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UNITED IRELAND

All Roads Lead to Belfast this Weekend

A letter from Ireland

a Chara,

This weekend will be a homecoming. The Sinn Féin Ard Fheis will be held in my native Belfast.

The Ard Fheis is our annual conference. Around 800 delegates and many more visitors will attend from Friday to Saturday evening. This important conference elects our party leadership and sets Sinn Féin policy.

Sinn Féin is a membership-driven party. Our Party office holders, including the President, Vice President, Chairperson, General Secretary and two Treasurers, serve a one-year term. The delegates also elect members to our Ard Comhairle (High Committee) annually. This means that the leadership is fully accountable to the membership.

From Friday evening through Saturday, over 150 motions will be debated and voted on. If agreed, they will become party policy. In advance of the Ard Fheis, the motions will be discussed at a local level, with delegates provided with voting guidelines.

This creates a highly democratic structure for leadership and policy formation. It is always interesting to listen to debates on issues that individuals feel passionate about. Despite conflicting views, there is always respect for the outcome of the vote.

The bulk of the agenda concerns domestic issues, including Irish Unity, economic and social issues. One motion commends the work of Friends of Sinn Féin, and his year

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interesting.

The highlight of the weekend is always the Presidential address, which is broadcast live on TV. This year will be an opportunity for Mary Lou McDonald to lay out a vision for the coming year, the challenges and opportunities, and to respond to the global context.

The weekend extends beyond the conference floor. It is an opportunity to attend fringe discussions, music and cultural events, and to meet up with old friends.

The backdrop to the Ard Fheis will be byelections (special elections) in May for Dublin and Galway. These will be a test for the Government parties, who are falling in the polls and failing to address the housing crisis and the cost of living.

Before the Ard Fheis formally kicks off, a few of us will gather for an event to remember Rita O'Hare, a friend who passed the baton of Sinn Féin North America representative on to me.

Friends of Sinn Féin will dedicate a bust of executed 1916 leader James Connolly to her honour. Connolly (an Irish Republican and socialist) had been a labour leader in the US before returning to Ireland, where he became the military commander of the Easter Rising.

The bust will be on display at the Áras Uí Chonghaile (James Connolly visitor centre) in Belfast. Rita was essential to the development of the centre, which was only made possible with the support of the US and Canadian Labour Unions. It will be a fitting reminder of Rita and her work to build a new and united Ireland.

Rita recognised the important role played by the US and Canada in our peace process and in securing Irish Unity. Her legacy and work continue across North America.

I always come away from the Ard Fheis invigorated by meeting with old friends, debating the issues of the day and marvelling at the ability and confidence of the new generation of leaders.

I hope you can make to Belfast or watch online.

Is mise,

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Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

Livestream Sinn Féin's Ard Fheis 2026

Watch the Livestream of Sinn Féin's Ard Fheis 2026 Building Ireland's Future - Ag Tógáil Todhchaí na hÉireann - taking place in Belfast on Friday 24th 6pm-9pm and Saturday 25th April 10am-7pm.

Michelle O'Neill will give a Keynote Address at 6:10pm (1:10pm ET) on Friday.

Mary Lou McDonald will give the Presidential Address from 6:30pm-7pm (1:30pm - 2:00pm ET) on Saturday.

You can watch the full event Live on the Sinn Féin page of the social media platform of your choice - [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#), or [Instagram](#).

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ARD FHEIS
2026  **Béal Feirste**

Livestream
Friday 24 April 6-9pm
Saturday 25 April 10am-7pm

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Building Ireland's Future
Ag Tógáil Todhchaí na hÉireann

#AF2026

Rita O'Hare honored at Áras Uí Chonghaile

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of Rita O'Hare at the Áras Uí Chonghaile/James Connolly Visitor Centre on Friday. She dedicated her life to Irish Republicanism and the cause of labor, and it was fitting to honor her life with the unveiling of a bust of James Connolly surrounded by her family, friends, and comrades. Friends of Sinn Féin donated the sculpture in her name and the bust was unveiled by Friends of Sinn Féin President Mark Guilfoyle.



Irish Unity Education Webinar with Rose Conway Walsh TD

Join us for a conversation with Rose Conway-Walsh, Sinn Féin TD for Mayo and member of the Oireachtas Good Friday Agreement Committee.

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preparing for Irish Unity, how Citizens Assemblies work, and more. You do not want to miss this one! It's free and all are welcome - registration is limited.

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FRIENDS OF SINN FéIN
IRISH UNITY EDUCATION WEBINAR SERIES



ROSE CONWAY-WALSH TD
 Member Oireachtas Good Friday Agreement
 Committee
SATURDAY, MAY 2 - 12:00 NOON ET



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FRIENDS OF SINN FÉIN USA

NEWS, ANALYSIS & EVENTS

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Victims and families' confidence will be further eroded by the cynical actions of the British government

Sinn Féin MP John Finucane has hit out at the British government for what he describes as 'political cynicism' to placate the British military lobby.

Speaking after Hilary Benn announced the legacy bill will be delayed until October to allow for a package of protections for British military personnel, as amendments to the bill, to be brought forward, the North Belfast MP said, "Today's statement released by Hilary Benn underlines the contempt the British government has for victims who suffered at the hands of their state forces.

"It displays no thought or empathy for families, but rather is designed to placate the British military lobby and the interests of security and intelligence agencies.

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“The only way this can be viewed is as an act of extreme political cynicism as the British Labour Party watches its electoral base crumble ahead of next month’s elections.

“The British government has reneged on its previous legacy commitments in pursuit of votes and in the process will attempt to bury the secrets of Britain’s war in Ireland at whatever cost.

“Hilary Benn accepts this is the final chance to get legacy right, as do many. But by delaying this bill and drawing up a loaded package of protections for British military personnel, he is clearly signalling his intent.

“Victims and families who have spent decades fighting for the simple right to truth and justice for their loved ones will today have their confidence further eroded by the disgraceful actions of the British government.

“It is incumbent on the Taoiseach Micheál Martin and the Irish government to speak out against what is clearly a disdainful diversion from their joint legacy framework.”

Irish Unity Education Webinars

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