to the European Parliament was another important step on the road to an exciting new Ireland.

## DID YOU KNOW ABOUT IRELAND?



Mícheál Mac Donncha

Ireland was the only country in Western Europe where there was an armed uprising AGAINST the nation's involvement in the First World War.

Ireland had been promised Home Rule - very limited autonomy - by the British government in return for Irishmen fighting with the British Army. Over 30,000 Irish died on the European battlefields 'for the freedom of small nations' but the British broke their promise and the Irish nation was denied its freedom.

The 1916 Easter Rising saw Irish Republicans led by P.H. Pearse join socialists led by James Connolly in an insurrection to end British rule and to establish an Irish Republic.

James Connolly co-founded one of the first workers' trade union militias in the world - the Irish Citizen Army.

16 leaders of the Rising were executed between May and August 1916. The last leader to be executed was Roger Casement, a renowned humanitarian who exposed massive human rights abuses by the rubber industry against native peoples in King Leopold II's Congo and in South America.

Roger Casement wrote on the inclusiveness of the Irish nation: "And remember that a Nation is a very complex thing - it never does consist, it never has consisted of men of one blood or of one single race. "It is like a river which rises far off in the hills and has many sources, many converging streams before it becomes one great stream."



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