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**UNITED IRELAND**

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# The Next Chapter

## A Letter from Ireland

a Chara,

I am back on the road again. I am in Washington DC to meet up with labor, community and political leaders. It has been a very productive couple of days on the Hill as well as with supporters of the Good Friday Agreement and Irish unity.

In the unpredictable political environment of Washington, peace and progress in Ireland remain a constant and a point of bipartisan support.

Our peace agreements remain a beacon of hope and evidence that conflict is intractable or inevitable.

At the core of all conflicts is political failure and refusal to recognize the equal rights and entitlements of others.

History demonstrates that starting a conflict is easier than bringing one to an end. Conflicts develop a self-sustaining dynamic of resistance, retribution and hurt. Breaking the cycle of violence requires breaking with old thinking and policies.

In 1994 President Clinton broke from uncritical support of British policy in Ireland and developed an independent approach that had achieving a peaceful settlement at its heart. He appointed and supported Senator George Mitchell as a Special Envoy to the North of Ireland to eventually chair the talks that led to the Good Friday Agreement.

After the signing of the agreement, Senator Mitchell said, "now the hard work begins". How right he was. Implementing the agreement became a continuation of negotiations. Peacebuilding is not a once-off event. It requires constant nurturing

Through all of that, the US played the role of guarantors of the agreement and its full implementation; pushing for demilitarisation and disarmament, a new beginning to

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re-establishing the institutions of the Agreement.

The role of the US did not end in 1998. It has endured and it has secured peace. The process of peace-building continues.

We have further to travel to reconcile the past with truth, justice, and acknowledgement. The British continue to cover up their role in the conflict.

The Agreement placed the constitutional future of the Island, Irish unity or continued division, in the hands of the people. The right to Irish Unity referendums in both jurisdictions is explicit in the agreement. The vindication of that right has been withheld by both governments.

In particular, the Irish Government refuses to prepare or advocate for Irish Unity.

The British Government refuses to deal with the past and the Irish government refuses to plan for the future.

In resolving these issues, the role of the US as guarantor of the Good Friday Agreement is central. Reconciliation requires truth and acknowledgment. The constitutional future requires respectful and informed discussion. The future, like the past, cannot remain unaddressed.

The full transformative potential of the Good Friday Agreement will not be realised until these issues are resolved.

This week in Washington has reminded me of how much we have travelled. The United States and Irish America have safeguarded our agreements and underwritten the agreements.

The next chapter must be about reconciliation and unity.

Have a great weekend.

Ciarán

**Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America**

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## **Former Taoiseach's intervention in unity debate evidences growing momentum**

Sinn Féin National Chairperson Declan Kearney has welcomed the latest intervention by Leo Varadkar on Irish unity.

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Taoiseach Leo Varadkar is another welcome contribution to the public debate which is taking place.

“His remarks are further evidence of the overall momentum for constitutional change in Ireland, within Irish America, and throughout the global Irish diaspora.

“The former Taoiseach has correctly identified the attitudinal shifts taking place particularly in the north, where the unionist parties are now a political minority in the assembly, at Westminster and at local government.

“These changes are being positively reinforced with the work of the Shared Island Fund, which has committed €2 billion to cross-border projects.

“His call for the Irish government to set aside a quantum of the government’s surplus for ‘a sovereign wealth fund for the transition to a new and united Ireland’ is both timely and prudent.

“While Leo Varadkar points out that reunification is not inevitable, he asserts that the case for constitutional change has to be made and proactively taken forward.

“That must be done by engaging with all of the public policy issues which impact on people’s lives.

“The Irish government needs to listen carefully to the public discourse on Irish unity and develop a strategy to plan and prepare for constitutional change. The government should change its approach now and prioritise reunification as a political objective.”

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## **Save the Date - April 22 - Martin McGuinness Peace Foundation Dinner in New York**

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## Let's build the future of Ireland together - major speech by Michelle O'Neill

Leas Uachtarán Shinn Féin Michelle O'Neill MLA in a major speech to the Mid Ulster People's Assembly on the future of Ireland called on all those with a stake in the question to come together and play their part in road mapping out how best to achieve a future Ireland based on equality for all its citizens.

