



**BRITISH-IRISH  
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY BODY**

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

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**THIRTY-SIXTH PLENARY SESSION**

**28 and 29 April 2008**

**White's Hotel, Wexford / Brown's Hotel, Wexford**

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**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

(Produced by ALDA BARRY & EOIN FAHERTY, Clerks to the Body)

(11 July 2008)

## 1. Monday 28 April 2008

**The sitting was opened in public at 9.30 in White's Hotel, Wexford, with Mr Niall Blaney in the Chair**

**The Chairman** welcomed Mr Michael Higgins, T.D, as a new Member in the place of Mr Emmett Stagg, T.D.

**The Chairman** announced that, pursuant to Rule 2(a) the following Associate Members had accepted the invitation of the Steering Committee to assume the powers and responsibilities of Members for all of the session: from Ireland, Senator Martin Brady; Senator Cecilia Keaveney; Senator Phil Prendergast; from the United Kingdom, Lord Bew, Lord Gordon; from Northern Ireland, Mr Alex Attwood M.L.A and Mr Willie Clarke M.L.A.

### 1. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

*Ordered*, That the proposed Programme of Business for the current Session be approved. —(**Mr Niall Blaney.**)

### 2. RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Resolved, That the Body, in this the tenth anniversary year of the Good Friday Agreement, welcomes the immense and historic political progress made on these islands in the past decade; welcomes the continued successes of the power-sharing Executive in Northern Ireland, which is taking forward its work programme in an inclusive way, for the benefit of all people in Northern Ireland; calls on all parties to work together to implement the outstanding elements of both the Good Friday and St Andrews Agreement; looks forward to the political parties moving to complete the process of devolution through the devolution of policing and justice powers, as agreed at St Andrews; welcomes the continuing engagement of the international community in the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, in particular the European Commission Task Force on Northern Ireland and the engagement of the US administration in the forthcoming US Investment Conference, which takes place in Belfast from 7 to 9 May; welcomes and supports the ongoing programmes and initiatives of North/South and East-West cooperation on these islands; recognising the potential of the British-Irish Council for strengthening further relations between its members, welcomes the strategic review of the BIC and looks forward to active engagement with the Council; looks forward to continuing its consultations with the Northern Ireland Assembly, the governments and other elected institutions, with a view to early establishment, under the name of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly, as the East-West parliamentary forum, embracing the totality of relationships on these islands, as envisaged in the St Andrews Agreement.—(**Mr Seymour Crawford.**)

## **2. TOURISM AS A DRIVER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Mr Hugh Friel, Chairman of Tourism Ireland, addressed the Body.

Mr Friel and Mr Paul O'Toole, Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland, answered questions from the floor.

**The sitting was suspended at 11.16 am**

**The sitting was resumed at 11.34 am**

## **3. THE DRUGS PROBLEM, ITS EFFECT AND IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES**

Mr Pat Carey, T.D, Minister of State for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, addressed the Body.

Superintendent Barry O'Brien, Head of the National Drugs Team, addressed the Body.

Mr Carey and Superintendent O'Brien, answered questions from the floor.

**The sitting was suspended at 1.10 pm**

**The sitting was resumed at 2.41. pm, with Mr Peter Hain, M.P., in the Chair.**

## **3. THE DRUGS PROBLEM, ITS EFFECT AND IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES (Cont'd)**

Mr Michael Wall, Chair of the Cornmarket Project, addressed the Body.

Mr Wall, Chair, Mr Paul Delaney, Co-ordinator, and Mr Bernard O'Brien, General Manager, of the Cornmarket Project, addressed the Body and answered questions from the floor.

**The sitting was suspended at 3.26 pm.**

**The sitting was resumed at 4.08 pm with Mr Niall Blaney in the Chair**

## **4. STATEMENT BY MR MARTIN CULLEN, T.D, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL AND FAMILY AFFAIRS**

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Mr Martin Cullen, T.D, addressed the Body.

## **5. QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWER**

The Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Mr Martin Cullen, T.D, replied to Questions for oral answer put by Members of the Body.

**The sitting was suspended at 5.32 pm, until to-morrow.**

## **2. Tuesday 29 April 2008**

**The sitting was opened in public at 9.53 am in Brown's Hotel, Wexford,  
with Mr Niall Blaney, T.D, in the Chair**

### **1. BUSINESS REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES**

**Mr Michael Mates, M.P.**, made a statement about the work of Committee A.

**Mr Charlie O'Connor, T.D.**, made a statement about the work of Committee B.

**Mr Seymour Crawford, T.D.**, made a statement about the work of Committee C.

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

**Mr Sean O'Fearghaill, T.D., Vice-Chair of the Body, took the Chair**

### **2. GOVERNMENT REPLIES TO REPORTS**

*Resolved*, That the Body takes note of the response of the Irish government to the Report of Committee A (Document No 119) entitled "ID Cards and the Common Travel Area" (Document 135)—(**Mr Michael Mates.**)

*Resolved*, That the Body takes note of the response of the Irish Government to the Report of Committee A (Document No 94) entitled "the Mutual Recognition of Penalty Points" (Doc No 133)—(**Lord Dubs.**)

*Resolved*, That the Committee takes note of the response of the Irish Government to the Report of Committee A (Document No 131) entitled "The Irish Community in Britain" (Doc No 134)—(**Lord Dubs.**)

### **3. TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT**

*Resolved*, That the Body take note of the Twelfth Annual Report of the Body. (Document No 132)—(**Mr Peter Hain.**)

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

*Resolved*, That the Body do now adjourn.—(**Mr Steve Rodan.**)

**The session concluded at 10.13 am**