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UNITED STATES UNITED IRELAND

Peace is Possible

A Letter From Ireland

a Chara,

I am on the road again, in Washington D.C. this week for meetings and events to mark Saint Patrick's Day. It will come as no surprise that this is not my first rodeo. I first came in 2007 with Martin McGuinness when he was Deputy First Minister. Times have changed since then. We have experienced political ups and downs, challenges and crises, and periods when the institutions were suspended.

Throughout all of this, the US position has been constant; the protection and promotion of the Good Friday Agreement. Progress was made due to the steadfast support of the United States.

The return of government in the North and the re-establishment of the North-South Ministerial Council provided a positive background to this year's gathering. The visit by Michelle O'Neill as First Minister makes it historic. There is nothing but goodwill for Ireland in Washington this week.

Political, civic, and business leaders want our process to succeed. In a world of global uncertainty and the conflict in Gaza, our process remains a beacon of hope.

In all of our meetings, the situation in Gaza has been raised. The Sinn Féin and the Irish position of an immediate ceasefire, ending aid, respect for international law, and the development of a process to deliver a two-state solution was outlined.

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25 years of relative peace.

Conflicts are doomed to remain intractable unless there is a paradigm shift. For over 25 years, US government policy in Ireland deferred to Britain. It was deemed to be an internal matter for Westminster. The conflict continued until the paradigm shifted. The development of a peace process centered in Ireland was matched by a fundamental shift in US foreign policy.

The Clinton administration broke with London, provided a visa for Gerry Adams, and appointed a special envoy. The pursuit of peace, facilitated by the US, became the priority. And it worked.

A change in policy can create the space for a peace paradigm to develop. The building of peace requires a break from past policies that have sustained conflict.

Have a good weekend, and a Happy Saint Patrick's day.

Is mise,

Ciarán

Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

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Lá Fhéile Pádraig faoi mhaise daoibh Happy St. Patrick's Day to you all

We welcome the visit of Michelle O'Neill, First Minister of Northern Ireland, to Washington DC.

The first United Irishlander in history to serve as First Minister.

The peaceful reunification of Ireland is a shared vision of Irish America. It is now possible in our time.

The democratic right of the people to vote for Irish Unity is enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement.

The Irish peace agreements remain an American foreign policy success that our political leaders must continue to protect and safeguard.

Irish America encourages the Irish Government to plan, prepare, and become persuaders for Irish Unity. We urge the establishment of an inclusive Citizens' Assembly.

