



**BRITISH-IRISH
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY**

**COMHLACHT IDIR-PHARLAIMINTEACH
NA BREATAINE AGUS NA hÉIREANN**

EIGHTTEENTH PLENARY SESSION

29 and 30 March 1999

Drumoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

(Produced by FRANK CRANMER & JOHN ROYCROFT, Clerks to the Body)

1. MONDAY 29 MARCH 1999

The sitting was opened in public at 10.25 am in Drumoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, with Mr Michael O'Kennedy in the Chair.

The Chairman announced that, pursuant to Rule 2(a), **Mr Seán Doherty TD, Mr John Browne TD, Senator Enda Bonner, Ms Jean Corston MP, Mr Jeff Ennis MP, Ms Helen Jackson MP, Mr Andrew Mackinlay MP, Lord Glentoran, and Baroness O'Cathain**, being Associate Members, had accepted the invitation of the Steering Committee to assume the powers and responsibilities of Members for all of the Session.

1. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS, AS AMENDED

Ordered, That the proposed Programme of Business for the current Session, as amended, be approved.-(**The Chairman.**)

2. AMENDMENT TO THE RULES

Ordered, That the Amendments to Rules 29, 32 and 34 and consequential amendments [Doc. No. 62] be made with immediate effect.-(**Mr Kevin McNamara.**)

3. STATEMENT BY MR JOHN O'DONOGHUE TD, MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM

A Statement was made by Mr John O'Donoghue TD, Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

4. QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr John O'Donoghue TD, replied to Questions for oral answer put by Members of the Body.

The sitting was suspended at 12.10 pm.

The sitting was resumed at 12.30 pm with Mr Michael O'Kennedy in the Chair.

5. ROAD AND RAIL LINKS ON THE ISLAND OF IRELAND

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Responses of both Governments to the Report of the Committee on Economic and Social Affairs [Doc. No. 63] on matters relating to the Road and Rail Links on the Island of Ireland..-(**Mr Séamus Kirk.**)

The sitting was suspended at 1.05 pm.

The sitting was resumed in public at 2.50 pm with Mr David Winnick in the Chair.

6. INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN UNION INVOLVEMENT WITH THE PEACE PROCESS

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Responses of both Governments to the Report of the Committee on European and International Affairs [Doc. 64] on matters relating to International and European Union Involvement with the Peace Process.-
(Mr Michael Colvin.)

Mr Michael O'Kennedy resumed the Chair.

7. THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Third Annual Report of the Body [Doc. No. 61].-(**The Chairman.**)

8. COMMITTEE A - ORAL REPORT BY CHAIRMAN ON ACTIVITIES

Mr Charles Flanagan, Chairman of Committee A, made an oral report on the work of the Committee during the past year.

9. WORKING GROUP ON THE FUTURE OF THE BODY - ORAL REPORT BY CO-CHAIRMEN

The Co-Chairmen made an oral report on the progress made by the Working Group on the Future of the Body.

10. EDUCATION AND INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS - A STUDY OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1995

Motion made and Question proposed, That the Body takes note of the Report of the Committee on Culture, Education and the Environment [Doc. No. 65] on matters relating to Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland, and agrees with the conclusions and recommendations of the Report, which should be forwarded to both Governments for their observations.-(**Mr Roger Stott**);

Mr David Winnick took the Chair as Chairman.

Mr Michael O'Kennedy resumed the Chair.

And the Question being put;

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the Report of the Committee on Culture, Education and the Environment [Doc. No. 65] on matters relating to Education and Inter-Community relations within Northern Ireland, and agrees with the conclusions and recommendations of the Report, which should be forwarded to both Governments for their observations.

The sitting was adjourned at 5.30 pm till tomorrow.

2. TUESDAY 30 MARCH 1999

The sitting was opened in public at 9.05 am in Drumoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, with Mr Michael O'Kennedy in the Chair.

1. RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Motion made, and Question proposed, That the Body commends the two Governments and the political parties in Northern Ireland for the progress made in implementing the Good Friday Agreement, in particular the further agreements reached on the Government Departments in Northern Ireland and the North/South Implementing Bodies; further supports the four supplementary International Agreements providing for the establishment of the North/South Ministerial Council and Implementation Bodies, the British-Irish Council and the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference which were signed in Dublin Castle on 8 March by both Governments; welcomes the approval expressed in both Parliaments of the British-Irish Agreement and the Supplementary Agreements; reaffirms its faith in the Agreement as the only way towards a new future of peace and cooperation; looks forward to the early transfer of devolved powers to the Assembly in Northern Ireland; and calls on all parties to maintain their commitment and ensure the implementation of all aspects of the Agreement.-(**Mr Charles Flanagan.**)

An Amendment was proposed to the Question, in line 12, after "commitment" to leave out "and" and insert ", begin the decommissioning of arms and explosives at once, and thus".-(**Mr David Wilshire.**)

Mr David Winnick took the Chair as Chairman.

Mr Michael O'Kennedy resumed the Chair.

And the Question being put, That the Amendment be made:-It was negatived.

And the Main Question being put;

Resolved, That the Body commends the two Governments and the political parties in Northern Ireland for the progress made in implementing the Good Friday Agreement, in particular the further agreements reached on the Government Departments in Northern Ireland and the North/South Implementing Bodies; further supports the four supplementary International Agreements providing for the establishment of the North/South Ministerial Council and Implementation Bodies, the British-Irish Council and the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference which were signed in Dublin Castle on 8 March by both Governments; welcomes the approval expressed in both Parliaments of the British-Irish Agreement and the Supplementary Agreements; reaffirms its faith in the Agreement as the only way towards a new future of peace and cooperation; looks forward to the early transfer of devolved powers to the Assembly in Northern Ireland; and calls on all parties to

maintain their commitment and ensure the implementation of all aspects of the Agreement..

The sitting continued in private.

2. BUSINESS REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Mr Charles Flanagan, Chairman of Committee A, made a statement about the work of the Committee.

Mr Michael Colvin, Chairman of Committee B, made a statement about the work of the Committee.

Mr Séamus Kirk, Chairman of Committee C, made a statement about the work of the Committee.

Mr Roger Stott, Chairman of Committee D, made a statement about the work of the Committee.

The sitting continued in public.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, That the Body do now adjourn.-(**The Chairman.**)

The Session concluded at 12.05 pm.