



BRITISH-IRISH PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

SESSION XV

1. Monday 21 February 2010

The sitting was opened in public at 9.10 a.m. in the Radisson BLU Farnham Estate Hotel

Cavan with Mr Niall Blaney T.D. in the Chair

The Chairman announced that for Ireland, Senator Terry Leyden had replaced Seamus Kirk as a full Member of the Assembly.

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 Terry Leyden, Frank Feighan, T.D., Senator Cecilia Keaveney, Senator Joe O'Reilly and Senator Eugene Regan; from the United Kingdom Mr Jim Dobbin M.P., Baroness Harris of Richmond, Julie Kirkbride, M.P. and Jim Sheridan, M.P.

1. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

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

2. TWENTY YEARS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Rt Hon Michael Mates, M.P, Vice-Chair of the Assembly, addressed the Assembly.

3. ASSEMBLY WEBSITE

Mr Jim O'Keeffe introduced the new Assembly website.

4. THE ECONOMY AND THE BANKING SECTOR

Professor Patrick Honohan, Governor of the Bank of Ireland addressed the Assembly.

Professor Honohan answered questions from the floor.

5. FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY

Resolved, That the Assembly takes note of the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Assembly [Document No 163]—(**The Co-Chairman.**).

6. BUSINESS REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Mr Jim O’Keeffe, T.D., made a statement about the work of Committee A.

Mr Robert Walter, M.P., made a statement about the work of Committee B.

Ms Margaret Conlon, T.D., made a statement about the work of Committee C.

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

7. CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN POLICE FORCES

Resolved, 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]—(**Mr Jim O’Keeffe.**)

8. A COMMON EUROPEAN AND DEFENCE POLICY

Resolved, 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]—(**Mr Robert Walter.**)

9. ADDRESS BY THE TAOISEACH

Mr Brian Cowen, Taoiseach, addressed the Assembly.

Mr Paul Murphy, Co-Chair of the Assembly, took the Chair

Mr Cowen answered questions from the floor.

The sitting was suspended at 12.50 a.m.

The sitting was resumed at 3.15 p.m.

10. ADDRESS BY GARDA COMMISSIONER FACHTNA MURPHY

Garda Commissioner Fachtna Murphy addressed the Assembly.

11. ADDRESS BY CHIEF CONSTABLE OF THE POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND, MR MATT BAGGOTT

Chief Constable Bagott addressed the Assembly

Commissioner Murphy and Chief Constable Bagott answered questions from the floor.

12. THE RECESSION AND EU ECONOMIC MIGRANTS

Resolved, 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]—(**Mr Charlie O'Connor.**)

13 THE BRITISH AND IRISH ISLES REGIONAL ECONOMIC SPACE

Resolved, 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]—(**Mr Michael German.**)

The sitting was suspended at 5.30 p.m., until tomorrow.

2. Tuesday 23 February 2010

The sitting was opened in public at 9.37 a.m. in the Radisson BLU Farnham Estate Hotel Cavan with Mr Niall Blaney T.D. in the Chair

1. RECIPROCAL HEALTH AGREEMENT WITH THE ISLE OF MAN

Resolved, 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.—(Mr Andrew Mackinlay.)

2. GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO REPORTS

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Resolved, That the Assembly takes note of the correspondence of the Northern Ireland Executive on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

[Doc No 168]—(The Co-Chair.)

PASSPORT CONTROLS WITHIN THE COMMON TRAVEL AREA

Resolved, 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]—(The Co-Chair.)

APPRENTICESHIPS IN IRELAND AND BRITAIN

Resolved, 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]—(The Co-Chair.)

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Resolved, 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]—(The Co-Chair.).

3. RETURNING THE UNEMPLOYED TO WORK

Resolved, 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]—(Lord Dubs.)

4. ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP

Resolved, 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.—(Lord Dubs)

5. NEWRY BOMB

The Co-Chair expressed the Assembly's condemnation of the bomb explosion in Newry the previous evening.

6. THE ECONOMY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr Declan Kelly, US Special Economic Envoy to Ireland, addressed the Assembly.

Mr Kelly answered questions from the floor.

7. NORTH-WEST RAIL LINK

Resolved, 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 Joe McHugh.)

8. ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, That the Body do now adjourn.—(Ms Margaret Conlon.)

The session concluded at 12.08 p.m.

**ALDA BARRY
PAUL KELLY**

Clerks to the Assembly

16 March 2010

