



BRITISH-IRISH PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
TIONÓL PARLAIMINTEACH NA BREATAINE AGUS NA HÉIREANN

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

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FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH-IRISH PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Introduction

1. This is the fifteenth annual report of the Assembly since it was decided at the Plenary Session in May 1996 that such a Report should be made. This Report summarises the work of the Assembly during 2010.

Membership of the Assembly

2. Following the UK General Election of 6 May 2010, a new UK delegation was appointed. Paul Murphy was replaced as Co-Chair by Lord Cope, though he remained a Vice-Chair. Lawrence Robertson, new to the Assembly, was appointed the second UK Co-Chair. The Assembly was saddened by the departure of Michael Mates, a founder member, who was not standing in the General Election, and by the loss of a number of other long-standing Members.

Political developments

3. Although this is a Report on the work of the Assembly in 2010, this section includes some reflections on developments in the first five months of 2011.

General Overview

4. The first British State Visit to Ireland took place from 17-20 May 2011. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh met the President Mrs Mary McAleese and Dr McAleese, as well as the Taoiseach, Mr Enda Kenny TD. They laid wreaths at the Garden of Remembrance and the Irish War Memorial, Islandbridge, and visited the Gaelic Athletic Association stadium at Croke Park. They were also able to view the Book of Kells and the National Stud, and meet traders and others at the English Market in Cork. The successful programme touched upon history, trade and community and showcased the strong partnership which now exists between Britain and Ireland.

4. Early 2011 also saw a general election in Ireland, resulting in a change of government and necessitating the appointment of a new Irish Co-Chair and delegation. General elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also resulted in changes.

5. The political situation in Northern Ireland has come through a period of unprecedented stability, with the last Assembly becoming the first since the Good Friday Agreement to run a full uninterrupted term. Following the 5th May elections, the new Assembly met quickly and the process of electing a Speaker and appointing the First and Deputy First Ministers and the Executive was uneventful.

6. There remains, however, a high level of political, security and media attention on the threat posed by so-called ‘dissidents,’ most recently in the aftermath of the murder of PSNI Constable Ronan Kerr on 2 April. The Hillsborough Agreement, finalised in February 2010, paved the way for the devolution of justice and policing powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2010 and was a significant step forward in the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. The Gardaí and the PSNI continue to cooperate very closely to combat dissident activity on both sides of the border.

7. There are still several areas of work relating to the Good Friday and St. Andrew’s Agreements which remain to be implemented. These include a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, which is currently under consideration by the British government following a public consultation in Northern Ireland. The key issue of an Irish Language Act, as agreed at St. Andrews, remains unresolved, although some progress has been made in securing measures to promote and protect the Irish language and Ulster Scots. A North South Parliamentary Forum Conference (‘Building Strong Pillars’) took place on 7-8 October in Newcastle, Co. Down. However, agreement to establish the parliamentary forum has not yet been reached. Establishment of the North South Consultative Forum also remains outstanding, as does the completion of the Review of North/South bodies.

North South Co-operation

8. Since the restoration of the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly in May 2007, there have been significant advances in North-South co-operation, in the context of the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC). The next NSMC plenary meeting is scheduled to take place on 10 June 2011.

9. Of ongoing significance are economic matters of mutual interest: shared fiscal challenges; the banking sector; National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) and the property market, all of which were discussed at the plenary meeting in February. A key priority will be to strengthen the island economy, as an essential component of economic recovery, to help create jobs for our people and to improve cross border public services such as health and education. Another important issue will be the need to maintain the overall effectiveness and ability of the North/South bodies to fulfil their functions as institutions of the Good Friday Agreement.

Security Situation

10. Over the last 18 months a series of violent attacks by so-called dissident groups have taken place, resulting in injuries and in the deaths of two British Army personnel and two Catholic PSNI officers. The most recent of these was Officer Ronan Kerr, killed by an under-car device in Omagh on 2 April.

11. Loyalist paramilitary elements also continue to require attention at present and ongoing uncertainty attaches to the position of the UVF in particular since the murder of Bobby Moffett in West Belfast in May 2010.

Dealing with the Past

12. The publication of the Saville Report on June 15 2010 and the accompanying apology by Prime Minister Cameron were well received by the families of the Bloody Sunday victims and garnered much positive international attention. The majority of the families of the victims announced that the 2011 Bloody Sunday March which is held in the last weekend of January of each year would be the last of its kind in that format.

13. On 29 March 2011 Secretary of State Owen Paterson formally presented the family of Majella O'Hare, a 12 year old girl shot dead by a British soldier in 1976, with a letter of apology on behalf of the British Government. A Historical Enquiries Team investigation into the death found that the soldier's testimony was not supported by evidence and it suggested that the British Government should apologise for the death. Much of the media coverage welcomed the apology.

14. On 23 May 2011 the Secretary of State formally published the report of the Rosemary Nelson Inquiry. While the 500 page report found that no act of any state agency directly facilitated her murder, it did find a series of omissions on the part of the NIO and the RUC which rendered her life more at risk. The family have welcomed the publication of the report and expressed relief that their call for an inquiry has been vindicated. The family and several prominent NGOs have called for the public to read the report carefully as they suggest that a careful reading of the detailed report would lead most people to conclude that there had been collusion.

15. The Smithwick Tribunal, inquiring into allegations of collusion on the part of Gardaí in the deaths of two senior RUC officers in 1989 (Breen and Buchanan), had its first public hearing of evidence on 9 June. This Inquiry was the only one recommended by Judge Cory for this jurisdiction when he reported in 2004.