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## Leveraging the St. Patrick's Day Season: A Strategy to Press Irish Government Officials on Unification

By Brendan McGovern

As the St. Patrick's Day season approaches, Irish government officials will once again make their way to the United States for parades, cultural celebrations, and political events. From New York to Washington, D.C., to Boston and beyond, these visits present a unique opportunity for Irish America to hold them accountable on one of the most pressing issues of our time—Irish unification.

For years, Irish political leaders have used these trips to strengthen ties with the diaspora, engage with U.S. officials, and promote Ireland's economic and cultural interests. But too often, discussions of Ireland's constitutional future are sidestepped in favor of safe diplomacy and business investment. This St. Patrick's season, we must ensure that the issue of unification is not just on the agenda—it must be at the forefront of every conversation.

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Momentum for Irish unity is growing. Changing demographics in the North, shifting political landscapes, and Brexit's fallout have all fueled renewed conversations about a referendum on unification. Polls indicate increasing support for a border poll, and Sinn Féin's electoral success on both sides of the border has further demonstrated the demand for change.

Yet, the Irish Government—the co-guarantor of the Good Friday Agreement—has been hesitant to take the necessary steps to prepare for unity. A Citizens' Assembly, a White Paper on unification, and active engagement with nationalist and unionist communities in the North are all necessary measures that have yet to be taken. The Irish Government must be reminded that its role is not to act as a neutral observer but to actively plan and advocate for a united Ireland.

[\*\*READ FULL STORY HERE\*\*](#)

*Brendan McGovern is an Irish American activist and community organizer who wrote and submitted this piece for publication. Readers can submit stories for publication and consideration at [admin@friendsofsinnfein.com](mailto:admin@friendsofsinnfein.com).*

## **Easter Commemoration in San Francisco with Galway East Sinn Féin TD Louis O'Hara**

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**HONOR IRELAND'S PATRIOT DEAD**

**ANNUAL 1916 EASTER RISING COMMEMORATION  
AT THE GRAVE OF THOMAS DESMOND**

**Fenian Organizer and Catalpa rescue participant  
HOLY CROSS CEMETERY, COLMA.**

**Easter Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April**

**Assemble main Gate 11am.**

**March to graveside with the Pearse and Connolly Fife and  
Drum Band**

**Reading of Phoblacht Na Eireann**

**Main Oration by**

**GALWAY EAST SINN FEIN TD.**

**LOUIS O' HARA**



**ORGANIZED BY THE K.R.B.**

**WEAR YOUR EASTER LILY WITH PRIDE**

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## **‘I am committed to the struggle for equality for everyone’ – Finnegan makes inaugural Assembly speech**

Sinn Féin MLA Aoife Finnegan has said while International Women’s Day is about celebrating women, it is also about recognising the need for all of us—men and women—to work together to break down barriers.

In her first address to the Assembly Aoife Finnegan MLA said it was a great privilege for her first contribution to an Assembly debate to be on a motion marking International Women’s Day.

“I am committed to the struggle for equality for everyone, and to an Ireland of Equals—built on fairness, justice, and opportunity for all.

“While International Women’s Day is about celebrating women, it is also about recognising the need for all of us—men and women—to work together to break down barriers.

“Gender equality is not just a women’s issue; it is a societal issue, and it requires real commitment from all of us in this chamber and beyond.

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where over half of our MLAs are women.

“These incredible women inspire me every day to fight against injustice and the inequalities caused by partition.

“I am committed to the struggle for equality for everyone,” she said.

The new Newry and Armagh MLA also highlighted the importance of advocating for workers, families, and communities, particularly in neglected rural, border regions.

And committed to securing a School Enhancement Programme for St. Patrick’s Primary School in Crossmaglen, and called for rural schools across the constituency to remain a priority, adding, “This school has long served our community with dedication, but it now faces significant challenges due to outdated infrastructure and inadequate facilities.

“I will work tirelessly so that children and staff in Crossmaglen – and in schools throughout Newry Armagh – have the opportunity to thrive in fit-for-purpose, modern school accommodation that provides safe and supportive learning environments.”

Concluding her speech, Aoife Finnegan called for collective action towards achieving gender equality, saying, “As we mark International Women’s Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that women’s voices are heard, their rights are protected, and their contributions are valued in every sector of our society.”



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