



Turkey: Comparative Studies Visit to the United Kingdom Conflict Resolution

22-29 July 2011
London 22-25 July
Belfast 26-27 July
Edinburgh 28-29 July





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Foreword

DPI aims to create an atmosphere whereby different parties share knowledge, ideas, concerns, and suggestions facing the development of a democratic solution to key issues in Turkey and the wider region. The work focuses on a combination of research and practical approaches to broaden bases for wider public involvement by providing platforms for discussion in the form of roundtable meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences. This is being carried out in order to support and contribute to existing work on Turkey whilst also extending to the wider region.

DPI's work will incorporate research and discussions on a wide range of strategic and relevant topics including constitutional reform; preparing for constitutional changes in conflicting societies; post conflict societies; freedom of expression and association; cultural and language rights, political participation and representation; women's role in resolving the conflict; access to justice and transitional justice including truth and reconciliation commissions.

DPI aims to facilitate the creation of an atmosphere whereby the different parties are able to meet with experts from Turkey and abroad, to draw on comparative studies, as well as analyse and compare various mechanisms used to achieve positive results in similar cases. The work supports the development of a pluralistic political arena capable of generating consensus and ownership over work on key issues surrounding a democratic solution at both the political and the local level.

This report gives a record of the roundtable meeting entitled ‘The Role of the Media in Conflict’ held in Istanbul on 28 April, 2012.

This report details both the speeches given by guest experts in media and journalism, as well as contributions and reflections from the participants during the roundtable discussion. We hope that this report can be utilised as a resource for media professional and civil society members in Turkey, for recognising the challenges that journalism faces as well as recommending a way forward.

Cengiz Çandar, Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, Mithat Sancar, Sevtap Yokuş, Kerim Yıldız
DPI Council of Experts

August 2011

Participants:

Participants from Turkey:

Members of Parliament:

- Ayla Akat: Member of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)
- Levent Gök: Member of Parliament, Ankara, Republican People's Party (CHP)
- Levent Tüzel: Member of Parliament, Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)
- Lütfi Elvan: Chairman and Member of Parliament, Justice and Development Party (AKP)
- Mehmet Tekelioğlu: Member of Parliament, Justice and Development Party (AKP) and Vice-Chairperson
- Nazmi Gür: Member of Parliament and former Vice-President of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)
- Nursuna Memecan: Member of Parliament, Justice and Development Party (AKP)
- Sezgin Tanrıkuşu: Member of Parliament and Member of Central Executive Board, Republican People's Party (CHP)

Journalists:

- Ali Bayramoğlu: Columnist, political commentator at Yeni Safak daily newspaper
- Ayhan Bilgen: Columnist and Editor in Chief of Gunluk daily newspaper
- Bejan Matur: Columnist, poet and writer

- Cengiz Çandar: Writer and Journalist for Radikal newspaper
- Hasan Cemal: Journalist, columnist and reporter for Milliyet daily newspaper

Academics:

- Mithat Sancar: Professor of Public Law, Ankara University and Columnist, Taraf daily newspaper
- Sevtap Yokuş: Professor of Constitutional Law at Kocaeli University
- Yilmaz Ensaroğlu: Coordinator of Law and Human Rights Studies, SETA Politics Economic and Social Research Foundation

UK Participants:

- Alasdair McDonnell: SDLP
- Brandon Hamber: INCORE Transitional Justice Institute
- **Sir Bruce Robinson:** Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service
- Catriona Vine: DPI
- Christine Graham MSP: SNP Member of the Scottish Parliament
- David McKittrick: Journalist
- Deidre Griffith: Executive Secretariat, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, Stormont Castle
- Eleanor Johnson: DPI
- Baroness Elizabeth Smith: Governor of the English-

Speaking Union, Board member of Centre for European Reform

- **Francie Molloy:** Sinn Feinn politician and Principle Deputy Speaker
- Frank Millar: Journalist
- Father Gary Donegan: Parish Priest, North Belfast
- Gary Mason: East Belfast Mission
- Gerry Kelly MLA: Sinn Féin Party
- Gizem Akyil: DPI
- Rt Hon Hugo Swire MP: Minister of State for Northern Ireland
- Jeffrey Donaldson MP: Democratic Unionist Party
- Jim Hume MSP: Liberal Democrat Member of the Scottish Parliament
- John Home Robertson: Former Labour MP and MSP
- John Loughran: Intercomm
- John McCallister: UUP
- Lord John McCluskey QC: Former Scottish Supreme Court Judge
- **Jonathan Powell:** Former Chief of Staff to Tony Blair, negotiator in Northern Ireland peace talks
- Kelly Kileff: DPI
- Kerim Yildiz: DPI Director
- Kieran Dowling: Irish Joint Secretary, DFA
- Sir Kieran Prendergast: DPI Council of Experts, Career diplomat, Mark Muller QC
- **Mary Madden:** British Joint Secretary and Deputy

Director, Northern Ireland Office

- Mervyn Frost: Head of the Department of War Studies, King's College
- **Mike Gapes:** Labour Member of Parliament
- Neil Jarman: Queen's University
- Rev Norman Hamilton: Presbyterian Church
- Patrick Lynch: Head of Political Liaison Unit, Northern Ireland Office
- Penelope Green: Head of Research at King's College, School of Law
- Director of the International State Crime Initiative (ISCI)
- Peter O'Reilly: Mediation Northern Ireland
- Ritchie Ryan: Department of Justice, Republic of Ireland
- Rosemary Neill: Northern Ireland Office
- Simon Hamilton: DUP
- Steven Sweeney: Northern Ireland Office

Aims of the Comparative Study Trip, 22nd – 29th July 2011

The goals of this trip were to bring together representatives from different political parties including the ruling party and those representing Kurdish and Turkish opposition interests, policy makers, opinion influencers, academics and journalists for roundtable/seminars to share comparative experiences.

Comparative study of post conflict societies, with experience of peace agreements and conflict resolution is a vital means of gaining information and sharing experiences. The process of devolution and constitutional arrangements are also highly relevant to the Turkish context.

It is hoped that in visiting London, Belfast, and Edinburgh and in meeting key players in the Northern Ireland peace process and UK devolution, strong sharing experiences can be drawn and comparisons made, with a view to opening up the possibility of broadening bases for peace and democratic advancement through dialogue and discussion. Issues addressed during the UK visit are detailed in this report.

Roundtables and structured discourse provided an opportunity to all parties to share knowledge, ideas, concerns and challenges in implementing a future solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey, and the study aimed to create an atmosphere whereby different parties could draw on comparative studies, analyse and compare various mechanisms used to achieve positive results in similar cases across the United Kingdom.

LONDON 22-25 JULY 2011

ROUNDTABLES/SEMINARS/MEETINGS

LONDON SESSION 1: Monday 25th July , 2011 King's College, London

With: Professor Mervyn Frost, Head of the Department of War Studies, King's College

Moderated by: Kerim Yildiz

After a brief introduction and welcome by Kerim Yildiz, the first roundtable discussion of the week began in King's College's River Room, with Professor Mervyn Frost, Head of the Department of War Studies at King's offering a detailed and insightful view on lessons to be learned from the South African experience.

Professor Frost, who is South African and was previously Chair of Politics and Head of Department at the University of Natal in Durban, joined the War Studies department of King's in 2003 as Professor of International Relations, before being appointed as Head of Department in 2007. His special area of interest is that of Ethics in International Relations.

Professor Frost discussed reconciliation and transitional justice in detail. The table posed questions to Professor Frost on the South African case and discussed a number of issues, including:

- the stages through which a relationship was forged between opposing movements during Apartheid;
- the use of secret meetings as an important tool in successful

negotiations;

- the importance of civil society movements and discussion occurring in parallel to government action;
- the importance of trade union movements;
- the issue of 'spoilers' and breakaway extremists; the feasibility of legitimate efforts for conflict resolution as opposed to armed struggle;
- the role of Nelson Mandela in the peace process and the ways in which he participated from prison;
- the relationship between the constitutional reform process and that of conflict resolution

The question and answer session was lively and informative:

Q: How easy was it to forge a relationship between White and Black movements,given that the objectives of the two were very different?