16. The current disposition of ministerial assignments in the Northern Ireland Assembly is as follows:

Department	Minister	Party
Finance and Personnel	Sammy Wilson	DUP
Education	John O'Dowd	SF
Enterprise, Trade and Investment	Arlene Foster	DUP
Regional Development	Danny Kennedy	UUP
Agriculture and Rural Development	Michelle O'Neill	SF
Environment	Alex Attwood	SDLP
Social Development	Nelson McCausland	DUP
Culture, Arts and Leisure	Carál Ni Chuilín	SF
Health, Social Services and Public Safety	Edwin Poots	DUP

Employment and Learning	Stephen Farry	Alliance
Justice	David Ford	Alliance
Junior Minister OFMDFM	Martina Anderson	SF
Junior Minister OFMDFM	Jonathan Bell	DUP

Work of the Assembly

Fortieth Plenary

17. The Fortieth Plenary session was held at the Radisson Farnham Estate Hotel, Cavan on 22nd and 23rd February 2010.

18. The session began with a personal reflection on the first 20 years of the Assembly's existence by Rt Hon Michael Mates MP, one of the Assembly's founding members. Mr Mates spoke first about his own experiences of Ireland as a National Serviceman and then of an early visit he made as leader of a small group of MPs to the Dail where he had been made very aware of the history of twentieth century relationships between the UK and the Republic. He described the first meeting of the Assembly (or Body as it then was called) as almost the last (because of mutual hostility) but the Minutes recorded that "the Body agreed to meet again"! He went on to list the various stages in the political reconciliation of the North in which Dublin played a crucial part. He described the Assembly as having been instrumental in bringing politicians of both parts of the island of Ireland and of the United Kingdom to a greater understanding of each others' points of view. He was delighted to have served as a member and was sorry that because of the impending UK general election, in which he would not be a candidate, that this would be his last meeting. He was followed by Jim O'Keeffe TD, the only other founding member still a member of the Assembly, who thanked Michael for his comments and then formally launched the Assembly's new website---www.britishirish.org.

19. The first item on the Assembly's agenda was an address on the economy and the banking sector by Professor Patrick Honohan, Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland, who spoke of similarities and contrasts between the economies and financial systems of Britain and Ireland before and during the global financial crisis. He acknowledged that the Irish economy had been hit harder but the dependence in both countries on the financial sector and the property boom were similar. A contrast was found on inflation which had been negative in the Irish Republic but rising in the UK. He spoke of the weakness in both countries of the fiscal position where tax revenues were declining. The collapse of the housing and credit booms in both countries had had a major impact on the public finances. He spoke of the banking crisis in some detail and of the measures both Governments had taken to protect weakened segments of their banking systems and he was confident that the measures taken by the Irish government would confirm the solidity of the banks and restore confidence in the public finances. He welcomed the international dimension of the banks and that British and other foreign banks continued to operate in the Republic. He ended by drawing a contrast on wage competitiveness between Britain and Ireland assisted in the British case by the weakness of sterling against the euro. The contrasting exchange rate regimes had complicated the problem.

20. Professor Honohan then answered questions from Senator Dan Boyle, Michael Mates MP, Michael D Higgins TD, Arthur Morgan TD, Senator Regan, Lord Gordon of Strathblane, Joyce Watson AM, Noel Treacy TD, Iain Smith MSP, Jim O’Keeffe TD, Joe McHugh TD and Senator Keaveney.

21. The Assembly then agreed the 14th Annual Report after a question from Andrew Mackinlay MP to Paul Murphy MP, Co-Chair, about strengthening relationships between the Assembly and the British Irish Council. Andrew Mackinlay wanted to know what progress had been made in efforts to promote BIPA as the parliamentary arm of the BIC since Paul Murphy as the responsible minister had made certain positive suggestions at a previous plenary. Paul Murphy replied that he stood by what he had said but he was no longer the responsible minister.

22. The Chairs of the Assembly’s Committees reported on the work they were undertaking and Jim O’Keeffe TD, Chair, moved that the Assembly should adopt the report of Committee A on cross border co-operation between police forces. He said that there was already enormous co-operation but the Committee recommended some procedural changes. They were also critical of the slow pace of transfers between the two forces. The issue of criminals evading arrest by crossing the border needed addressing. Other speakers were Steve Rodan SHK, who regretted the short time that members were given to read all the Committee reports before having to comment on them, and Seymour Crawford TD, who represents a border constituency, and spoke of the importance of police co-operation across the border. Senator Cecilia Keaveney, Dr Rory O’Hanlon TD, Noel Treacy TD also spoke.

23. Jim O’Keeffe TD also introduced the report of Committee A on the Common Travel Area. He said that while everyone supported the Common Travel Area and wished to maintain it, there were problems with drug smuggling and illegal immigration. The Committee hoped that the British and Irish governments would work together to eliminate different visa requirements in Dublin and London. Steve Rodan SHK supported this recommendation as did Baroness Harris of Richmond.

24. Robert Walter MP then introduced the Report of Committee B on a Common European Defence and Foreign Policy. He said that the report had had a long gestation period going back six years. British and Irish defence policies had different objectives, the UK using its defence forces as a projection of its foreign policy, while the Republic has a tradition of military neutrality. Despite these differences, the European Union did have a common security and defence policy which could be traced back to the Maastricht Treaty twenty years ago. The conclusion of the report was that a common security and defence policy had limited but desirable aspirations and that Britain and Ireland could be jointly involved in the current areas of activity of peace-keeping.

25. The Assembly welcomed an address by the Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD. He began by saying that he was a founding member of the Body (as it was then) which has done so much to create a better understanding between parliamentarians on both sides of the Irish

question. He spoke of the developing peace process and of the importance of the Good Friday and the St Andrews Agreements. He added that the politics of the North should focus on growth and prosperity. He then described how the Irish Republic had taken tough and unpopular budgetary decisions which had been strongly welcomed by the European Commission. The economic crisis was far from over but much had been done to stabilise the situation. The Irish government was focusing on boosting competitiveness, productivity and energy efficiency. North/South co-operation was key to growth and they were doing a great deal to eliminate duplication in expenditure on the island. He ended by saying that the peace process was central to increasing confidence within communities and thus contributing to prosperity.

26. The Taoiseach then answered a series of questions from members of the Assembly ranging from unemployment and the Presbyterian mutual trust fund, migrant workers to how the Assembly can ensure that British-Irish relations and Northern Ireland issues remain on the political agenda.

27. When the Assembly reconvened for its afternoon session, it heard addresses by the Commissioner of An Garda Síochána, Mr Fachtna Murphy, and PSNI Chief Constable Matt Baggott. The two senior police officers spoke of the increasing co-operation between the respective police forces north and south of the border on fighting crime. The economic situation meant that money was tight and this made cross-border co-operation even more important from the point of view of saving resources whenever possible. The importance of proper accountability had never been greater. They spoke of a new form of terrorism where people come together in loose alliances and then break up and form again with another group, making it much harder to counter. Therefore, it was important to stress the destructive nature of all forms of terrorism and the advantages to the well-being of all the people of the island of Ireland of peace and the acceptance of the current political situation. Human rights were an issue which was important to preserve and the police had a right not to be blown up. Co-operation was taking place at all levels of the two police forces.

