



# CEASEFIRE NOW

Sinn Féin's leaders Mary Lou McDonald TD, Michelle O'Neill MLA and Conor Murphy MLA travelled to the US for a series of political engagements in Washington DC and New York around St Patrick's Day.

The visit included a series of briefings on Capitol Hill, events hosted by Georgetown University, Irish diaspora groups, Labor Unions, US Special Envoy Joe Kennedy, the Ad Hoc Committee to protect the Good Friday Agreement and meetings concerning Ireland's future economic growth.

However, with Israel's continued six-month slaughter of the Palestinian people, both Ireland and Palestine were top of the political agenda in meetings in the US this year.

First Minister Michelle O'Neill MLA urged US President Joe Biden to play a constructive role in securing an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and an end to Israel's blockade on humanitarian aid:

"The United States has been a critical partner for peace in Ireland.

"We deeply value this support.

"Our peace process and the US role in this are a fine example of successful US diplomacy and foreign policy success.

"As the world watches on in horror at the genocide of the Palestinian people, I have urged the US President to apply this same

constructive role to securing: an immediate ceasefire in Gaza; full humanitarian aid; an end to illegal settlements in the West Bank, and a sovereign Palestinian State."



Mary Lou McDonald TD and Rep. Rashida Tlaib

Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD on her first engagement met with Rep. Rashida Tlaib to express support for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

Reflecting that this year's visit brought a message of hope, Mary Lou McDonald TD said:

"Our message in the US has been very clear: we come here as friends, as people who have had the benefit of great support from the United States, for our own peace process and we acknowledge that.

"But in respect of Palestine, the US have got it dangerously wrong.

"Over the last six months, Gaza has become a graveyard for children.

"I will talk to anyone, anywhere in a bid to stop that. That's my responsibility and my duty.

"The achievement of the Good Friday Agreement shows that no conflict is intractable, that peace is always possible and peace must now be the shared will of the international community.

"Leaders in the United States and across the world must now push unequivocally for an immediate, full, permanent ceasefire and for the renewal of a peace process."

# Ireland must be a voice for the Palestinian people

Declan Kearney MLA addressed activists in Belfast's Europa Hotel in February calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, alongside the Palestinian Ambassador to Ireland, and Mustafa Barghouti – live from Ramallah.

The Sinn Féin National Chairperson said:

“We have watched a war of genocide be broadcast and recorded in real time by the victims of that same genocide, with more than 27,000 Palestinians now confirmed dead.

“Ethnic cleansing and genocide is being implemented across Palestine by the Israeli government with total impunity, and with the complicity of the US, Britain, and other western powers.

“Across Ireland, Sinn Féin is introducing motions in councils which will require the compliance of ethical investment and purchasing practices.

“In Dáil Éireann, we have called on the Irish government to join South Africa's legal case against Israeli genocide at the ICJ.

“In an appalling failure of leadership, the government parties refused to do so.

“Sinn Féin will use our engagements in the US, through promotion of our peace process, to demand an end to Israel's war and promote Palestinian national freedom.

“Whether at home or abroad, all Irish influence must be used on behalf of Palestine.

“We must not be silent.

“We will ensure the plight of the Palestinian people is spoken of, and heard everywhere.

“We refuse to stop talking about Palestine.

“The Palestinian people need the combined political and civic pressure of Ireland to be used at home, and internationally on their behalf.

“To achieve a permanent, unconditional ceasefire.

“The withdrawal of all Israeli forces from both Gaza and the West Bank.

“And an end to the human suffering of every Palestinian through effective initiatives, and campaigns.



Declan Kearney MLA, Belfast Europa Hotel



Activists attending the Sinn Féin Belfast Europa Hotel solidarity event

“This should take primacy over everything else.

“While we are closer now than at any time in history to the achievement of Irish self-determination and independence, Sinn Féin believes that our own freedom will ultimately be incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.

“This is a watershed moment.

“Ireland must refuse to stop talking

about Palestine.

“The future of Palestine demands that the democratic world finally acts decisively in support of the Palestinian people's fundamental, national and human rights.

“To the oppressed and dispossessed of Palestine, Ireland sees you, we are with you forever, and will never abandon you.”





## 67 TDs and Senators call on FIFA and UEFA to expel Israel from European and international competition

Chris Andrews TD has welcomed that 67 TDs and Senators have co-signed a letter to FIFA and UEFA calling for Israeli national teams and Israeli clubs to be expelled from all European and international tournaments until the genocide in Gaza ends.