Professor Frost: The Whites regarded the ANC as terrorists; there was no trust at all. They could not talk to them as they simply did not trust them. In the early days, it was all about learning to trust, and understand that they were not dealing with madmen. Then, the White government had to start delivering, and meeting certain promises to earn their credentials.

Q: How long did it take to forge a relationship?

Professor Frost: The Soweto Riots was the fist time Black schoolkids had actively engaged in the struggle. From 1976 to 1986, the White government embarked on many reforms. It set up a three part parliament, divided between Blacks, Indians and Whites; all with different rights. This had the opposite effect of appeasing people – it enraged them as

they wanted full political rights. So, there was a ten year period of piecemeal reform. The culmination came in 1989, when Mandela was released, the ANC was unbanned and a tranche of political prisoners were released. Very importantly, while 1986 was a period declared to be a state of emergency (a military crackdown by the White regime), at the same time, informal processes were taking place.

Q: Discuss the secret meetings in Dakar, Senegal concerning the South African negotiations.

Professor Frost: These meetings were not organised by government but by a civil society organisation. It turned out later that the government did have a representative there. Civil society actors from left and centre and one or two members of government were present. They talked to the opposition and came back to South Africa, and convinced the cabinet that this was a good process. They agreed, but still needed some convincing. All actors involved started out with the theory that you only get cooperation when you have meetings among the elite, that is to say, at leadership level.

Q: Would it be better to have a civil society movement and discussion in parallel to government negotiations?

Professor Frost: Many roadshows took place in South Africa and were organised by the Anglo American corporation (the biggest gold mining company there). They were planned very well, with films, stylised powerpoint presentations and so on – it was a process of educating the wider public (from 1985) and is perhaps what Europe needs to do. It is not possible to simply transpose the South African case onto the Turkish case but civil society movements and discussion between groups are a

very important place to start.

Q: What was the very first step to start the peace process?

Professor Frost: The government thought it could change people's minds by putting money into schools and so on in the homelands, but their attempts failed. Dakar was the first real step. The talks their undermined the legitimacy of the armed struggle. The first steps towards talks between elites undermined the previous nature of talks, which had been Black versus White, and focused on armed struggle.

Q: How important were the trade union movements?

Professor Frost: Very. The United Democratic Front managed to bring many Black and White South Africans into the civil society movement – people opposed to Apartheid on any level. It was not linked to the armed struggle. The civil society movement had a very strong voice and it led to the international movement against Apartheid. The political pressure achieved by the group was invincible.

Q: Was the ANC always united?

Professor Frost: The ANC was not agreed on a single struggle. It was strongly involved with the UDF. But once negotiations started and the constitutional conversation started, the leadership of the UDF was pushed aside by the ANC as they said they had been leading the struggle for forty years. They were not in conflict with one another though.

In order to show good faith, the South African government had to desist armed struggle. The ANC had to demonstrate that it had curtailed

activities (this was the case in the run up to Mandela taking power). They had to show that weapons had been dismantled. This was in 1989, but previously, in 1986, the armed struggle was still flowing.

Q: Were Whites supportive of government? How many people lost their lives due to the armed struggle?

Professor Frost: Not all Whites supported the government Apartheid system. But all Whites were obliged to do military service, so all Whites were beneficiaries of Apartheid, even if they did not agree with it. Opposition parties, however, were small.

In terms of loss of lives, the Angola war was occurring at the same time. Also, the situation in Mozambique meant significant loss of life was occurring among South Africa's Special Forces. But, the loss of life among terrorists was not tens of thousands but rather thousands. In the wars on the South African borders many more civilians were killed. It was difficult to know who were civilians and who were terrorists – the government would say civilians were terrorists when they were not.

Until 1960, the ANC was a very old organisation speaking out for the right of Black South Africans to find union. In 1948, there was an increasing representation of Blacks in parliament, but they were kicked out. In 1959, came the culmination: the banning of all Black parties. If you belonged to them, you were committing a crime. It was then that Mandela said, if it is not possible to do things legitimately, the ANC would commit to armed struggle.

Q: Were there 'spoilers' within the ANC and government; people who prevented the process?

Professor Frost: Towards the end of the process, from around 1980, groups of extremists were breaking away from the government's main party, saying that the tricameral system was too liberal, as it legitimised Blacks and Indians.

Q: Why did the White government party last so long?

Professor Frost: Throughout the 1970s and 1980s many Western states saw South Africa as playing a key role in the struggle against communism. It anticipated armed sanctions. South Africa developed the atomic bomb, but only with the cooperation of international powers. There were many stakeholders in a stable, White South Africa: corporations, mining and arms industries, for example. It suited global capitalism to have a stable South Africa. It was only when the communist world collapsed with the end of the cold war that things changed – if it hadn't finished, White South Africa would have lasted longer.

Q: What is the best way to forge peace? Is it possible to get a social movement which wants change but not armed? In Turkey, the only way for peace to be achieved is to create a group of people not belonging to any party, only wanting peace and no political association.

Professor Frost: The UDF in South Africa wanted a democracy, and were not armed. In order to form a group committed to peace, external elite cooperation is needed (this takes many meetings, a very safe place, far from the politics of home) to begin with.

Q: The UDF believed in legitimate efforts other than armed struggle. Can we say that these efforts were a very important method of resolving the situation?

Professor Frost: The methods of the UDF were not altogether peaceful or ‘nice’. During that time, although there were unarmed, they used coercive methods to make sure people obeyed their commands. Lots of intimidation occurred, tyre burning and so on (people killed due to a burning tyre being placed around their neck). So although they were not armed as such, the methods they used made South Africa ungovernable, they would block school gates, intimidate teachers and so on. So they were not armed but not peaceful either, many were hurt in the process.

Q: You mentioned partial reforms in the 1970s and 1980s. Were any White people opposed to these reforms and was there a Black majority which supported these partial reforms?

Professor Frost: The partial reforms were very complex, and followed the idea that each homeland would have its own parliament, airport, passports and so forth. It was ridiculous. Previously, there was a passport control system in the homelands throughout South Africa. The majority of Black people never accepted the homelands or the partial reforms, and saw the solution as being a unified state.

Q: What was Mandela’s role during the whole process, and how did he participate from prison?

Professor Frost: Initially, when Mandela was imprisoned for terrorist actions (he could have been sentenced to death but was not), in the early phases of his imprisonment he was obliged to do hard labour and played no role in politics. As the process progressed, he was still recognised as a leader. Secret meetings later took place between the government and Mandela in prison. They would make deals, such as ‘we’ll release you if you do this or that...’. Mandela always said, ‘release me unconditionally

or not at all'. There was not compromise. The message sent to his party was 'we do not negotiate from prison'.

Q: What is the relationship between the constitutional process and the conflict resolution process?

Professor Frost: Once prisoners were released, it was a very complex and traumatic four year period of negotiation – how to get to a new constitution? Many parties were involved; many homeland parties, such as the Pan African Party. Numerous very small parties had insisted on being there. What is most crucial of all is the first conflict resolution stage – the first stage of negotiations and meetings. Because, once lawyers are brought in, it changes everything.

Q: Did the UDF succeed in making the state ungovernable? In Turkey, people protest without using violence, this does not make the state ungovernable.

Professor Frost: The UDF did not succeed in making the state ungovernable. That was their aim though. As such, they increased the cost of continuing Apartheid, make South Africa a horrible place to live (sirens, tear gas, and so on were constant; it was like a war zone). The movement increased the cost to the government. The crucial step towards ending Apartheid was international pressure. In 1986, banks in New York said to the South African government, that the pressure from shareholders was unbearable. They threatened a blanket credit ban on South Africa if change did not happen soon. So the international financial institutions threatened to 'turn off the tap' – they all followed suit. International pressure brought Apartheid to a head.

LONDON SESSION 2:

Monday 25th July, 2011 King's College, London

With:

Mike Gapes, Member of Parliament, Labour Party

Moderated By:

Kerim Yildiz

The second roundtable session was with Mike Gapes, Labour MP, who presented a firsthand account of the relationship between Westminster, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as the history of the devolution process in the context of Scotland and the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland.