28. The Assembly was extremely interested in what had been said and the Commissioner and the Chief Constable then answered a wide range of questions from Alasdair Morgan MSP, Senator Keaveney, Chris Ruane MP, Charlie O'Connor TD, Lord Maginnis of Drumglass, Noel Treacy TD, Lord Dubs, Arthur Morgan TD, Michael Mates MP, Seymour Crawford TD, John Robertson MP, Lord Cope of Berkeley, Joyce Watson AM, Brian Hayes TD, Baroness Harris of Richmond and Senator Leyden.

29. The Monday business concluded with the presentation of two further Committee reports from Committee B, one on The Recession and EU Migrant Workers and the other on The British and Irish Isles Regional Economic Space.

30. On Tuesday morning Andrew Mackinlay MP moved "That the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly calls on the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Health to defer the cancellation of the Reciprocal Health agreement with the Isle of Man planned for 1st April 2010 and to review the decision to abrogate the arrangement, a decision

which will not only be unfair to the residents of the Isle of Man but also substantially disadvantage United Kingdom residents and voters and in particular the elderly, the chronically disabled and motorbike enthusiasts; believes that Age Concern and all the major disability pressure groups and charities should be consulted as part of the review; asks that the review be at ministerial level with the Health Ministers of the Isle of Man, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales as well as the United Kingdom Justice Secretary, who has responsibility for the bilateral and constitutional relationships between the United Kingdom and Crown Dependencies; demands that the details and totality of the costs of the reciprocal agreement to both jurisdictions be published; seeks an explanation of the constitutional basis upon which the Secretary of State relies to abrogate the existing agreement on behalf of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales; requests that the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Health makes a statement on the modalities by which it is proposed to collect the costs of emergency admissions and hospitalisation in each jurisdiction if the existing agreement is terminated”.

31. Mr Mackinlay spoke of the arbitrary nature of the British Government’s decision and the impact it would have on those wishing to visit the Isle of Man, including those attending the annual TT races. He also referred to the constitutional issue of the decision being made without consultation with the Health Ministers in the devolved administrations. Many ex-services organisations in the Isle of Man were campaigning to get the decision reversed; they feel affronted on behalf of those Manx people who gave service to the UK armed forces in days gone past.

32. The motion was supported by Lord Dubs, Dr Dai Lloyd AM, Robert Walter MP, Iain Smith MSP, Baroness Harris of Richmond, Deputy Graham Guille, Jeff Ennis MP, Lord Smith of Clifton, Michael German AM, Brian Adam MSP, Stephen Rodan SHK, David McLarty MLA and Senator Alan Breckon. Deputy Guille, Speaker Rodan and Senator Breckon were able to speak to the motion from the perspective of those living in the Crown Dependencies.

33. At the conclusion of the debate, Mr Mackinlay’s motion was agreed to unanimously.

34. Lord Dubs then moved that the Assembly should take note of a report from Committee D on Returning the Unemployed to Work. The Committee had had to work very hard to produce the report in the gap since the Swansea plenary. The committee had taken evidence in Dublin, Belfast and Rhyl. In Rhyl, they had had the help of Chris Ruane the local MP to enable them to take evidence at a more local level and it was at the local level that they found the greater number of initiatives. The process of getting people back to work was complicated and all jurisdictions had a large number of schemes. The Committee recommended that some simplification should take place. Chris Ruane MP spoke about the Rhyl city strategy which was based on developing partnerships between public, private and voluntary groups and organisations. The partnerships needed to be based in the centre of the community, not outside in leafy parks! Other speakers were Dr Dai Lloyd AM, Senator Dan Boyle and Iain Smith MSP who all praised the ideas contained in the report. The Assembly agreed that the report should be forwarded to both Governments and to the devolved administrations for their observations.

35. With a General Election due in the UK within two months, Assembly discussed the situation where a plenary conference might be put at risk because of a delay in appointing a new delegation. The Steering Committee had recommended that the Rules should be changed to allow the “old” delegation to attend if necessary; there was a precedent for such an arrangement at the Council of Europe. So far as the Westminster delegation was concerned this Rule change had already been cleared with the Speaker. Consequently Lord Dubs moved:-

“That, subject to the authorisation of the financial authorities in each legislative institution represented, the Rules of the Assembly shall be amended to allow individuals to remain Members of the Assembly following the dissolution of their nominating institution until replaced or until the end of the next session of the Assembly, whichever is the earlier.”

36. The motion was passed unanimously

37. The next major debate of the morning was on the economy and the United States of America. It was opened by Mr Declan Kelly, the US Special Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland who spoke about the importance of the peace process for the Northern Ireland economy. He said that no-one was a greater friend of Northern Ireland than US Secretary of State Clinton. His appointment as Economic Envoy was a unique one being the first time in US history that such an appointment been made. He had just left London where he had been engaged in a whole series of meeting about investment in the North.

38. He said that in areas such as healthcare, renewable energy, technology and financial services there were immense opportunities for economic development and in these four areas Northern Ireland was ahead of the curve. He said that his first initiative on taking up his appointment was to appoint a bilateral working group to advise and support him in his mission. The group comprised men and women who ran some of the world’s leading companies with billions to invest. They had little spare time but because they all believed in Northern Ireland’s economic prospects they were giving dozens of hours to advise and encourage. He then spoke of the dual track approach he was following, a Momentum Track and a Leadership Track. The Momentum Track was designed to develop and leverage a range of initiatives in the short term to show case what Northern Ireland could offer. The Leadership Track represents a longer term approach which involves planning and implementing projects which could be developed over time.

39. Mr Kelly said that Northern Ireland had recognised some time ago that it should build niche expertise in areas such as healthcare and renewable energy. He praised the work done at Queen’s University, Belfast, in oncology and in developing “personalised medicine”. The film industry was also very active in Belfast and Derry. New technology and microfinance were other sectors where Northern Ireland was doing well.

40. The final focus of the Leadership Track was to develop links between the United States and Northern Ireland to provide opportunities for an exchange on commerce and

ideas. Northern Ireland was all about the future and he was confident that it would succeed.

41. Noel Treacy TD, Barry McElduff MLA, Dinny McGinley TD, Baroness Harris of Richmond, Senator Cecilia Keaveney, Frank Feighan TD, Chris Ruane MP and Julie Kirkbride MP then asked a wide range of questions.