Teachta Andrews said:

“What we are witnessing is barbaric.

“There is an onus on us as parliamentarians to use every avenue possible to bring pressure to bear on Israel to end the slaughter, and to agree to an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

“We saw last month, when Israel played Ireland in a basketball qualifier, how the Israeli war machine uses sporting events as tools for propaganda and to spread misinformation.

“Sporting bodies should not be complicit in that.

“I want to acknowledge the tireless campaigning work over the past number of months by Irish Sport for Palestine.

“A group of Irish sportspersons past and present, who have used their voice and platform to call out Israeli sport-washing and the hypocrisies of international sporting bodies.

“We know how important sport boycotts and sporting sanctions can be.

“Sporting boycotts remain as important now as they did in the fight to end apartheid in South Africa.

“Boycotts work and sanctions work.

“I would urge government parties to join us just as they did when it came to calls to exclude Russia from international sporting competitions.

“Israel cannot be allowed to use sporting events to promote its war machine against the Palestinian people.

“Sporting bodies and sporting communities must stand up for human rights, justice and freedom.”

## ‘Moral hypocrisy’: Government frustrating ‘2023 Illegal Israeli Settlements Bill’

Matt Carthy TD has condemned Irish government moves to frustrate Sinn Féin’s ‘2023 Illegal Israeli Settlements Divestment Bill’.

The Bill was introduced as legislation to ban the state from investing in companies that profit from illegal Israeli settlements.

Sinn Féin’s Foreign Affairs & Defence spokesperson said:

“The government’s decision to frustrate this important legislation is unacceptable.

“In the face of a genocide being inflicted on the people of Gaza, it is imperative that the Irish government take meaningful action to send a clear message that the people of Ireland will not allow our taxpayers’ monies to be invested in companies that profit from Israel’s illegal activities.

“The very least Ireland could do is progress this legislation.

“The decision of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green party to further frustrate the passage of this law is indefensible.

“They already delayed the bill by nine months during time which they could have carried out any scrutiny they wanted.

“The world is looking for steps that can be taken to support the people of Gaza.

“This is one way in which Ireland could have shown vital solidarity in an impactful and meaningful way.

“Sinn Féin demand that this inexcusable delay is overturned immediately.

“This legislation must be allowed to proceed as a matter of urgency.”



Matt Carthy TD

# IRISH UNITY SUMMIT: NEW YORK CITY

On 1st March, Sinn Féin President, Mary Lou McDonald TD delivered a keynote address to an Irish Unity Summit in Cooper Hall in New York City.

The seismic event was organised by a wide range of Irish American organisations that featured notable speakers and panel discussions.

Addressing the summit, Mary Lou McDonald said:

“To address you in the Cooper Union, a Hall that bore witness to the makers of American History is a great honour for me.

“To stand at the very lectern at which Abraham Lincoln asserted the right of Congress to end slavery, in a place whose walls echo with the words of US Presidents, world leaders, and Irish Republicans.

“Friends, the work of nation building, of uniting Ireland, is about creating a home where everyone belongs.

“A nation is a collection of generations walking their length of the same journey.

“Today, our generation holds the compass and the map.

“The people of Ireland get to decide the direction we take, not only for ourselves but for everyone who comes after us.

“The people of Ireland get to shape the future.

“It’s an awesome responsibility.

“One that must inspire, motivate, and excite us.

“Change is happening now, and we cannot let it pass us by.

“For Ireland, the opportunity is just too great.

“The saying goes, ‘Society grows great when people plant trees in whose shade they will never sit.

“But I believe that with every conversation, every debate, every initiative, we plant the seeds of a United



Mary Lou McDonald TD addressing the summit



Irish Traditional musicians playing at the summit



Mary Lou McDonald TD with Governor of New York, Kathy Hochul & Friends of Sinn Féin USA President, Mark Guilfoyle

Ireland that we will see in our lifetime.

“Nation building is the task of dreamers, changemakers, future shapers.

“Just imagine the dream comes to pass.

“Imagine in ten years Ireland is united.

“History will forever record that we were the generation that made Irish Unity a reality, the generation that made history.

“I believe we must achieve it.

“I believe we can achieve it.

“I believe we will achieve it.

“Together, and in our time, we will realise the dream, we will finish the journey, we will shape the future – a new, united Ireland, a nation home for all.”