Mike Gapes MP was first elected as Labour and Co-operative Member of Parliament for Ilford South in April 1992. He served as Chairman of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee from July 2005 to April 2010. He had previously served as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee from 1992 to 1997, and the Defence Committee from 1999-2001 and 2003 to 2005. Mr Gapes held the role of Parliamentary Private Secretary in the Northern Ireland Office from 1997 to 1999 and Parliamentary Private Secretary in the Home Office from 2001 to 2002. He was Chair of the Board of Governors of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy from 2002 to 2005.

Mr Gapes gave an in-depth analysis of the Northern Ireland conflict and peace process, describing how he worked alongside then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mo Mowlam to see through the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

Mr Gapes also described the challenges of devolution; the differences in devolved powers in Scotland and Wales; and comparisons between devolution within the UK and the decentralisation of other states, such as Spain.

Numerous questions were posed by the table, and the ensuing discussion focused on the following subjects:

- the definition of a unitary state;
- the role of local governments in the devolution process;
- the role of ethnicity, language and nationalism in the context of UK devolution;
- law making powers of devolved regions;
- public perception of devolution and the attitudes of the English public towards devolution in other parts of the UK;
- the possibility of transposing the ‘Scottish model’ of devolution to other states;
- the recognition of different national identities within the UK;
- the role of the constitution within devolution;
- the extent to which the Good Friday Agreement of Northern Ireland has proved successful;
- the issue of trust within the context of Northern Ireland’s peace negotiations;
- the importance of confidence building measures in the Northern Ireland peace process;
- the role of former prisoners in Northern Ireland’s peace negotiations;
- the perception of ‘terrorism’ within the Northern Ireland context

The question and answer session, opened by Kerim Yildiz, was lively and informative:

Q: Define a ‘unitary’ state.

Mike Gapes: In the 1970s, growing support for Scottish nationalism and independence was occurring. The Scottish National Party, under Labour, won some elections and by-elections. They were a depositary called ‘protest votes’ against Labour. When Thatcher came into power, she tried to change the system, for example introducing tax on property (‘rates’). She tried to change that to a poll tax, as an experiment in Scotland, one year before it was introduced to the rest of the UK. The Scots rose in anger and it led to a huge anti-Conservative sentiment.

As a consequence, in the early 1980s, Labour became more determined it should be pro-devolution. They also thought this would be a means by which to diffuse and weaken people calling for independence. A very firm position was taken by John Smith (then Labour leader). One of Blair’s decisions was to carry on the commitment begun by John Smith. In many senses, the UK has a unitary state, it has many centralised power. But there is also devolution. The UK has a complex situation, there are 43 police forces, for example, each related to local government territorial areas. But, in practice, we do have a central system: the Metropolitan Police. Also, there are different education systems in Scotland and Wales and health structures are devolved. There are often different ministers for different things in different parts of the UK. What you label it is part of the problem. We are still moving in an evolutionary way (and have been since the Civil War). Discussion continues to take place, despite not always having a name for things.

Q: Some strict unitary states devolve powers to local governments, such as France. In Turkey, there is a Public Administration Draft Law, to provide better services, and some powers are delegated to local governments. In the UK, was there any demand for autonomy due to ethnic differences, and to have better services?

Mike Gapes: There has not been any argument in official policies, for ethnic differentiation, but linguistic issues have arisen. For example, in Wales, a large part of the support for nationalists originally came from the Welsh language community (8 to 10% of the population). Now, in the Welsh Assembly, you can choose whether to use Welsh or English. Road signs and television are in both languages. It can be difficult for English speaking Welsh people. Some English speakers resent this change. With regards to Scotland, there are some fringe groups with anti-English racism. But, the SNP has always said that every resident living in Scotland is a Scot, not just those born there. So, the phenomenon does not mirror the experiences of Eastern Europe for example, where issues regarding ethnicity have arisen.

Q: What other powers are granted with devolution? Are they only law making powers?

Mike Gapes: The most comprehensive devolved powers like with Scotland, which has its own Parliament. They have the ability to vary the level of taxation (within a small range: +3/-2% for local tax). They also have the ability to determine their own health and school systems. Scotland received financial support based on the total revenues coming into the UK, by the UK Treasury. They do have 'Scottish money' but the currency used there is still Sterling. There is one UK Treasury, one Foreign Minister, one Defence Minister and social security and benefits

system, determined by the UK as a whole. If greater devolution to Scotland were to occur, there would be very interesting consequences. They would have more economic power. It is possible that Scotland believes they would become better off financially through devolution. Pre recession, Alex Salmond talked about the 'Arc of Prosperity', which he names as comprising Norway, Iceland and Ireland (he wanted Scotland to join). The rate of UK financial support to Scotland is around 10 to 15 percent. This means more financial support per head than people living in England, as a result of subsidy from prosperous parts of England.

Q: Every tension or conflict has its own specific circumstances. To what extent can we create a model from the Scottish experience?

Mike Gapes: The ending of conflict brings the creation of a new structure, as seen in the case of South Africa. There are two elements necessary for this to occur:

- 1) Political negotiation (to end the conflict)
- 2) Social consensus

Both elements are very important.

Scotland is not a case of conflict resolution but of political resolution to complex political processes. There are only very few examples of fringe political violence. It is a very different case from Northern Ireland. It is unclear where the Scottish model will lead. One lesson which has been learned by Labour, is that Scottish issues must be fought in Scotland.

In terms of Northern Ireland, there are still problems with extremists, even though the main parties are working together. There is always a danger of breakaway groups and violence.

Q: In terms of the Northern Ireland experience, what came first, the agreement or trust?

Mike Gapes: The agreement occurred after enormous effort over the previous twenty years (which included secret talks and so on before formal negotiations in 1997). The Belfast Agreement was made in Belfast in 1998. There was a divide within the main political party from the Unionist side – some people left the table. David Trimble found keeping his party on side very difficult. Popularity for Sinn Féin grew, they had more working class Catholic support than other parties. It was hard for Unionists as they were not prepared to meet Sinn Féin. It took many years before David Trimble and Gerry Adams eventually shook hands.

It all centred around weapons. Trimble wanted categorical proof that all weapons had been destroyed. This became a sticking point in the process. Many international mediators came in to assist the process. Eventually, Trimble accepted that all weapon stocks had been destroyed. Gradually, the Unionist party became more involved. But, they lost support. Then, the DUP leader, Ian Paisley became a big force. He had always been the Great Rejectionist, with a motto of ‘no surrender’, but suddenly changed, and accepted Sinn Féin’s leader Gerry Adams good faith. They even spent time together and laughed, so much so that they became known as the ‘Chuckle Brothers’. This was phenomenal and had previously been inconceivable. At Stormont in 1998, it had never been envisaged that the agreement would have been implemented by Paisley and Trimble. Those previously seen as most extreme, went on to implement it. Today, opposing parties discuss normal issues such as traffic schemes and hospitals. The dynamics have changed, but it took ten years.

Q: What is the English public opinion?

Mike Gapes: Public opinion in England has never been tested by a poll for example. My instinct is that there is quite a lot of support in England for the view that Ireland should be united. But there is also a very strong view that this can only be possible through peaceful means. Very few people from England visit Northern Ireland or know the details of its history. The perception of it is a place where bombings happen.

Q: What specific confidence building measures were employed during the Northern Ireland peace process (such as the Mitchell principles)?

Mike Gapes: Building confidence is essential, before one can even think about disarmament and so forth. Confidence building measures are essential. One important contributor to confidence building in Northern Ireland was the role of former prisoners. In 1994, under the Conservative government, the main Protestant paramilitaries announced a ceasefire of their activities and concluded they wanted a peaceful settlement.

In 1996, the predominantly Catholic organisation the IRA announced a ceasefire, but it broke down due to terrorist attacks in Canary Wharf, London. When Labour came into power in 1997, the momentum stopped and there was a fear that the Protestant paramilitaries would also break the ceasefire. The then Northern Ireland Secretary, Marjorie 'Mo' Mowlam said, if the ceasefire was maintained for six weeks she would resume talks. This approach proved successful.

