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THE AGREEMENT GENERATION AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE?

A one day conference at
The John Hume Institute
17th November 2010

www.ucd.ie/johnhume

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

- 09:00 Arrival – tea/coffee
- 09:15 Welcome
- 09:30 **SESSION ONE**
The post conflict situation in Northern Ireland
- 11:00 Tea/coffee
- 11:15 **SESSION TWO**
The North/South relationship (The Political Parties)
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:00 **SESSION THREE**
Creating spaces
- 15:30 Tea/Coffee
- 15:45 **SESSION FOUR**
The future
- 17:30 Wine reception

PRESENTED BY
John Hume Institute for Global Irish Studies
Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.
T. **+353 (0)1 716 1565**
www.ucd.ie/johnhume

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
Universities Ireland, Centre for Cross Border Studies,
39 Abbey Street, Armagh, Northern Ireland, BT61 7EB.
T. **+44 (0)28 3751 1550**
www.universitiesireland.ie

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department of enterprise, trade and employment

THE AGREEMENT GENERATION

The theme of the conference is the opportunity for change in Northern Irish and all Island politics. The peace process, the passage of time and generations with different frames of reference, have all provided space to reframe the political agendas and the various relationships between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

In particular the conference will focus on the Agreement Generation, those who were raised with the peace process. The Agreement Generation, have a uniquely different perspective to the generation that went before. They are the first generation of people on the island of Ireland raised with a negotiated peace settlement, which had the overwhelming democratic mandate of the people.

Speaking about the North/South relationship, one of the students interviewed in a pilot study in UCD explained: 'I think a younger generation, this generation, needs to be targeted and brought into the political system to improve things. The current generation are the residue. I think our generation is the generation that could change it.'

The conference aims to incorporate the academic, cultural, policy and political perspectives on the opportunity for change. Most importantly it aims to give a voice to the Agreement Generation. It will show their current contribution, as well as attempt to identify how space can be created for their perspectives, and how they can be stakeholders in the future of Northern Irish, Irish and all Island politics.

SESSION ONE THE POST CONFLICT SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

CHAIR **Jane Morrice**
Former Deputy Speaker Northern
Ireland Assembly

The peace process and success of the 1998 Agreement can cloud the fact that there is a post conflict situation in Northern Ireland. It still faces major issues that must be resolved: the political situation in Stormont, peace walls, community relations and security. This session looks in detail at the most recent developments and asks what the real story on the ground is.

SPEAKERS

Rebecca Bell
Committee member of Platform for Change
and explore coordinator of the Spirit of
Enniskillen Trust.

Dr Laura McAttackney
Post doctoral fellow with the
John Hume Institute, UCD.

John Loughran
Programme Director for Intercomm's North
Belfast Developing Leadership Initiative.

Cllr Conor Maskey
Sinn Fein Belfast City Councillor.

SESSION TWO THE NORTH/SOUTH RELATIONSHIP (THE POLITICAL PARTIES)

CHAIR **Tim O'Connor**
Former Joint Secretary of the North South
Ministerial Council, and former Secretary-
General to the President, Mary McAleese

This panel is a mixture of party political members from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. As well as being members of political parties, all have experience and knowledge of the changes in the North/South relationship in recent years: at a policy, political or personal level. They will be discussing the current state of the North/South relationship, what should be done at a policy level, and whether the Agreement Generation is capable of stepping outside of identity politics and developing working relationships.

SPEAKERS

Kenny Donaldson (UUP)
Community and Voluntary Sector
Spokesman for the UUP and Chairman
of the West Ulster Unionist Forum.
Lives outside Crossmaglen, South Armagh.

Michelle Byrne, (SDLP)
Michelle ran in South Antrim 2010 elections
and is an aide to Conall McDevitt, MLA for
South Belfast. Previously she was the SDLP
Youth PRO.

Lorcan Price (FF)
Lorcan is an aide for the Fianna Fail
Parliamentary Party in the Dail and Seanad
Eireann. Former Member of the FF National
Executive, and former chair of Ogra FF.

John Carroll (FG)
Parliamentary Assistant to Leo Varadkar TD.
Formerly International Secretary and Policy
Officer for Young Fine Gael.

Richard Bullick, (DUP)
Special Advisor to the First Minister
Peter Robinson.

SESSION THREE CREATING SPACES

CHAIR **Orlaith McBride**
Arts Council and Director of the National
Association for Youth Drama

This is a reflective session on the role of culture and our lived environment, examining how they provide the frames of reference in people's lives. It asks: is there space for those who don't subscribe to traditional entrenched identities, or the traditional fault lines? And how do we create the spaces to reinterpret the past, reflect the present and offer vision for the future?

By recognising the role that culture and our physical environment play we can begin to understand the different experiences that people have. It also allows us to examine how we can create spaces (cultural and physical) that allow for a more inclusive, pluralist conversation, and an opportunity for change from the politics of the past.

SPEAKERS

Dr Catherine Morris
Cultural Coordinator for TCD and the
National Library of Ireland (NLI) and curator
of the Alice Milligan exhibition at NLI.

Damian Duffy
Visual artist and curator at the
Void Gallery, Derry.

Mark Nagurski
Digital Champion for the Digital Derry
project and blogger.

Dr Karen Keaveney
Lecturer in Spatial Planning at QUB.

SESSION FOUR THE FUTURE

CHAIR **Andy Pollak**
Director of the Centre for Cross Border
Studies and Secretary of Universities Ireland

The result of a settlement and peace on the island makes it easier to attract inward investment, in the Republic and Northern Ireland. Also economic North South cooperation has increased in recent times and has been to the mutual benefit of both jurisdictions. The business community sees the commercial benefits of being able to sell into additional markets, increase efficiencies and develop economies of scale on the same island. But currently those of the Agreement Generation, in both jurisdictions, are facing the very real challenges of economic recession and the lack of employment opportunities. So what are the immediate impacts if the loss of social capital and the disengagement, continues? And what are the implications for North/South cooperation in economic and business terms?

SPEAKERS

David Manning
Public Affairs Manager for SSE
Renewables (Ireland).

Ciara Farren
Regulatory Affairs Manager for Meteor,
focusing on European affairs and
spectrum management.

Dr Katy Hayward
Lecturer with the School of Sociology,
Social Policy and Social Work, QUB.

Aoibhín de Búrca
Ad Astra Research Scholar with the
John Hume Institute, UCD.