42. The final debate of the conference was on the case for a North-West rail link. Joe McHugh TD moved “That the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly notes the views of 10,000 signatories to date of the Irish north-west railway petition; endorses the need for adequate public services in this bi-jurisdictional region; and calls on the Irish and British Governments to conduct a cost-benefit analysis to explore the feasibility of a rail project connecting the north-west of Ireland with Belfast, Dublin and the western rail corridor, thus completing the island’s railway grid and linking the north-west with British and continental transport networks”. Mr McHugh referred to the fact that five counties of Ireland, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan (where the conference was being held) do not have rail. All the other speakers in the debate, apart from Lord Dubs, represented these counties and supported Mr McHugh’s call for a rail link. Lord Dubs confessed that he had once been the railway minister in the Northern Ireland Office. He was supportive of the motion and said he had tried to improve rail links when in office.

43. At the conclusion of the debate the motion was agreed to.

Forty-first Plenary

44. The Forty-first Plenary session was held at the Villa Marina Conference Centre, Douglas, Isle of Man on 22nd November 2010. It became apparent very soon after the Irish delegation had arrived that, because of the developing financial crisis in Ireland, the delegation would have to return to Dublin almost immediately. The Steering Committee agreed that the sitting on Tuesday 23rd November should be cancelled to enable the Irish delegation to return. Some of the business scheduled for Tuesday was postponed to a future plenary but other more essential business was advanced and taken on 22nd November. But, inevitably, proceedings were overshadowed by events taking place in Dublin.

45. The first debate was on the Saville Report and the events of Bloody Sunday, a debate which was introduced by Lord Bew who had been historical adviser to the tribunal. He spoke about the background to the inquiry which was set up for reasons associated with the peace process and the charge made by some commentators that Bloody Sunday was part of a political conspiracy, a charge which Lord Saville rejected. The Government strategy at that time was to win over Catholics, not to alienate them further. Lord Bew also spoke about the enormous cost of the inquiry, some of which were unavoidable but others which, in his view, should have been avoided, including the eight days Edward Heath, the Prime Minister at the time, spent giving evidence which added nothing to what was already known from the documents. He said that Lord Saville had done a professional job and, although his conclusions were not always what the Nationalist

community was hoping for, they were based on all the available evidence. He ended by saying that Bloody Sunday was now beginning to fade from people's consciousness; even Tony Blair's memoirs referred to the event happening in Belfast!

46. Rory O'Hanlon TD thanked Lord Bew for what he had said and believed that a cloud had been lifted from over Derry with the publication of the Saville Report. Paul Murphy MP said that he was a minister in the Northern Ireland Office when the inquiry was set up and he fully supported it and welcomed Lord Saville's conclusions. Seymour Crawford TD thanked David Cameron for his apology on behalf of the British Government, something which was very important. Lord Dubs argued that there was a case for an inquiry into incidents at Ballymurphy which took place before Bloody Sunday, incidents which the families wished to have investigated. Jim O'Keeffe TD added his praise to the way David Cameron had handled the publication of the report. Barry McElduff MLA thanked Lord Dubs for what he had said about Ballymurphy and called for an independent truth commission, independent of the British Government.

47. Other speakers in the debate were Noel Treacy TD, Lord Glentoran, Senator Geraldine Feeney and Alasdair McDonnell MLA MP.

48. At the conclusion of the debate, the Assembly was addressed by the Chief Minister of the Isle of Man, Hon Tony Brown MHK a former member of the Assembly. Mr Brown began by saying how delighted the Isle of Man was that the Assembly had chosen to hold its plenary on the island. He then spoke of the financial upheaval which had shaken the world. The Isle of Man's particular difficulty was the unexpected and sudden revision by the UK Government of the VAT revenue sharing arrangements which would result in an annual shortfall in the island's budget. This had led to a five-year strategy to rebalance government finances. Staff numbers had been cut by natural wastage, and efficiency savings sought. An island with few natural resources meant that they had to look outwards to make a living. The Isle of Man government was engaged in promoting economic development by promoting the island as an international business centre. Mr Brown recognised the need for mutual cooperation between countries and organisations to enhance prosperity.

49. Mr Brown answered questions from Robert Walter MP, Joe Benton MP, Andrew Rosindell MP, Seymour Crawford TD, Senator Geraldine Feeney and Lord Dubs on a wide variety of subjects.

50. The Assembly then heard a short address by the President of the Nordic Council, Mr Helgi Hjorvar. Mr Hjorvar spoke of the need for greater co-operation between regions on issues such as security, renewable energies and financial stability. The Nordic Council had exchanged views with the Baltic Council and the European Union on these subjects and he hoped that there could be increased and strengthened co-operation with BIPA.

51. This was followed by a debate on the economy which had been agreed by the Steering Committee earlier that day. Margaret Conlon TD opened the debate by referring to the situation in which the Irish Republic found itself, with the Government having to

apply to the European Union and the International Monetary Fund for financial assistance. She spoke of the Irish government's determination to reduce the financial deficit. She rejected any idea that the Republic had suffered a loss of sovereignty. She expressed confidence in the future. Brian Hayes TD welcomed the support expressed by the British Government and the close ties between the two countries. He said that there was cross-party consensus on reaching a 3% deficit target by 2014. Barry McElduff MLA said that the European Union and IMF bailout was shameful and that there was need for an immediate general election. He added that partition of the island, with its duplication of services, made no sense.

52. Paul Murphy MP supported the £7 billion loan made by the British Government to help the Irish economy in view of the close links between the two countries. Alastair McDonnell MLA MP spoke of the fears in Northern Ireland that the difficulties in the Republic would make things more difficult for the north. He also welcomed the recognition of the British Government of the close ties with Ireland in the making of a loan. Robert Walter MP also spoke of the interdependence of the British and Irish economies and he praised the Irish government as being the first of the eurozone countries to react to the financial crisis.. Kris Hopkins MP said he was not an enthusiastic supporter of the euro but he referred, as other speakers had done, to the close ties, historical, cultural and geographical, which connect Britain and Ireland and believed that recent events would strengthen these. Seymour Crawford TD said he was enthusiastic about Ireland's membership of the European Union, membership which had enhanced the Irish economy. He added that Fine Gael, the main opposition party, was supportive of the four year plan to reduce the deficit.

53. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP, addressed the Assembly for the first time, although he had often attended its meetings in past years as shadow Secretary of State. He began by saying that he was the first Secretary of State to be appointed who was not faced with difficult political and security crises. He then spoke of the current financial situation and the fact that the problems faced in the South had implications for the North. Foreign investment was important and he was working with local Ministers to bring in more. On human rights, he said it was difficult to bring forward legislation at Westminster when there was no consensus on the matter in Belfast. He urged supporters of a Bill of Rights to convince those who are sceptical of their case. The British Government was happy to move on the matter but only if there was consensus on the issue.