In 1998, there was another block to the process over Christmas. Leading Protestant paramilitary Billy Wright was murdered in Maze prison by members of a breakaway Republican group. There was a real danger both

IRA and Protestant paramilitary groups would break down. Mo Mowlam decided to go into the prison and talk to prisoners, despite controversy over this and fears for her safety. She knew the prison organisations had big external influence. It was seen to be a very risky decision but Mowlam saw that drastic action was needed. She talked to both Loyalist and Republican prisoners and got agreement from the main leaders in prison to keep the ceasefire. Outside, ex prisoners from both sides, were being funded by EU projects such as Belfast Community Centres, with ex prisoners being encouraged to be political spokespeople and to talk to schools and so on. Political support was offered by Bill Clinton and financial support was offered by the EU and UK government. But brave individuals from the communities were also needed. It was all about getting people out of the past and into the future.

Q: How have the people of England accepted Welsh and Scottish identities in the process of devolution? In Turkey, Kurdistan is not even recognised as a word.

Mike Gapes: Direct parallels cannot be drawn. It is important to go back in history. There have been different constitutional arrangements throughout history. There was a period when there were many separate kingdoms. Then there was the unifying of two monarchies, James I and James VI (the two monarchs of England and Scotland became one). 200 years later the Scottish parliament was abolished, because Scotland had become bankrupt following attempts to develop colonies in Central America (Panama) and so they depended on England.

We cannot live in the past. We are one country but with devolution, which is important. We must recognise the diversity within. There are benefits in being together. The Welsh language, for example, has been

recognised in such a way that is important to a minority. That is a very important factor in Wales making people there feel comfortable as both Welsh and British. In Scotland it is more nationalistic than linguistic.

Q: There are no constitutional warranties in the UK, is that a problem?

Mike Gapes: There is no written constitution in the UK. There has not been a revolutionary break like in France, for instance. We have the Act of Union between England and Scotland, and the Bill of Rights, which delineates powers of the monarchy and parliament. Various laws have since been added. There is no constitutional court, as in the USA or France.

The UK is different, we operate by way of a pragmatic ‘muddling through’ – there is no ‘grand vision’, it is just the British way. Sometimes judges become political. There is a constant tussle between the judiciary and the executive. Some believe a constitution is necessary, but we are a member of the Human Rights Declaration, we have our own Human Rights Bill and are a member of the EU (this is also a controversial issue in the UK!). We do not have an easily codifiable constitution as it comes from many different pieces of legislation.

Q: In Turkey, we need similar political figures such as Mo Mowlam. Terrorism still has a very negative perception. How has the perception of terrorism changed in the UK?

Mike Gapes: Mo Mowlam was unique. She played a very important role at a very important time. The agreement would not have been possible without her. There was a good team, Mowlam, Blair, Ahern and so on.

There was a personal chemistry. But Mo was something of a phenomenon and a public face.

Lunch took place at King's College, where lively discussion continued, the afternoon programme continued at the Legatum Institute, an independent organisation which aims to advance human liberty and good governance, through researching and promoting the integration of human dignity, liberty, and development. The Institute undertakes original and collaborative research, publishes scholarly literature and popular distillations, and cultivates a distinguished group of advisors and fellows.



*Roundtable meeting at King's College, London, 25th July 2011
(Left – Right): Levent Tüzel, Ayla Akat, Kelly Kileff, Lütfi Elvan,
Nazmi Gür, Kerim Yıldız, Penny Green, Mike Gapes, Catriona Vine,
Nursuna Memecan, Sevtap Yokuş, Mithat Sancar, Cengiz Çandar,
Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, Ayhan Bilgen, Levent Gök, Sezgin Tanrikulu,
Hasan Cemal, Ali Bayramoğlu*

LONDON SESSION 3: Monday 25th July , 2011 at The Legatum Institute, London

With: Mr. Jonathan Powell, former Chief of Staff to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair

Moderated by: Kerim Yildiz

The first roundtable discussion of the afternoon was opened by Mr. Jonathan Powell, former Chief of Staff to Tony Blair. Mr. Powell talked in depth about the lessons to be learned from the Northern Ireland peace process, in which he played an intrinsic role, working closely with Blair to forge peace.

Mr. Powell became Tony Blair's Chief of Staff in 1995, following a career in the diplomatic service. His role in Northern Ireland's peace talks was one of his most crucial jobs during Blair's time in office, leading to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Following the agreement, Powell continued to be a trusted advisor on a wide range of policy issues throughout Blair's time as Prime Minister.

Mr. Powell began with some background on the Northern Ireland conflict and his involvement in the peace process:

The Northern Ireland conflict was very particular to Northern Ireland and so was the solution. There is not a 'Northern Ireland model' that can be transferred elsewhere.

But, lessons can be learned. Northern Ireland took many lessons from South Africa, for example, the rule of consensus, that is, the rule which ensures support from both sides for the agreement.

The first time I met Gerry Adams and Martin McGuiness in 1997 at Stormont, I refused to shake their hands. They had shot my father and put my brother on a death list. Not long after that, I had a call from McGuiness asking for a meeting ‘in cognito’ in Derry. I went, and as I waited to be picked up, I was suddenly bundled into a black taxi and taken to a Catholic enclave somewhere in Derry. There was no trust. They saw me as the British establishment, which they did not trust. Over the years of going to safehouses, trust was achieved. This is only possible if it is safe, and if concessions are made. Trust was still limited though. In 2004, negotiations took place in a monastery. There are limits to trust but some must exist if bridges are to be built.

Peter Sheridan, the most senior Catholic policeman, had to move three times to avoid the IRA, his car was bombed too. I met McGuiness (Sinn Féin) and was given homemade soup, made by Peggy McGuiness, his mother. Being able to talk about the soup together helped. Those kind of things are essential.

Political momentum came with an election victory (Labour, led by Blair) – this was used to make progress on the Northern Ireland question. Blair’s first visit upon being elected was to Northern Ireland. He reassured Unionists they would be considered.

Without such effort and political capital, progress would have been more difficult. Blair deliberately set a timetable for progress. John Major (previous UK Prime Minister) had not been strong enough, he never set

a timetable and never spoke to Sinn Féin. As a result, Sinn Féin gave up. We deliberately set up a period of six weeks post ceasefire, when Sinn Féin would be brought in. The difficulty was in persuading the Unionists to stay and not walk out once Sinn Féin were involved. The deadline set for a solution was one year. Without this, a solution would not have been possible – you can talk forever. Blair negotiated until a solution was reached, but with an absolute cut off point of Easter one year later. But without political momentum, a solution cannot be possible.

Numerous conditions were needed for peace:

- 1) Economic position: Northern Ireland is viewed as the ‘celtic tiger’. If it weren’t for its strong economic position, for example if it were poor and priest-ridden, it would have less confidence
- 2) Both countries were in the European Union
- 3) A border was less important – both Catholics and Protestants existed
- 4) A belief that neither side could win militarily

The British military knew it could contain the IRA but could not wipe them out. Both sides knew, a military solution was not possible, and that a political solution was needed. Equal employment, housing and so on needed to be addressed, but Sinn Féin knew they could not drive the British government and army out of Northern Ireland, and that a political solution was needed. We started to reach out to John Hume (moderate SDLP member). The situation can be contrasted with that of Sri Lanka, where both sides believed they could win militarily, so went back to war. In Northern Ireland, both sides knew they could not win militarily, this was key.

Leadership is very important. Adams and McGuiness were political leaders of strong calibre. They led their organisation, almost intact, into a peace agreement on terms it would never have accepted ten years earlier. Trimble, on the Unionist side, was also a good leader. He sacrificed his own party and support for peace. Ian Paisley was a Protestant radical. From 2004 onwards (following a close encounter in hospital) he always looked for an agreement, whereas he had previously been a ‘no’ man.

I left government to write a book on Northern Ireland. The most important thing of all was the process. Without a process, there would be a vacuum, filled by violence – look at the Middle East. In that context, we more or less know what peace would look like in terms of territory, but there is no process to get us there. Perez described it as the following: the good news is there is light at the end of the tunnel, the problem is there is no tunnel. I call it the bicycle theory – you always need a process. We had to release prisoners – killers – it was very difficult, but we had to in the name of peace. the IRA committed the biggest bank robbery in history, but even that could not break negotiations.