# Legacy Act must be scrapped - Kelly



Deirdre Hargey MLA

Sinn Féin MLA Gerry Kelly has backed calls from the British Shadow Secretary of State calling on the British government to extend the 1st May Legacy Act deadline.

Also reiterating calls for the British government's Legacy Act to be scrapped, the North Belfast MLA said:

"I echo the call from the British Shadow Secretary of State urging the British government to extend the 1st May deadline for legacy inquests. While the British government actively appeal last week's High Court ruling, this Act should not be allowed to become law.

"I would also once again appeal for this Act to be scrapped. Last week's ruling exposed clearly that key provisions in the Legacy Act breach Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

"This legislation must be repealed and replaced with the Stormont House legacy mechanisms in a human rights compliant manner."



Michelle O'Neill  
MLA & Sinn  
Féin leaders  
interviewed by  
international  
media - London

## Sinn Féin leaders address Foreign Press Association - London

Following the appointment of Michelle O'Neill MLA as First Minister in the northern Assembly, the Sinn Féin leader travelled to London to address the world's media at the Foreign Press Association.

Michelle O'Neill MLA was accompanied by fellow party leaders Mary Lou McDonald TD, John Finucane MP and Conor Murphy MLA during the visit.

Engagements also included live

broadcast interviews on Sky News - Kay Burley Show, Good Morning Britain (GMB), LBC - Andrew Marr and a diplomatic meeting with Palestinian Ambassador to Britain, Husain Zomlot.

After the visit, the First Minister remarked:

"It was fantastic to speak to the international press corps from every corner of the world.

"We talked about the restoration of the Assembly, my determination to deliver for all people and communities, and to work together with others to build a brighter, better future for everyone.

"I will work with everyone who shares our island, to build a brighter and better future where all our people have the best opportunities to prosper and achieve their aspirations in life."

# Two years on – Ireland remains steadfast in support of Ukraine

Sinn Féin spokesperson on Foreign Affairs & Defence, **Matt Carthy TD** has said that two years on from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ireland continues to be committed ‘in our support of the people of Ukraine, adherence to international law, and to peace across Europe and the globe’:



“Two years ago, Vladimir Putin’s Russia launched a brutal and criminal war on its peaceful neighbour, Ukraine.

“For Irish people we are clear whose side we are on.

“We are clear that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is a blatant breach of international law.

“It is a full-scale aggression which has been defined by war crimes committed by the Russian military against innocent people.

“Sinn Féin supports the utilisation of all diplomatic, economic and financial sanctions against Russia in response to these breaches of international law.

“I welcome the constructive approach of the Irish government at a European level in their continued support for Ukraine.

“That approach is one for which they have Sinn Féin’s total support.

“Our unified message to Vladimir Putin must remain clear:

- Russia must immediately withdraw from Ukraine;
- Putin must end his war and end the bloodshed.

“As a neutral country that is consistent in our demand for adherence to international law, whether it is Russia or Israel or anyone else that is in breach, our message today is that Ireland will stand with Ukraine through all the horror.

“We hope and pray that the people of Ukraine win out.

“The actions of Russia should remind the world of a lesson that Ireland has long learned.

“That is that the damaging and



Left to right: Mary Lou McDonald TD, Ukrainian Ambassador G. Larysa & Matt Carthy TD



Mary Lou McDonald TD, Dublin

divisive legacy wrought by colonisation, occupation and the denial of self-determination must end.

“We in Ireland know that imperialist

ventures and colonial aggression have no place in a peaceful world, a world of rights, justice and equality.

“Two years on we repeat that a withdrawal of the Russian military must happen and we must all come together to build a pathway and a plan for peace.

“As we mark two years since Russia’s brutal war against Ukraine commenced, I hope that we won’t have to do so again next year.

“But, if we must then we will remain as committed in our support of the people of Ukraine, to our adherence to international law, and to peace across Europe and the world as we did in the hours, days and weeks immediately after that illegal invasion.”





Chris MacManus MEP

## Second Von der Leyen term would be bad for Ireland & EU

Sinn Féin MEP Chris MacManus has said Ursula von der Leyen should not be offered a second term as European Commission President.

MacManus highlighted a number of shortcomings and controversies that von der Leyen was embroiled in during the current Parliament term which she has spent as Commission chief, particularly at her handling of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza:

“Von der Leyen’s handling of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has severely damaged the European Union’s credibility as a partner for peace and an honest broker for any future negotiations.