54. He moved on to talk about "the past". He spoke of the efforts the Government had made to ensure the Saville report was published in good order to allow for a sensible and widespread debate. The Prime Minister and he would not flinch from reports of the past where apologies were required. He touched on the Pat Finucane case and said that he had met the family to discuss their concerns. The Government were strong supporters of the Historical Enquiries Team which was working its way through 3,268 cases but the way forward was not easy.

55. Mr Paterson then talked about the security situation and the small number of people who did not accept the political settlement. He said that there was now an extraordinary level of cooperation between ministers north and south of the border as well as between the police forces and they were all determined to bear down on the dissidents. There had been 199 arrests in 2010 compared to 126 in 2009.

56. He ended by congratulating the Assembly on its continuing work and said that its contribution towards improving relationships between the Republic and the UK had been enormous.

57. Mr Paterson answered a series of questions from Baroness Harris of Richmond, Laurence Robertson MP, Alasdair Morgan MSP, Lord Dubs, Barry McElduff MLA, Charlie O'Connor TD and Jim Sheridan MP.

58. Following questions to the Secretary of State, Lord Smith of Clifton moved a motion as follows:-

“That this Assembly, following the proposal for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland contained in the Good Friday Agreement 1998, and further supporting the commitment to introduce Westminster legislation contained in the British and Irish Governments’ Joint Declaration 2003, notes the delay in introducing a Bill to this effect and calls upon the British Government to fulfil this obligation”.

59. He argued the case for a distinctive Northern Ireland Bill of Rights rather than, as the Secretary of State had argued for, the inclusion of Northern Ireland in a UK Bill of Rights. The Belfast Agreement favoured his case rather than that of the Secretary of State’s.

60. Jim Wells MLA gave the views of the Unionist community and said they were more than happy to accept Northern Ireland’s inclusion in the UK Bill; since the Northern Ireland Assembly was split down the middle on the case for a separate Bill, no British Government would attempt to impose one on Northern Ireland. Gavin Williamson MP supported the arguments of Jim Wells. Other speakers including Noel Treacy TD, Paul Murphy MP and Lord Dubs urged that the Northern Ireland office should work towards implementing the Belfast Agreement in this respect, while Kris Hopkins MP and David McLarty MLA supported the position of Jim Wells. Lord Bew questioned whether the obligation under the Belfast Agreement was as clear cut as stated by speakers in favour of a separate Bill of Rights. Barry McElduff MLA and Baroness Harris of Richmond were in favour while Lord Glentoran and Laurence Robertson MP were opposed. Jim O’Keeffe TD, Alasdair McDonnell MLA MP and Dr Rory O’Hanlon TD were supportive of the motion.

61. Finally, the Secretary of State said that the Attorney General and the Solicitor General had advised that the obligation under the Belfast Agreement could be met by subsuming Northern Ireland into the UK Bill of Rights. He put it bluntly that the problem was not a UK Government problem. Politicians in Northern Ireland should try to see whether they

could find some sort of consensus on the issue. At the end of the debate, however, Lord Smith's motion was agreed to.

62. The Assembly then moved on to consider reports from its Committees. Lord Dubs moved "That the Assembly takes note of the report of Committee D on the Irish Community in Britain and the conclusions and recommendations of the Report which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved administrations for their observations". Lord Dubs said that the report was a follow-up to a study that Committee D had made of the Irish community in Britain four years ago. It was important to support the culture of the Irish community and he suggested that too little is known of the needs of the elderly Irish in particular. There was a need for a further survey of the elderly and the census in 2011 could help provide the information. Lord Dubs also referred to the situation of the Irish Traveller community and said that the Committee would examine that in the future.

63. Chris Ruane MP supported Lord Dubs' emphasis on the needs of the Irish elderly and he expressed his pleasure that the Irish tick-box will continue to be included in the census. He also reported that an all-party group for the Irish in Britain had been set up in the House of Commons in the week before the plenary began. Other speakers in the short debate were Johnny Brady TD and Brian Adam MSP.

64. At the Cavan plenary the Assembly had agreed that, if the financial authorities were content, a rule change should be made to allow the old delegation from a legislature where there had been a General Election to attend until a new delegation is appointed. This was to ensure that a plenary would not be put at risk by the absence of a delegation, principally those from Westminster or Dublin. Just before the Assembly adjourned, it agreed to amend Rule 1 (d) about membership.

The Steering Committee

65. The Committee met on the occasion of the two plenary sessions. Despite proposals for a meeting between the two plenary sessions, none was arranged, mainly because following the UK general election no delegation was appointed until shortly before the autumn plenary. Following the British General Election there were important changes among the Westminster members of the Committee, brought about by the change of the majority party. Lord Cope of Berkeley became British Co-Chair in place of Paul Murphy MP, who became a Vice-Chairman, and Lord Dubs was replaced as a Vice-Chairman and member by Laurence Robertson MP. Michael Mates, who had not been a candidate in the Election, was another who left the Committee.

Committees

70. The work of the Committees during the year can be found in Appendix 3. Committee work was limited by the intervention of the United Kingdom General Election and uncertainty surrounding developments in Ireland.

Staffing of the Assembly

71. The staffing of the Assembly was largely stable throughout the year. Details can be found at Appendix 4.

Prospects for 2011

72. The work of the Assembly will once again be disrupted by the General Elections in Ireland, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland, which will see the departure from the Assembly of several long-standing members. We trust that these disturbances will be followed by a period of stability in which the Assembly can continue to develop its relations with the British-Irish Council and North-South Parliamentary Forum and to contribute to mutual understanding between the peoples of these islands.