If there is one danger to learn from, it is pre-conditions. John Major, in 1994, wanted the IRA to say it was a permanent ceasefire, not a temporary one. The IRA did not agree. They also demanded decommissioning, which was refused. They watered this demand down and said ‘most weapons’ must be decommissioned. The IRA said no!

Then they said a ‘token amount’ – and the IRA still said no. Pre-conditions should be dealt with within the peace process talks, not as a reason for the talks. Also, the concept of surrender is an anathema in negotiations. Parties will never surrender, so one has to find a way for

them to stand down with their ‘own’ reason. It is critical not to force them. Paisley demanded photos of the arms decommissioning at the last minute, and this was refused so the deal was broken.

Symbols are crucial. For example, whether a crown should be used on a police force badge is as equally argued as more substantive issues. The problem is often one of sequencing and choreography. Neither side wants to go first as there is not trust. We had to break things into small steps so that both sides had confidence. We also needed independent referees such as George Mitchell from the US. This person had to be acceptable to both sides, therefore could not be British. Arms were also surrendered to an independent party. The main way to reach a solution is to break away from a ‘zero sum’ game. One must move forward from the idea that there is a winner. In 1996, Adams realised he not only had to sell the agreement to his own side, but also to the Unionists. Paisley did the same. Only when both sides see themselves as winners can it work, otherwise one side will try to reopen negotiations.

However long a conflict has lasted, it can be resolved. Successive governments thought it could not be (Thatcher, Churchill). You need a strong leader. In Blair’s book, he describes how I thought he had a ‘messiah complex’. And this was necessary! Absolute belief in a solution.

Following Mr.Powell’s introduction, Kerim Yildiz opened the floor for questions and answers:

Q: What comes first, agreement or trust?

Jonathan Powell: Peace is not an event, it is a process. The Good Friday

Agreement was an amazing triumph. But, to think the problem is solved there, is a mistake. IT took nine more years of negotiations. Look at the Oslo Accords in the Middle East – this was celebrated, but collapsed, as nothing was done to implement it. Look at ETA in Spain – there was a ceasefire in 2006, then both sides collapsed as there was no implementation. So, implementation is of equal importance to the agreement itself.

There must be enough trust to talk to people. But if you wait for complete tryst, you will be waiting a long time.

The Good Friday Agreement was ambiguous on the issue of decommissioning. We used what is called ‘constructive ambiguity’. The agreement deliberately uses ambiguous language. This can be important to move forward. But, you must be careful, as both sides can project what they want onto the agreement.

Q: Can you describe the secret meetings that took place?

Jonathan Powell: There were no secret meetings between McGuinness, Adams and Blair. There was a secret channel to the IRA from 1972. This was established by the British Secret Service. It was first established by a link named ‘Mountain Climber’ (code name), who negotiated a peace process in 1974. There was the Downing Street meeting in 1998, with McGuinness and Adams and the British Government. The next meeting was at Chequers, the country residence of the British Prime Minister.

Q: During the peace process, what was the reaction of English and British people?

Jonathan Powell: They had been used to problems for such a long time, so did not care so much, there was not the same degree of feeling as in Spain, regarding ETA, for example. Two children were killed in Warrington, England, by a bomb in the early 1990s, and a peace organisation/campaign was set up. Labour had previously offered bi-partisan support to the Conservative government to support Major in Northern Ireland, and later, the Tories also gave some bi-partisan support. But, the strength of feeling was not so strong in Britain.

Q: What was the death toll from the conflict?

Jonathan Powell: The death toll was around 3,600 over the whole period. At its height, around 300 people died per year. These were mostly civilians; innocent people caught in bomb attacks. Both sides felt pain and resentments. The local military force were accused of committing atrocities on Catholics and retaliations took place by the IRA. There was much pain and hatred. On leaving government, Labour considered setting up a truth and reconciliation commission, but neither side wanted to.

Q: What was the role of the press/media?

Jonathan Powell: In the early days, the press was a problem. It inflamed feelings on both sides. Catholic and Protestant press whipped up feelings. The British press inspired anti-Irish feeling, especially after the Guildford and Birmingham bombings. In the 1990s, the press played a more constructive role. Both Catholic and Protestant papers found a common cause and worked together. So the press can either be destructive or constructive.

Q: Why did the media change its attitude? Was PR enrolled?

Jonathan Powell: The media changed its attitude as the populations they served changed attitudes and wanted peace – they followed people's will. Newsletter and the Irish News were particularly positive. Alistair Campbell was employed. But it was not press or politicians that led to the positivity – what had changed was attitudes of the people.

Q: Discuss Blair's interest in Northern Ireland.

Jonathan Powell: Blair was very sincere in wanting peace. Political capital can be spent on many things. He deliberately chose to spend it on Northern Ireland. This had never previously been the case. This was partly due to his origins. His grandmother was related to the Orange Order (Protestant), and had told him, 'whatever you do, don't marry a Catholic' (he later on to do so!). Blair did not get one extra vote for peace in Northern Ireland, there was no political gain at all.

Mr. Jonathan Powell was followed by Sir Kieran Prendergast.



*Roundtable meeting at the Legatum Institute, London, 25th July 2011
Sir Kieran Prendergast and Jonathan Powell*

LONDON SESSION 4:

Monday 25th July , 2011 Legatum Institute, London

With:

Sir Kieran Prendergast, former Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations.

Moderated by:

Kerim Yildiz

The final roundtable discussion of the day was with Sir Kieran Prendergast, British diplomat and former Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations. Sir Prendergast discussed the subject of conflict and its resolution. In 1997, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed Sir Prendergast Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations, a position he held until 2005. During this role he helped call attention to human rights violations and ethnic cleansing resulting from the War in Darfur, and was an instrumental part of the Cyprus reunification negotiations in 2004.

Prior to this role, Sir Prendergast worked as Assistant Private Secretary to Secretaries of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs; Member of the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations; Head of Chancery and Consul-General in Israel; High Commissioner to Zimbabwe and Kenya, and British Ambassador to Turkey. He has also worked at the British Embassy in Ankara, Turkey; the NATO Department at the British Foreign Office; the foreign service in Cyprus, and The Hague.

Sir Prendergast began with an insightful talk on conflict resolution and his experiences within this field:

Many British people have multiple identities, which can be problematic in this world; people have to accept that people have multiple identities, and that these identities must be recognised.

Conflict is natural and inevitable in most societies. What is worrying is violent conflict, which often arises when there is no democratic means of resolution. Take the example of Darfur, most of the population is Muslim, Arabic speaking, and there is also a government formed of a dominant elite. The problem occurs when there is no means of stopping conflict; no political will to stop it. The question which is often asked is: do you understand your view of the conflict and the other's view of the conflict? If you only understand your view, there is no solution. (If you only see your view as right). Often, there are two valid views, they are just different perspectives. I often ask, are parties ready to solve the issue, or do we have to live with conflict as it is not ripe for solution? If a conflict is being managed, we must ask, how can the conflict be ripened so that it is ready for a solution? As if it is not ripe, it is very difficult to reach a solution.

It must also be asked, who are the parties, and who are the spoilers? The temptation is to assume that all parties come with goodwill. But often, people feel they would be damaged by a solution. For a spoiler, often, the best situation is the worst situation.

Peace is made by the parties, not imposed by outsiders. The danger is that one can infantilise parties if it is implied they have no responsibility – they have the prime responsibility. In the CPA in Sudan, the parties were locked up until agreement was reached! It took as long as it took. The Norwegian mediators in the Oslo Accords insisted that the two parties (Israelis and Palestinians) stay together in the same hotel, that there was

only one table for meals, so that they had to engage with one another. Jan Egeland, one of the main negotiators in the Oslo Accords, just made tea for the parties! He recognised it was the parties that had to make peace. What went wrong was the assassination of Rabin – he was succeeded by people with no interest in a solution.