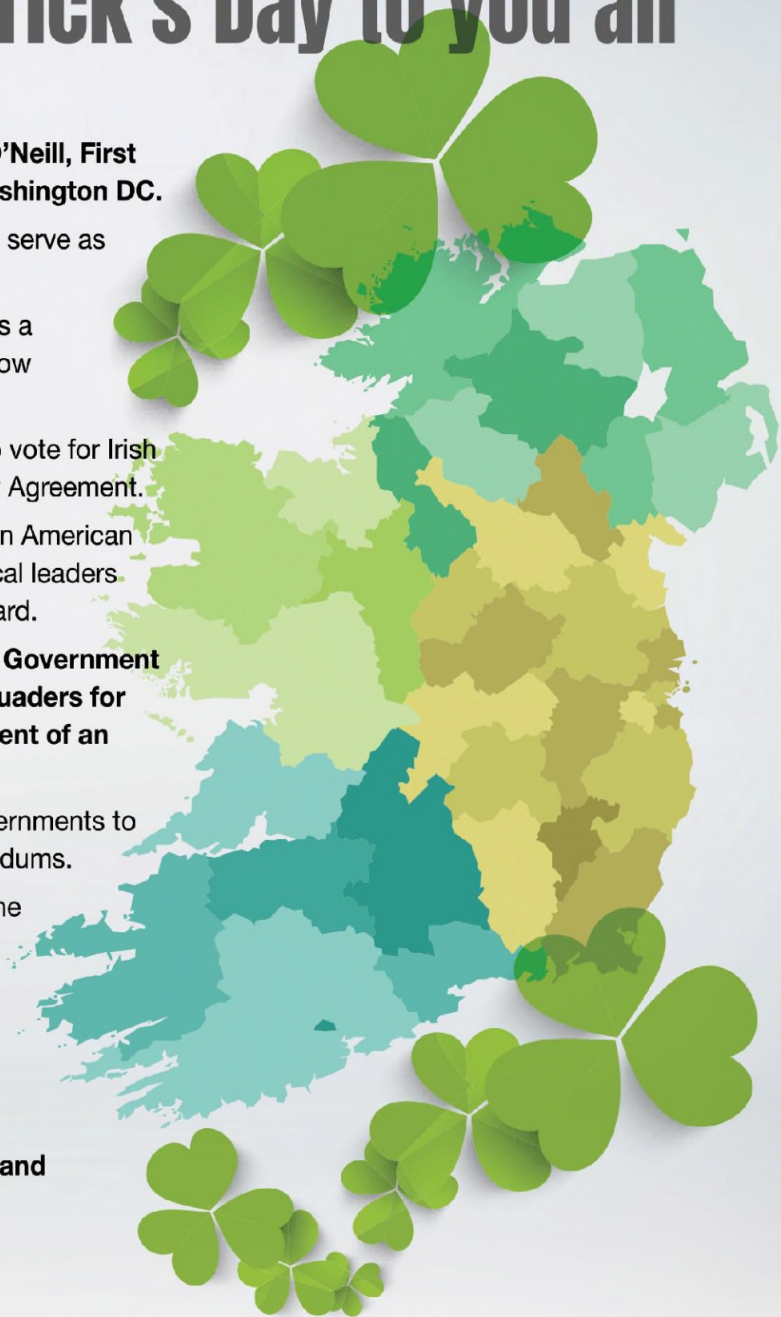
It is time for the Irish and British Governments to agree on a date for the Unity Referendums.

We call on the Irish diaspora to join the debate and plan for Irish Unity.

Let the people have their say.
That's the democratic way.

The future is ours to write.
Together we can build a new Ireland.

A home for all. A United, peaceful, and prosperous Ireland.



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More Irish Unity Summit Pictures

Even more pictures from the Irish Unity Summit! We're still hearing such wonderful feedback about the day. Together, we started a new chapter in the conversation about Irish Unity!



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Ireland and Palestine top political agenda in the US this week

Sinn Féin Leader Mary Lou McDonald is in the US this week for a series of political engagements in Washington DC and New York. During the trip Ms. McDonald will meet with senior political leaders on Capitol Hill and with the US Administration and attend events with business leaders, the Irish diaspora and the Labour Movement. She also met with US Representative Rashida Tlaib, the first Palestinian American woman to serve in Congress.

Ms. McDonald said, "This week Sinn Féin leaders will undertake a series of political engagements in Washington DC and New York. We will brief members of the US Administration and senior Congressional leaders and attend events hosted by Georgetown University, Irish Diaspora groups, Labour Unions, the Ad Hoc Committee to protect the Good Friday Agreement and US Special Envoy Joe Kennedy. We will also attend the Speakers Lunch on Capitol Hill and St. Patrick's Day event in the White House and meet with US and Irish businesses who are key to Ireland's future economic growth.

"Our message in the United States this year is one of hope and opportunity. Coming at a time when the political institutions have been re-established in the north and growing momentum for change as the conversation on Irish unity deepens, the US will continue to be important for political progress and economic success across the island.

"The ongoing slaughter in Palestine will be central to our meetings in the US this year. In our engagements we will be raising the need for an immediate ceasefire and the renewal of a peace process grounded in international law, based on the two state solution."

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Irish Unity Summit - Watch, share, and find your favorite moments

Watch the Irish Unity Summit for the first time, go back and listen to a panel for references and new ideas, or relive your favorite parts. The whole day was captured and is available now for you to watch.

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