APPENDIX 1

Members of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly

Members of the Assembly

Ireland – January 2010

Mr Niall Blaney, TD
Mrs Margaret Conlon, TD
Mr Seymour Crawford, TD
Senator Dan Boyle
Senator Donie Cassidy
Senator John Ellis, TD
Senator Dominic Hannigan
Senator Eoghan Harris
Mr Brian Hayes, TD

Mr Chris Andrews, TD
Senator Martin Brady
Senator Ivor Callely
Mr Joe Carey, TD
Mr Sean Connick, TD
Mr Michael D’Arcy, TD
Senator Geraldine Feeney
Mr Frank Feighan, TD
Senator John Hanafin

Mr Michael D Higgins, TD
Senator Terry Leyden
Mr Dinny McGinley, TD
Mr Joe McHugh, TD
Mr Arthur Morgan, TD
Senator Francie O'Brien
Mr Charlie O'Connor, TD
Mr Fergus O'Dowd, TD
Dr Rory O'Hanlon, TD
Mr Jim O'Keeffe, TD
Mr Michael Ring, TD
Mr Noel Treacy, TD
Senator Diarmuid Wilson

Senator Cecilia Keaveney
Senator Joe O'Reilly
Senator John Paul Phelan
Senator Phil Prendergast
Senator Eugene Regan
Senator Shane Ross
Senator Brendan Ryan

Ireland – December 2010

Mr Niall Blaney, TD
Mrs Margaret Conlon, TD
Mr Seymour Crawford, TD
Senator Dan Boyle
Mr Johnny Brady, TD
Ms Joan Burton, TD
Senator John Carty
Senator Donie Cassidy
Senator John Ellis
Senator Dominic Hannigan
Senator Eoghan Harris
Mr Brian Hayes, TD
Mr Michael D. Higgins, TD
Senator Terry Leyden
Mr Dinny McGinley, TD
Mr Joe McHugh, TD
Mr Arthur Morgan, TD
Senator Francie O'Brien
Mr Charlie O'Connor, TD
Mr Fergus O'Dowd, TD
Dr Rory O'Hanlon, TD
Mr Jim O'Keeffe, TD
Mr Noel Treacy, TD
Senator Diarmuid Wilson

Mr Chris Andrews, TD
Senator Martin Brady
Mr Joe Carey, TD
Mr Sean Connick, TD
Mr Michael D'Arcy, TD
Senator Geraldine Feeney
Mr Frank Feighan, TD
Senator John Hanafin
Senator Cecilia Keaveney
Senator Marc Mac Sharry
Senator Paschal Mooney
Senator Terry Leyden
Senator Joe O'Reilly
Senator John Paul Phelan
Senator Phil Prendergast
Senator Eugene Regan

The UK Parliament—January 2010

Rt Hon Paul Murphy MP
Rt Hon Michael Mates MP
Lord Dubs
John Austin MP
Henry Bellingham MP
Joe Benton MP
Baroness Blood MBE
Alistair Carmichael MP
Rt Hon Lord Cope of Berkeley
Jeff Ennis MP
Paul Flynn MP
Lord Glentoran CBE DL
Lord Gordon of Strathblane
Elfyn Llwyd MP
Eddie McGrady MP
Rosemary McKenna CBE MP
Rt Hon Andrew Mackay MP
Andrew Mackinlay MP
Lord Maginnis of Drumglass
Baroness O’Cathain OBE
John Robertson MP
Chris Ruane MP
Lord Smith of Clifton
Robert Walter MP

Dave Anderson MP
Tony Baldry MP
Sir Patrick Cormack MP
Jim Devine MP
Jim Dobbin MP
Lord Donoghue
Mark Durkan MP
Roger Godsiff MP
John Grogan MP
Baroness Harris of Richmond
Julie Kirkbride MP
John McFall MP
Rt Hon Lord Mawhinney
Stephen O’Brien MP
Albert Owen MP
David Ruffley MP
Alex Salmond MP
Jim Sheridan MP

The UK Parliament--December 2010

Rt Hon Lord Cope of Berkeley
Rt Hon Paul Murphy MP
Laurence Robertson MP
Joe Benton MP
Baroness Blood
Ms Lorely Burt MP
Conor Burns MP
Oliver Colvile MP
Jim Dobbin MP
Lord Dubs
Paul Flynn MP

Tony Baldry MP
Lord Bates
Gordon Birtwistle MP
Viscount Bridgeman
Neil Carmichael MP
Rosie Cooper MP
Ian Davidson MP
Paul Farrelly MP
Lord Gordon of Strathblane
Richard Graham MP
Baroness Harris of Richmond

Stephen Gilbert MP
Lord Glentoran CBE DL
Kris Hopkins MP
Rt Hon Lord Mawhinney
Esther McVey MP
Baroness O’Cathain OBE
John Robertson MP
Lord Rogan
Chris Ruane MP
Lord Smith of Clifton
Robert Walter
Tom Watson MP
Gavin Williamson MP

Brandon Lewis MP
Jack Lopresti MP
Jim McGovern MP
Baroness O’Loan
Andrew Rosindell MP
Jim Sheridan MP
Lord Skelmersdale
Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Basildon
Mel Stride MP

The Scottish Parliament – January 2010

Mr Alasdair Morgan MSP
Mr Brian Adam MSP
Mr Hugh Henry MSP
Mr David McLetchie MSP
Mr Iain Smith MSP

Mr Alasdair Allan MSP
Mr Michael McMahon MSP
Ms Shirley-AnneSomerville
MSP
One vacancy

The Scottish Parliament – December 2010

Mr Alasdair Morgan MSP
Mr Brian Adam MSP
Mr Hugh Henry MSP
Mr David McLetchie MSP
Mr Iain Smith MSP

Mr Alasdair Allan MSP
Mr Michael McMahon MSP
Ms Shirley-AnneSomerville
MSP
One vacancy

National Assembly for Wales – January 2010

Mrs Rosemary Butler AM
Mrs Joyce Watson AM
Dr Dai Lloyd AM
Mr Alun Cairns AM
Mr Michael German AM OBE

Mr Alun Davies AM
Ms Bethan Jenkins AM
Mr Darren Millar AM
Ms Jenny Randerson AM

National Assembly for Wales – December 2010

Mrs Rosemary Butler AM
Mrs Joyce Watson AM

Mr Alun Davies AM
Ms Bethan Jenkins AM

Dr Dai Lloyd AM
Mr Alun Cairns AM

Mr Darren Millar AM
Ms Jenny Randerson AM

Northern Ireland Assembly- January 2010

Mr David McClarty MLA
Dr Alasdair McDonnell MP MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Sean Neeson MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA

Mr Alex Atwood MLA
Mr Willie Clarke MLA
Rev Robert Coulter MLA

States of Jersey – January 2010

Deputy Alan Breckon

Connetable Daniel Murphy

States of Jersey – December 2010

Deputy Alan Breckon

Connetable Daniel Murphy

States of Guernsey – January 2010

Deputy Graham Guille

Deputy Jack Honeybill

States of Guernsey – December 2010

Deputy Jane Stephens

Deputy Jack Honeybill

Tynwald – January 2010

Hon Steve Rodan, SHK

Mr Eddie Lowie MLC

Tynwald – December 2010

Hon Steve Rodan, SHK

Mr Eddie Lowie MLC

APPENDIX 2

Reports and other Documents approved by the Body

Fortieth plenary, Cavan, 22 and 23 February 2010

The Assembly agreed to the following Resolutions

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

That the Assembly takes note of the Fourteenth Annual Report (Document No 163).

CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN POLICE FORCES

That the Assembly takes note of the report of Committee A on Cross-Border Co-Operation between Police Forces and the conclusions and recommendations, which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved Administrations for their observations [Doc No 171]

A COMMON EUROPEAN AND DEFENCE POLICY

That the Assembly takes note of the report of Committee B on A Common European and Defence Policy and the conclusions and recommendations, which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved Administrations for their observations [Doc No 164]

THE RECESSION AND EU ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

That the Assembly takes note of the interim report of Committee B on The Recession and EU Migrant Workers and the conclusions and recommendations, which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved Administrations for their observations [Doc No 165]

THE BRITISH AND IRISH ISLES REGIONAL ECONOMIC SPACE

That the Assembly takes note of the interim report of Committee B on the British and Irish Isles Regional Economic Space and the conclusions and recommendations, which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved Administrations for their observations [Doc No 165]

RECIPROCAL HEALTH AGREEMENT WITH THE ISLE OF MAN

That the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly calls on the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Health to defer the cancellation of the Reciprocal Health Agreement with the Isle of Man planned for 1 April 2010 and to review the decision to abrogate the arrangement, a decision which will not only be unfair to residents of the Isle of Man but also substantially disadvantage United Kingdom residents and voters and in particular the elderly, the chronically disabled and motorbike enthusiasts; believes that Age Concern and all the major disability pressure groups and charities should be consulted as part of the review; asks that the review be at ministerial level with the Health Ministers of the Isle of Man, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales as well as the United Kingdom Justice Secretary, who has responsibility for the bilateral and constitutional relationships between the United Kingdom and Crown Dependencies; demands that the details and totality of the costs of the reciprocal agreement to both jurisdictions be published; seeks an explanation of the constitutional basis upon which the Secretary of State relies to abrogate the existing agreement on behalf of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales; and requests that the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Health makes a statement on the modalities by which it is proposed to collect the costs of emergency admissions and hospitalisation in each jurisdiction if the existing agreement is terminated.

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

That the Assembly takes note of the correspondence of the Northern Ireland Executive on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. [Doc No 168]

PASSPORT CONTROLS WITHIN THE COMMON TRAVEL AREA

That the Assembly takes note of the response of the UK Government to the Resolution of the Assembly on passport controls within the Common Travel Area.[Doc No 169]

APPRENTICESHIPS IN IRELAND AND BRITAIN

That the Assembly takes note of the response of the UK Government to the Report from Committee C on Climate Change and Renewable Energy.[Doc No 170]

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

That the Assembly takes note of the response of the UK Government to the Report from Committee A on Climate Change and Renewable Energy. [Doc No 171]

RETURNING THE UNEMPLOYED TO WORK

That the Assembly takes note of the report of Committee D on returning the unemployed to work and the conclusions and recommendations, which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved Administrations for their observations [Doc No 167]

ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP

That subject to the authorisation of the financial authorities in each legislative institution represented, the Rules of the Assembly shall be amended to allow individuals to remain Members of the Assembly following a dissolution of their nominating institution until replaced or until the end of the next session of the Assembly, whichever is the earlier.

NORTH-WEST RAIL LINK

That the British—Irish Parliamentary Assembly Notes the views of 10,000 signatories to date of the Irish North—West railway petition; endorses the need for adequate public services in this bi-jurisdictional region; and calls on the Irish and British Governments to conduct a cost-benefit analysis to explore the feasibility of a rail project connecting the North-West of Ireland with Belfast, Dublin, and the Western Rail Corridor, thus completing the island's railway grid, and linking the North-West with British and continental transport networks.

Forty-first plenary, Douglas, 22 and 23 November 2010

The Assembly agreed to the following Resolutions.

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

That this Assembly, following the proposal for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland contained in the Good Friday Agreement 1998, and further supporting the commitment to introduce Westminster legislation contained in the British and Irish Governments' Joint Declaration 2003, notes the delay in introducing a Bill to this effect and calls upon the British Government to fulfil this obligation.

THE IRISH COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

That the Assembly takes note of the report of Committee D on the Irish Community in Britain, and the conclusions and recommendations of the Report, which should be forwarded to both Governments and devolved administrations for their observations [Doc. No. 174].

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSEMBLY

That Rule 1(d) be amended to read:

(d) The term of office of a member or of an Associate Member shall commence when his nomination has been certified to the Clerks, and shall expire on the certification of his discharge by the nominating institution or following a determination made in accordance with Rule 2(d) or when he ceases to be a Member of that institution, whether by dissolution or for any other reason:

Except that Members and Associates nominated to the Assembly shall, notwithstanding any dissolution of the nominating institution, remain Members and Associates of the Assembly until the end of the next Session or until new nominations have been made, whichever is the earlier.

RESOLUTIONS OF 40TH PLENARY SESSION

That the Assembly takes note of the response of the Isle of Man government to the resolutions of the Assembly of the 40th plenary session [Doc. No 177]

APPENDIX 3

Work of Committees

Committee A Sovereign Matters

The Committee met formally on three occasions during 2010, twice during plenary sessions and once on a working visit to Dublin and Belfast.

The Committee concluded two inquiries during the year in which its work programme was interrupted by the UK General Election. The reports were presented at the plenary held in Cavan in February 2010.

The first inquiry, a follow-up to a previous study of the Common Travel Area (CTA) involved the Committee requesting information from the UK and Irish Governments on the implications for the CTA and the e-borders scheme of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill. The Committee noted the significant increase in the number of people travelling both to and within the CTA and the potential for criminal abuse which that brings. The Committee called on the agencies of Ireland and the UK to work ever more closely and for more transparent consultation with the Crown Dependencies to take place.

Committee A also reported its deliberations on the Cross-border cooperation between the Garda and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). A series of meetings were arranged in Dublin and Belfast in January 2010 and the Committee heard from the Garda

Commissioner Fáchtina Murphy; the newly appointed Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Matt Baggott; the then Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform Dermot Ahern; and the then Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office, Paul Goggins MP. While the Committee welcomed the continued ongoing high level of cooperation between both forces, it was concerned to hear of the continued threat posed to members of both forces by the activities of dissident groups. The Committee made a number of recommendations including that the publication of a procedural manual for both police forces take place without further delay.