It is important for there to be no winner or loser. Otherwise, the ‘losing side’ will not comply. Both sides must feel like they gain. In the Oslo Accord, the key for success was patience and persistence. Reverses are natural and inevitable. They are often due to spoilers. One must have patience and persistence. With regards to deadlines: the Peace Agreement on Zimbabwe was to a timetable. Psychologically, this was intended to tell guerrillas it would not be pain free if they left the process. It is always important to allow enough time, especially on the constitution building process. The quality of a constitution is in direct proportion to the time spent on it. It is very important parties feel ownership of the agreement. The process of consultation cannot be rushed. I was pushed out of the UN over Iraq, and my opposition to the speed with which settlements were done.

The importance of momentum is this: it is like climbing a very steep hill. Politically, it is important that there be a very clear statement of intention, so that both sides know it is real and so actions are taken. But, one side should not be given a veto on whether to carry on or not. Why? Because accidents happen, and also, because you are giving a veto to the spoilers. This is not desirable.

The importance of not demonising or dehumanising your opponent is essential. If you do, how can you explain what you are doing to your own public opinion when you talk to them? There have only been a few cases

of victory, including the Malayan case and Angola.

Importance and dignity are very important as well. The weaker people are, the more important it is they are treated with respect. Look at the Arab Spring – lots of people took part as they had not been treated with respect by their government. People need to be treated like citizens not subjects. All citizens have rights and are the same.

Martin McGuiness started out seeking an apprenticeship as a mechanic. He was turned down as a Catholic and treated with contempt. This fuelled his hatred. In the Iran and USA case, secret meetings took place on the basis of sovereignty and equality – sovereign equality and mutual respect. These things mattered the most. One must remember that. Where there are two parties of unequal force, the bigger party has a greater responsibility to be generous to the other party. For example, Turkey and Greece. There is a bigger onus of responsibility on Turkey to be generous towards Greece, as Turkey can afford to be so. This is an important aspect of many conflicts.

It is important to leave ‘terms’ to the end. Look at powers and individual components, such as decentralisation. It is less important to name things, try to avoid terms that are painful for the other side, as this can impede progress.

Trust – there is almost never trust. How do deal with that? Through monitoring. For example, in Zimbabwe, a ceasefire monitoring commission was made up, with the UN as a referee. In Guatemala, ‘accompaniment’ took place, that is to say, walking with the parties. The UN had responsibility for deciding who was complying with the

agreement and who was not. Where there is no trust, it is important to have third parties to monitor whether obligations are being complied with or not. If you are the weaker party, it is always a difficult judgment to decide whether to take part or to boycott; one must weigh up the pros and cons. Every conflict is *sui generis*, and needs to be looked at individually – but they do all have common features too.

A questions and answers session followed, introduced by Kerim Yildiz:

Q: How important are words?

Sir Prendergast: I do not believe in constructive ambiguity. Look at Resolution 242 on the Middle East and Israel and Palestine, it says ‘withdraw from occupied territories’ not ‘the occupied territories’, which is crucial, as it is not clear whether it refers to all occupied territories or some! It may have been necessary to get resolution, but they could have persisted longer for the purposes of clarity.

Q: What are your reflections on Turkey?

Sir Prendergast: There are many things to address – the democracy issue (which applies to all Turks), the Kurdish issue and the PKK issue. The European Commission say they accept subsidiary issues, that is, things should be dealt with at the lowest possible level. What can be dealt with locally should be. The Kurdish issue must be addressed. I was Ambassador for Turkey in 1996. Every action has a reaction. There is also the question of identity. Roots are mixed together very thoroughly, but identities must be recognised. There must be recognition of the Kurdish identity. If nationalities on passports could be changed from Turkish to Kurdish, that would go a long way. For example, many people in the UK

have British and Irish and African identities, for example.

The government has a strong mandate: identity, the Kurdish issue, and a subset of PKK issues. There must be a strong declaration of intent, backed up with confidence building measures. In Western Turkey, where there is a very small percentage of Kurdish people, people saw the Kurdish issue as major. It is important not to give spoilers a veto too.

Q: Tell us more about not dehumanising or demonising your opponent.

Sir Prendergast: Look at the hunger strikes in Northern Ireland. It was only when Thatcher was persuaded to use a set of words that inferred the strikers had committed crimes for political reasons and not criminal reasons, that they stopped the hunger strike.

Gerry Adams is quite a devout Catholic – he goes to church every Sunday. And yet he ordered the deaths of many. It would be a terrible mistake to present the enemy as inhuman, it stops you from understanding what makes them tick and it makes it harder to deal with them.

Q: What would you advise to all political parties and the media in Turkey?

Sir Prendergast: It could be difficult to get consensus, but, if a solution can be achieved through democratic means, this is good. Any national debate on the nature of the problem is great. It is difficult to justify violence when there is a legal, democratic, parliamentary means of solving a problem. The use of violence by insurgent groups is increasingly seen as unacceptable in democratic states. There are limitations regarding the use of force on both sides. Much is to be gained from parliamentary

democracy. The use of force by insurgents moves the political spectrum to the Right. Things should become easier if there is no use of violence. If there is to be a suspension of violence, it is vital that governance doesn't rest on its oars, but rather redoubles its efforts.

Turkey must launch a boat for peace alone, not as a result of external pressure. Sometimes, the more foreign pressure there is, the harder it can be.

The roundtable discussions were followed by a dinner reception at the Hotel Russell in Bloomsbury, hosted by Sir Prendergast. All participants discussed the day's roundtables with enthusiasm; dialogue was animated and the group was united in its opinion that the day's programme had been highly valuable. The comparative examples of South Africa and other post-conflict societies discussed throughout the day served as points of great interest and analysis for the duration of the evening.

LONDON DINNER DISCUSSIONS:

Monday 25th July, 2011

London

Hosted by:

Sir Kieran Prendergast, former Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations.

The dinner was an opportunity for participants to talk among themselves on the sharing experiences that had been discussed during the four roundtable sessions, as well as an opportunity to discuss freely the topics they were interested in with those who attended.

BELFAST 26-27TH JULY 2011

ROUNDTABLES/SEMINARS/MEETINGS

BELFAST SESSION 1:

Tuesday 26th July, 2011, Windsor House, Belfast

Northern Ireland Political briefing

With

Mary Madden, British Joint Secretary and Patrick Lynch, Head of Political Liaison
Unit of the Northern Ireland Office.

Moderated by

Kerim Yildiz

Upon arrival in Belfast, the group were met by visit coordinators from the Political Liaison and Protocol Unit of the Northern Ireland Office, Rosemary Neill and Steven Sweeney, who oversaw the transfer from Belfast Airport to Windsor House in the city of Belfast.

Once at Windsor House, Mary Madden British Joint Secretary and Patrick Lynch, Head of Political Liaison Unit of the Northern Ireland Office welcomed

the group and spent the morning conducting an in-depth political briefing on Northern Ireland by way of a presentation entitled ‘Northern Ireland: the path towards peace’.

The presentation gave the following perspective on the situation in Northern Ireland:

- The two-fold role of the Northern Ireland Office:
 1. to advise the British government on political and community developments in Northern Ireland
 2. an outward facing diplomatic role

Northern Ireland statistics:

- 1.7m population (equal to Bursa, Turkey) divided into six counties with two main cities (Belfast and Derry/London Derry)
- 53% of the population from a Protestant background
- 44% of the population from a Catholic background
- An ‘unstable majority’ – two populations coexisting, close to one another in number
- A case of ‘territorial competition’: one group favouring Britain, the other Ireland

Historical background to the situation in Northern Ireland:

- 1801: Act of Union – the decision to rule Ireland from Westminster. A similar act occurred in Scotland around the same time
- During this time, a demand for sovereignty emerged; a belief that

Ireland should have its own parliament, based in Ireland. The issue with this was that in the North of Ireland, the majority of people were Protestant, and saw themselves as ethnically British.

