



**BRITISH-IRISH
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY**

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

THIRTY-FIRST PLENARY SESSION

28 and 29 November 2005

Dalmahoy Suite, Dalmahoy Hotel and Country Club, Edinburgh

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

(Produced by ALDA BARRY & JOHN HAMILTON, Clerks to the Body)

(9 December 2005)

1. Monday 28 November 2005

The sitting was opened in public at 9.30 am the Dalmahoy Suite, Dalmahoy Hotel and Country Club, Edinburgh, with the Rt Hon Mr Paul Murphy, MP, in the Chair

The Chairman announced that, pursuant to Rule 2(a), from Ireland Senator Paul Coghlan and Senator Geraldine Feeney, for the United Kingdom Mr Kevin Brennan, from Scotland Mr Michael McMahon, MSP, and Mr Robin Harper MSP, had accepted the invitation of the Steering Committee to assume the powers and responsibilities of Members for all of the session.

2. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

Ordered, That the proposed Programme of Business for the current Session be approved. —(Mr Paul Murphy.)

3. ADDRESS BY MR STEPHEN KINGON

Mr Stephen Kingon of Price WaterhouseCoopers addressed the Body on the subject of the economy of Northern Ireland, and answered questions from the floor.

The sitting was suspended at 11.16 am

The sitting was resumed at 11.38 am with Mr Paul Murphy, MP, in the Chair

3. ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND POLITICAL PROGRESS

Resolved, That the Body, recognising that economic and political progress go hand in hand, welcomes recent developments in Northern Ireland, including the independently verified statement by the IRA that it has decommissioned all its weapons and the indications by loyalist groups that they were prepared to consider a positive response; urges all paramilitary groups to complete the process of decommissioning; notes the particular potential of deeper North/South economic co-operation to deliver real benefits for all the people of Ireland; trusts that the January report of the Independent Monitoring Commission will be favourable to the early restoration of the devolved institutions so that a renewed devolved government may play a central role in linking communities with the political and economic decision-making process; and calls on all appropriate authorities and political parties to work for the social and economic development of all communities in Northern Ireland. —(Mr Michael Mates.)

The sitting was suspended at 1.16 pm.

The sitting was resumed at 2.42 pm with Mr Pat Carey, TD, in the Chair

4. ADDRESS BY PROFESSOR PAUL BEW

Professor Paul Bew, Professor of Irish Politics, Queen's University, Belfast, addressed the Body on the subject 'Developments in Northern Ireland: Some Thoughts on the Current Situation', and answered oral questions from the floor.

The sitting was suspended at 3.46 pm.

The sitting was resumed at 4.06 pm with Mr Paul Murphy, MP, in the Chair.

5. STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Peter Hain, MP, addressed the Body.

6. QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Peter Hain, MP, replied to Questions for oral answer put by Members of the Body.

The sitting was adjourned at 5.30 pm, until tomorrow.

2. Tuesday 29 November 2005

The sitting was opened in public at 10.01 am in the Dalmahoy Suite, Dalmahoy House Hotel and Country Club, with the Rt Hon Paul Murphy, MP, in the Chair

1. BUSINESS REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Mr Jim O'Keeffe, TD, made a statement about the work of Committee A.

2. MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF PENALTY POINTS

Resolved, That the Body notes that it is two years since the submission by Committee A of the Report on the mutual recognition of penalty points and expresses its concern that no action appears to have been taken by the two governments.—(Mr Jim O'Keeffe.)

3. BUSINESS REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES (cont'd)

Mr Andrew Mackay, TD, made a statement about the work of Committee B.

Mr Seamus Kirk, TD, made a statement about the work of Committee C.

Lord Dubs made a statement about the work of Committee D.

4. THE WORK OF IRISH SOCIETIES

Resolved, That the Body notes the useful work done by the Federation of Irish

societies among expatriate Irish people.—(**Lord Dubs.**)

5. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME

Resolved, That the Body takes note of the 'CO-OPERATION' programme, the successor to INTERREG 111A, which will encourage co-operation between the North of Ireland and South- West Scotland. .—(**Senator Paschal Mooney.**)

6. ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, That the Body do now adjourn.-- (**Mr Michael Mates.**)

The session concluded at 11.40 am