“Her unwillingness to call for an immediate ceasefire and sustainable peace is a mark of shame for the EU and

highlights that she is unfit for a second term as President of the European Commission.

“Let’s not forget her u-turn over a move to control vaccine exports to the north of Ireland in early 2021, when her Commission triggered Article 16 of the Irish Protocol.

“There is also a question mark over her unprofessional handling of the process of awarding contracts for COVID-19 vaccines.

“She is also one of their driving forces behind the growing militarisation agenda of the EU, which disrespects Ireland’s long held neutrality.

“It is Sinn Féin’s opinion that all Irish MEPs and candidates ought to commit to resisting her re-appointment as Commission President.”

## Housing Crisis: Doolan addresses Berlin conference

In January, Sinn Féin MEP candidate Daithí Doolan addressed a Die Linke ‘kick-off congress’ in Berlin, Germany.

The congress discussed shared aims for the left ahead of the 2024 European elections in June.

Addressing the ‘Europe for All – Redistribution for Social Justice’ panel, he said:

“The housing crisis in Ireland is unprecedented.

“We have more homeless people now than ever in our history.

“That is the product of consecutive governments who have turned their backs on building public housing, affordable housing and they’ve put a price tag on land, homes and people’s lives.

“In Dublin, people cannot afford to live.

“Our teachers, firefighters, nurses, doctors are all having to leave Dublin to live or are emigrating to Qatar, Australia or Canada.

“Ordinary working-class communities are suffering because they depend on public housing, community infrastructure and public services.

“Sinn Féin is committed to delivering a social housing programme that meets the housing needs of people not developers.”



Daithí Doolan, Berlin



Martina Anderson, Diyarbakir

# Women Political Prisoners Conference

## - Diyarbakir

In January, Sinn Féin representative to Europe, Martina Anderson travelled to Kurdistan to address a 'Chains of Silence: Breaking Down the Walls Surrounding Women Political Prisoners' conference organised by the Kurdish Free Women Movement (TJA). A former political prisoner, Martina Anderson shared a platform with voices from Kurdistan, Basque Country, Palestine and Iran on narratives of resilience against oppressive prison regimes. The conference focused

on issues relating to sexual violence, systematic injustices, interconnected struggles and harrowing personal experiences. In her final remarks to the conference Martina remarked: "All women have similar experiences physically, psychologically and sexually. "The system applies isolation to women starting from our bodies. "I stand here, confidently, that collectively we will remove them from society. "I have no doubt that one day women will live a democratic life in a democratic society."

## CIEMEN Irish self-determination conference – Barcelona

On Friday 1st March, Sinn Féin National Chairperson, Declan Kearney MLA addressed a conference in Barcelona on Irish self-determination organised by the Catalan cultural organisation CIEMEN.

During his visit the Sinn Féin leader also met with political parties in the Catalan Parliament, including 'Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC)', 'Popular Unity Candidacy (CUP)' and 'Junts per Catalunya', addressed a press conference there and was interviewed live on the media station TV3.

Following the visit, he reflected:

"It was an honour to speak in Barcelona, a city that has long stood as a symbol of resilience, unity and the enduring spirit of self-determination.

"The conference focused upon the achievement of Irish reunification and the growing popular momentum for national self-determination.

"These are exciting times in Ireland; constitutional change is now on the political horizon.

"The exercise of national self-determination is more important than ever.

"It is the foundation stone upon which good relationships between nations can be built.

"Self-determination is inseparable from the organisation of society in the interests of all citizens.

"For progressives and democrats of this world, the realisation of national self-determination must be our collective future."



Declan Kearney MLA





Left to right: Declan Kearney MLA, Pello Otxandiano Kanpo, Michelle O'Neill MLA & Senator Gorka Elejabarrieta Diaz



Mary Lou McDonald TD & Pello Otxandiano Kanpo

# EH BILDU LEADER PELLO OTXANDIANO KANPO VISITS IRELAND

Full of enthusiasm, EH Bildu lead candidate in the upcoming 2024 Basque elections Pello Otxandiano Kanpo visited Ireland at the start of March.

Joined by EH Bildu Senator Gorka Elejabarrieta Diaz, the visit involved significant engagements with Sinn Féin representatives Mary Lou McDonald TD, Michelle O'Neill MLA, Declan Kearney MLA, Eoin Ó Broin TD, Cllr. Séanna Walsh and Martina Anderson to showcase a commitment to fostering diplomatic ties between Ireland and the Basque Country.