- 1921 – 1968: A growth in feelings of discrimination among Catholics. Unionists feared that the Catholics' increasing demands for rights were political, and driven by a desire to rule Ireland. Unrest turned to violence, what is today often referred to as 'the Troubles'
- 1969: The introduction of the British Army as a peacekeeping force, due to the police force being overwhelmed
- 1972: Devolved administration suspended and direct rule from London began

Details of the conflict:

- 3,600 people killed since 1969
- 52% of those killed civilians

Perpetrators:

- 57% of deaths by Republicans
- 28% of deaths by Loyalists (internationally viewed as counterinsurgency paramilitaries)
- 10% of deaths by the police force due to public disorder

Players in the conflict:

- Nationalists/Republicans, believe in a united Ireland, almost exclusively Catholic although a small minority Protestant
- Sinn Féin
- SDLP
- IRA

- INLA
- CIRCA
- RIRA
- ONH
- Unionists/Loyalists, favour the UK as part of a settlement, mostly Protestant although not exclusively so; a significant number of Catholics also saw themselves as Unionists
- DUP
- UUP
- UUF
- UDA
- UFF

Current political situation in Northern Ireland:

- Northern Ireland's political parties, ordered according to size:
- DUO (Unionist)
- Sinn Féin (former political wing of the IRA, includes previous IRA serviceman and ex prisoners)
- UUP
- SDLP
- Alliance (the only cross community party, not campaigning for either side, holds 8% of the vote)
- Green, Independent

Key stages leading to today's political situation:

- 1981: Republican hunger strike led by Bobby Sands, protesting against the abolition of special category status for prisoners convicted of Troubles-related offences.

- Sands was elected as an MP during the strike, some think this showed paramilitaries that a political path was possible
- 15 November 1985: Anglo-Irish Agreement. This gave the Irish government a more advisory role and discussed how a federal parliament might be established and power shared
- Late 1980s: Mutual stalemate. Paramilitaries realised they could not achieve aims through violence but the state also realised it could not eliminate the paramilitaries. British government faced a myth, that people saw their presence in Northern Ireland as an attempt to gain territory.
- 9 November 1990: Peter Brooke, Northern Ireland Secretary makes significant statement that Britain has ‘no selfish strategic or economic interest’ in Northern Ireland – that is to say, their presence is simply due to the will of the majority of people in Northern Ireland
- At this time, private talks progressed between the British government and the IRA through facilitators and also between the two main nationalist parties (Sinn Féin and IRA). Comparable to the Basque country negotiations – the more extreme party sends the more moderate party to negotiations. From this, momentum builds, leading to the Downing Street Declaration.
- 1993: Downing Street Declaration – a ‘statement of intention’. Most importantly, the statement asserted that if the IRA renounce violence, they could be part of a political solution, and no longer be locked out.
- 1994: First real ceasefire since the 1970s. Very quickly, a major concern emerged; what should happen to the weapons of this illegal army? The solution was found in a third party international body, with Dublin and London governments appointing Canadian General John de Chastelain (part of the team of Senator George Mitchell, United States Special Envoy for Northern Ireland, under President

Bill Clinton), who take charge of decommissioning.

- 1994 – 1996: Progress was very slow, frustration felt on both sides. Some think neither side was ready to take the next step at this stage. Politicians from the Unionist community felt it was too soon and too raw to share power with those responsible for so many deaths. As a result, no official multi-party talks took place at this time. The IRA responded by executing the Canary Wharf bombing in London, killing two people.
- June 1996: Multi-party talks continued but without Sinn Féin's presence. The government made clear that no talks were possible with perpetrators while violence was ongoing.
- 1 May 1997: UK General Election, Labour victory. This brought about key change.
- 20 July: Shortly after Blair's appointment as Prime Minister, the ceasefire was restored by the IRA.
- 9 September: After six weeks of ceasefire, Sinn Féin were allowed into talks again. They signed a pledge at Stormont, promising that the party would abide by the 'Mitchell Principles' of permanent nonviolence. Two main Unionist parties were present, the DUP and UUP. DUP left the negotiations and UUP (then the larger of the two Unionist parties) stayed.
- 10 April 1998: talks led to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement (also known as the Belfast Agreement), signed by London, Dublin and most political parties. The agreement set out a series of provisions on: the future status and system of government within Northern Ireland; the relationship between Northern Ireland and institutions in both the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom; human rights (Northern Ireland now has the strongest anti-discrimination legislation in Europe); the principle of respect for each of Northern Ireland's communities and their traditions; the decommissioning

of arms held by the various paramilitary groups, the release of members of paramilitary groups from prison; and the normalisation of British security arrangements within Northern Ireland. The power sharing model was based on the ‘consocialisation’ model, a form of government involving guaranteed group representation, often suggested for managing conflict in deeply divided societies.

- The area of policing could not be agreed on, it was seen to be too sensitive an area. On the Nationalist side, unhappiness lay with the fact that 92% of the police force comprised Protestants; it was alleged the Catholic community was discriminated against in this area.
- The Unionist view was that the IRA had intimidated people and stopped them from entering the police service. Over 300 police officers were killed during the conflict; policing was therefore a very sensitive issue.
- A separate commission was therefore set up to resolve the issue. Many changes took place within the police service. The name was changed from the ‘Royal Ulster Constabulary’ to the ‘Police Service of Northern Ireland’; the badge, uniform and working environment were all changed to make them neutral. A new policy of equal recruitment was established: for every Protestant officer, a Catholic officer had to be employed. This saw the percentage of Catholic officers rise from 8% to 30% within ten years. Delays, disputes and decommissioning all proved to be issues.
- Senator George Mitchell said that implementing the agreement would be as difficult as agreeing on it.
- 2004 – 2005: More talks were held, to overcome these problems. In 2004: things ground to a halt. A major bank robbery associated with the IRA and the murder of an individual occurred.
- July 2005: IRA formally ended their armed campaign and agreed to engage in decommissioning. It had taken five years to get to this

- stage.
- September 2005: General de Chastelain announced he was satisfied that decommissioning in Northern Ireland was complete.
- By this stage, the two largest parties in Northern Ireland were the two most extreme, but no power sharing agreement existed between them.

Devolution:

- 2006 – 2007: The St Andrews Agreement was an agreement between the British and Irish Governments and the political parties in relation to the devolution of power to Northern Ireland. The agreement resulted from multi-party talks held in St Andrews in Fife, Scotland from 11 October to 13 October 2006, between the two governments and all the major parties in Northern Ireland, including the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin. It resulted in the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the formation (on 8 May 2007) of a new Northern Ireland Executive and a decision by Sinn Féin to support the Police Service of Northern Ireland, courts and rule of law.
- America played a strong role in facilitating the agreement of the St Andrews Agreement. On 29 December 2006 The White House used its influence to tell Republicans that they should support the proposed agreement.
- 2010: A final piece of devolution took place. Responsibility for Policing and Justice moved from the Westminster government to the Belfast government. As the area remains so sensitive, it was agreed that the leader of the cross-community Alliance party would be Minister of Policing and Justice.
- NB: from 1997 to 2011, the most extreme political parties ascended

- and grew, while the more moderate parties, who made difficult and
- sometimes unpopular decisions, such as that of releasing prisoners,
 - became less popular. Some commentators viewed this as
 - undesirable, as it demonstrates many voters became more extreme in
 - their views. Others say this is a good thing, as it shows that the
 - ‘extreme’ parties have begun to adopt policies in the centre ground
 - and have renounced paramilitaries.
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- Moving forward: 2011
 - 5 May 2011: Assembly election. Today, relatively speaking, the constitutional question, that concerning the UK and Ireland, is less important. Today issued discussed among parties include health and the economy etc. This shows clear progress.
 - A challenge remains in the form of dissident terrorist groups. The British government is confident that such groups have little support, but still pose a threat.
 - The greatest challenge lies in the ongoing community segregation.
 - Around 92% of public housing is segregated and education is also heavily educated (around 93% remains separated). This is the next obstacle to overcome; the Secretary of State sees integration as the next step.

Question and Answer session moderated by Kerim Yildiz:

Following the presentation, which was eagerly received and seen by the group to be thorough and informative at every level, questions were posed to Mary Madden, British Joint Secretary, who worked on a number of the agreements in Northern Ireland. Questions focused largely on the peace process and the precise ways in which negotiation and agreement were achieved among such strongly opposed sides. Interest was also expressed

with regards to the details of the devolution process, in particular surrounding the issue of power sharing.

Questions raised included the following:

Q: Please elaborate on the Mitchell Principles, which seem to be an important part of achieving peace in Northern Ireland

Mary Madden: We had reached a particular stage in negotiations with the British and Irish governments, where it was recognised that outside help was needed. Both governments asked then US President Bill Clinton for help, and he responded by sending his Special Envoy Senator George Mitchell.