The Cavan plenary meeting also witnessed the final appearance of Michael Mates MP, the Vice-Chair of the Committee and a stalwart of the Assembly since its inception. The huge contribution that Michael Mates had made to both the Assembly and to Committee A was warmly noted.

Following the UK general election in May, the Committee, comprising new UK Members, next met at the plenary session held at Douglas on the Isle of Man in October. At that meeting the Committee decided to hold an inquiry into how significant events in the history of Ireland were to be commemorated during the following decade. However, progress was curtailed by the imminent General Election in Ireland.

Committee B European Affairs

During 2010, Committee B met formally three times, twice during the plenary sessions in Cavan, Ireland, and Douglas, Isle of Man, and once on a visit to London.

The Committee met in London in January 2010 in connection with its inquiries into A Common European Defence and Foreign Policy, and The Recession and EU Migrant Workers. It held discussions with Chris Bryant MP, Minister for Europe at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Lady Taylor of Bolton, Minister for International Security at the Ministry of Defence.

At the Cavan plenary in February 2010, the Committee agreed its Report on A Common European Defence and Foreign Policy, and agreed interim Reports into The Recession and EU Migrant Workers, and A British and Irish Regional Economic Space. It was agreed that further work would be done on the interim Reports.

At the Douglas plenary in November 2010, the Committee agreed its Report on A British and Irish Regional Economic Space. It agreed to carry out further work on its inquiry into The Recession and EU Migrant Workers, with a view to agreeing a final report in 2011.

Committee C
Economic Affairs

Committee C met formally twice during the year, once during a plenary session, and once on a working visit.

At the Swansea plenary in October 2009 the Committee had agreed to commence an inquiry into the support mechanisms available to the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector, with a particular emphasis on the areas of innovation, green technologies and the role of public procurement policy.

The Committee met in London in February 2010, both to agree terms of reference and commence its inquiry with a day of evidence taking in Westminster. The Committee held discussions with Cath Bremner, Head of International Development at the Carbon Trust, Professor David Cope, Director of the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, and with officials from both the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Environmental Audit Committee at the House of Commons.

On 22 February 2010 the Committee met during the Cavan plenary. Members agreed to postpone further work on the inquiry into the SME sector until after the UK parliamentary elections and re-establishment of the UK Parliament delegation to the Assembly. The Committee, and the Plenary, also noted the response of the UK Government to its report on Apprenticeships in Ireland and Britain.

Attendance at meetings of Committee C in 2010

Members visiting London on 7-8 February 2010:

Margaret Conlon TD (Chairman), Paul Flynn MP (Shadow Chairman), Brian Adam MSP, John Austin MP, Seymour Crawford T.D., Senator Dominic Hannigan, Senator Terry Leyden, John Robertson MP and Joyce Watson AM.

Members attending the meeting of the Committee at the Cavan plenary on 22 February 2010:

Margaret Conlon TD (Chairman), Paul Flynn MP (Shadow Chairman), Brian Adam MSP, John Austin MP, Seymour Crawford T.D., Senator Donie Cassidy, Lord Gordon of Strathblane, Senator Terry Leyden, Mr Arthur Morgan TD, John Robertson MP and Joyce Watson AM.

Committee D
Committee on Environmental and Social Issues

Committee D met on five occasions in 2010; twice during plenary sessions and three times on two-day working visits.

The Committee began 2010 by continuing their inquiry into returning the unemployed to work. The Committee took evidence in Dublin in January and in Belfast in February (following the evidence session in Rhyl, north Wales, in November 2009). Evidence was received from ministers and officials from the Irish and Northern Irish governments, as well as from those representing employers, charities, the unemployed and an expert on worklessness. The report on returning the unemployed to work was debated and formally adopted at the plenary session in Cavan in February 2010.

At the Cavan plenary the Committee agreed to carry out a short follow-up inquiry into the Irish community in Britain, following their report on the matter in 2007. Following the general election in the United Kingdom in May 2010 but before new members were appointed, the Committee met in London to take evidence in October. The Committee heard from the Federation of Irish Societies and representatives of the Irish Government, and visited an Irish community centre. The follow-up report on the Irish community in Britain was debated and formally adopted at the plenary session in Douglas in November 2010. It was debated by the House of Commons in Westminster Hall on 27 April 2011.¹

At the Douglas plenary the Committee agreed that they would carry out an inquiry into human trafficking. That will begin once the membership of the Committee has been settled following the Irish general election.

The Chairman would like to thank the members of Committee D for their efforts in attending meetings and for their commitment to the work of the Committee.

Attendance at meetings of Committee D in 2010

Dublin: 17–18 January 2010

Lord Dubs (Chair), Johnny Brady TD (Co-Chair), Senator Dan Boyle, Senator John Ellis, Jeff Ennis MP, Dr Dai Lloyd AM, Chris Ruane MP, Iain Smith MSP and Jim Wells MLA.

Belfast: 31 January and 1 February 2010

Lord Dubs (Chair), Johnny Brady TD (Co-Chair), Senator Dan Boyle, Senator John Ellis, Jeff Ennis MP, Senator Francis O'Brien, Chris Ruane MP, Iain Smith MSP and Jim Wells MLA.

Cavan plenary: 22 February 2010

Lord Dubs (Chair), Senator Dan Boyle, Jeff Ennis MP, Lord Glentoran, Dr Dai Lloyd AM, Chris Ruane MP, Iain Smith MSP.

¹ HC Deb, cols 95–102WH.

APPENDIX 4

Staff of the Assembly in 2010

Ireland:

Clerk: Mr Paul Kelly

Policy Adviser Adviser:
Ms Emer Deane

Clerk, Committee A:
Ms Sighle Doherty

Shadow Clerk, Committee B:
Ms Jillian O'Keefe/Ms Jullee Clarke

Clerk, Committee C:
Ms Jillian O'Keefe/Ms Jullee Clarke

Shadow Clerk, Committee D:
Ms Jillian O'Keefe

Irish Secretariat:
Mrs Jullee Clarke

Irish Secretariat:
Ms Grainne NiNeill, Mr Dennis Mckenna, Mrs Franca Ghelfi

United Kingdom:

Clerk: Miss Alda Barry

British Consultant:
Sir Michael Davies KCB

Shadow Clerk, Committee A:
Mr Adrian Jenner

Clerk, Committee B:
Mr Eliot Wilson

Shadow Clerk, Committee C:
Mrs Tracey Jessup

Clerk, Committee D:
Mr Nic Besly

UK Secretariat:
Mrs Amanda Healy

Media Consultant: Mr Ronan Farren