After the visit, Declan Kearney MLA reflected:

"Ireland and the Basque Country have an historic friendship.

"Sinn Féin were delighted to welcome our EH Bildu friends and comrades to discuss developments in Ireland, Euskal Herria and the special fraternal relations between our parties.

"We wish Pello and EH Bildu every success in the upcoming 2024 Basque elections."

## FREEDOM FOR ÖCALAN

Francie Molloy MP has joined global voices in demanding the immediate release of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan.

The Mid Ulster MP was the keynote note speaker for the 'People's Democratic Assembly's 3rd Annual Conference' in London, where he advocated for engagement and dialogue:

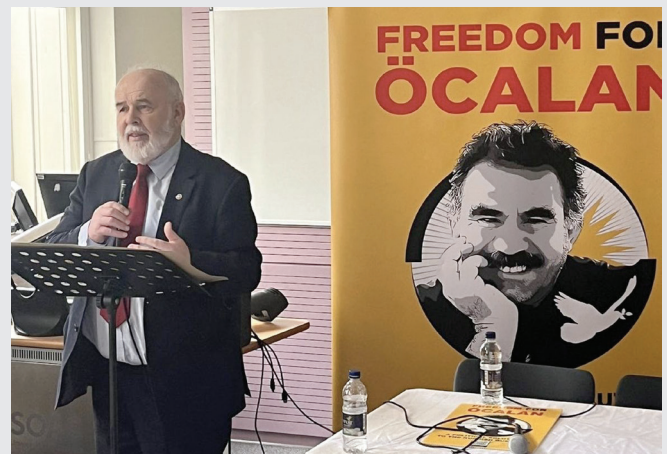
"We have to have faith that

Abdullah Öcalan will see freedom.

"His release is central to resolving the ongoing tensions in the region.

"Irish people understand the situation and problems of the Kurdish people and are capable of empathising with them.

"We will intensify our efforts to promote the Kurdish struggle and Öcalan internationally."



Francie Molloy MP, London

# Latin America 'Adelante!' London Conference

On 27th January, Mickey Brady MP addressed the annual Latin America 'Adelante!' Conference in London. Reflecting on the legacy of Venezuela's late leader Hugo Chavez, Mr Brady remarked: "Chavez was an energetic and enthusiastic leader and when it was discovered that he had cancer he confronted that illness with the same courage and determination that marked his political life. "His extension of free health care and education for all citizens was a noble mission. "He dedicated his life to building a new and radical society in Venezuela. "A society grows great when men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit.

"The Venezuelan revolution provided a powerful stimulus to the growth of left-wing and revolutionary tendencies, both in Latin America and internationally." In the separate session at the conference, Mr Brady spoke on Brazil's advances under President Lula da Silva: "A distinctly Irish aspect of Lula's election was the long line of Brazilian voters who turned out in Croke Park – in October 2022 – to exercise their franchise. "It was beautiful to see participatory democracy in action. "Brazil has demonstrated to the world just how change can take place. "How even at the seemingly darkest of times, a new dawn can rise."



Mickey Brady MP, London



Senator Paul Gavan

## Refusal to ratify Azerbaijan credentials for PACE 'welcome'

Senator Paul Gavan has welcomed the decision of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) to refuse to ratify the credentials of the delegation of Azerbaijan for 2024.

After a debate in January, PACE over-whelmingly endorsed a resolution confirming that the parliamentary delegation from Azerbaijan will not be allowed to attend the Assembly. Senator Gavan – MEP candidate in the upcoming European elections, reflected: "I had the honour of writing two PACE reports relating to humanitarian consequences of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the Lachin Corridor blockade.

"The Azerbaijan government has consistently displayed a flagrant disregard for the key principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law that are fundamental to the Council of Europe. "The endorsed resolution cites 'very serious concerns' about Azerbaijan's ability to conduct free and fair elections, the separation of powers, the weakness of its legislature, the independence of the judiciary, and respect for human rights. "In the light of all of these actions, and the consistent refusal of the Azerbaijan regime to comply with numerous reports produced by the Assembly there was simply no option other than to refuse to ratify the credentials of the Azerbaijan delegation for this year."



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Mary Lou McDonald TD  
**@MaryLouMcDonald**



Michelle O'Neill MLA  
**@moneillsf**



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