Part of the reasoning behind this was to build trust. Having an independent, international government alongside two national governments reassured both sides that there was an independent presence.

George Mitchell came to assist the two governments to engage in dialogue. One of his early views was that a level playing field was needed; that is to say, all parties must subscribe themselves to peaceful means, one could not bomb one's way to the negotiation table. It had to be agreed, that once there, you would negotiate without guns or bombs under the table, but instead on good faith. George Mitchell therefore announced the principle of peaceful intent as the ticket with which one would be allowed to come to the table.

Q: Which specific powers are devolved from Westminster to Belfast?

Mary Madden: All socio-economic issues, including housing, health, education, roads, policing, justice; areas which create the fabric of society. The retained powers include those which will never be devolved in the UK, such as national security, the army, elections, social welfare: national policies.

This reflects the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly: devolution to ‘the territorials’. The theory is that devolution allows local parliament to be more receptive to local needs. But the mother parliament of Westminster still keeps overarching control, still retains responsibility for European policy, national policy and overseas policy, as well as tax.

Q: What budget is allocated by Westminster to Belfast?

Mary Madden: Northern Ireland receives a subvention of £9.2bn to disseminate in whichever way it chooses. Belfast decides how this is spent. Northern Ireland receives, on average, 20% more per head than any other part of the UK. There are no tax-raising powers in the Northern Ireland Assembly, although some want tax raising powers to be devolved.

Q: Can you elaborate on what constitutes ‘national security’?

Mary Madden: National security concerns the security of the nation, and covers for example, international terrorism, domestic terrorism and world conflict. Westminster is responsible for global, national and local threats/conflict. In Northern Ireland there has been domestic terrorism. Even though policing is now devolved, they deal with local crime only. Terrorism is the preserve of Westminster and the UK Secretary of State.

Q: Is there still a visible presence of the British military in terms of camps

or bases in Northern Ireland?

Mary Madden: As security is a national matter, it is not devolved. It is a question of cooperation. Responsibility is taken on by national services, such as MI5. National security is under the responsibility of MI5, who operate in Northern Ireland. There is no longer a need for the army to be deployed to support police (the army is no longer deployed in Northern Ireland) except in one small regard: army technical officers who diffuse bombs etc. The army has a presence as in every other part of the UK, but it is not in operational service.

BELFAST LUNCH DISCUSSIONS, TUESDAY 26TH JULY 2011, WINDSOR HOUSE

Hosted by:

Mary Madden British Joint Secretary

With:

a number of guests, representing the different facets of Belfast's communities. Discussion continued over lunch.

Expert guests included:

- Tom Malaney, Representative of the Irish Government
- Ritchie Ryan, Department of Justice, Republic of Ireland
- John Loughran, Programme Director for Intercomm's North Belfast Developing Leadership Initiative
- Rev. Dr. Gary Mason, MBE, East Belfast Mission
- Father Gary Donegan, Parish Priest, Holy Cross, North Belfast
- Neil Jarman, Department of Social Anthropology, Queen's University and Community Development Centre, Belfast
- Peter O'Reilly, Mediation Northern Ireland

Some of the discussion over lunch focused on:

1. the role of women in peacebuilding
2. the role of civil society in peacebuilding
3. the most effective means of forging peace
4. the significance and use of symbols (such as badges and flags) and how they are employed differently in Northern Ireland today, now

that there is greater awareness of their impact the contribution poverty has made to the situation in Northern Ireland; how most people affected by the conflict are those in poverty and suffering deprivation; the idea of prosperity increase being the best way to advance progress the importance of working together at community level as well as national level.

BELFAST SESSION 2: Tuesday 26th July, 2011, Stormont, Belfast

With:

Francie Molloy MLA for Sinn Féin and Principle Deputy Speaker of the Northern Irish Assembly

Moderated by:

Kerim Yildiz

The first roundtable discussion of the afternoon was with Francie Molloy MLA, a Sinn Féin politician and Principle Deputy Speaker. Mr. Molloy has been active in his area's political and community life since his teens, and was one of the first people in his area to join the Catholic Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland. During the 1981 Hunger Strike, Mr. Molloy was Director of Elections for Bobby Sands. He was elected to the Assembly for Mid Ulster in 1998 and was re-elected in 2003.

Kerim Yildiz opened the table for questions and discussion:

Q: Please discuss the power of regional government in Northern Ireland.

Francie Molloy: The positive side to regional government is that we have an Assembly, which allows us to build together, across parties. It is easier to build trust through a regional assembly than it would be via Westminster or the Irish government. The negative side is that our funding comes from Westminster, and therefore it still controls us to a great extent.

Q: What issues are currently being debated, and what are the major issues you foresee will be debated in future?

Francie Molloy: One of the main issues discussed at the moment is corporation tax. The Republic of Ireland currently pays a lower rate than Northern Ireland. Basic planning legislations, for example industrial and domestic planning, is also an issue. More mundane issues, such as local authorities are also discussed. There are currently 26 authorities, and we are trying to reduce that number to 11.

Q: Discuss the history of your involvement in politics.

Francie Molloy: I got involved through the civil rights campaign, which still continues today. The biggest right obtainable is the right to self govern. At present, no party is banned from parliament, it is open to all. But we want to see and bring about change, and convince others that the best thing is a united Ireland. Sinn Féin is stronger today than it was in 1918, we are elected both in the South and in the North.

The Unionist party is very much opposed to a united Ireland; the SDLP is also against this. We recognise the right to armed struggle to achieve rights, as there was no alternative. When there is an opportunity – like now, we must open up and make the politics work.

Q: Is your aim of a united Ireland written into the party's political programme?

Francie Molloy: Yes, it is included as a main aspiration of the party.

Q: In parliament, you conduct legitimate political activities; however, there is a wide perception of a link between Sinn Féin and the IRA. If the IRA were to commit a violent action, what would you do?

Francie Molloy: The IRA is over now. Any violent activities are carried out by distant groups, who have not been brought into the process, operating as mavericks. We would condemn any violence. The IRA campaign has ended, the war is over. We focus now on the Good Friday Agreement and we want change.

Q: What powers would this parliament have if you become a united Ireland?

Francie Molloy: One government for Ireland is what we aspire to. But everything is negotiable. It is possible that we will have a federal government for the foreseeable future.

Q: Did the Good Friday Agreement meet all of your expectations? Among local people, are there any groups that hope to take further action?

Francie Molloy: The Good Friday Agreement went a long way in establishing a process and in making progress, for example the release of prisoners. But with regards to the prisoners, some still had difficulties finding jobs and faced discrimination. There is also the issue of collusion between the state and Loyalists.

Q: What is your view on the possibility of a truth and reconciliation commission in Northern Ireland?

Francie Molloy: Sinn Féin believes that a truth commission is the only

way to deal with the past, as with South Africa. But it would definitely have to have an international dimension and must be independent (not linked to the British government in any way, for example).

Q: Have you done anything to compensate for the pain of victims and their families? For example, common remembrance days?

Francie Molloy: Numerous events have been held. A recent memorial day took place a few weeks ago for all victims. There is no argument on the equality of all victims. Previously, some would not recognise Republicans as victims, even though they had been targeted by state authorities. Attempts have been made in the past to compensate, for example it was suggested that £1,000 be given to all families who had suffered a loss. That was rejected. There are many different victims on many different scales, one question is how to differentiate between victims? A large fund is necessary for compensation. There is no agreement as yet as to how to move forward from the past.

Q: What benefit or conclusions would you expect from truth commissions? What are the grounds for objections?

Francie Molloy: My hope is, to get the truth of everything that happened, by state authorities, the IRA, Loyalists. There is no agreement on this, some people only want the truth of what the IRA did. Whether Northern Ireland is ready to hear both sides, is questionable. Some people still feel it's too fresh or raw.

Q: Is it your personal view or the party view of Sinn Féin to have a truth and reconciliation commission?

Francie Molloy: It is the view of Sinn Féin.

Q: When the paramilitaries were released, were there any conditions?

Francie Molloy: All stated they would not be involved in violent acts. Today, even if convicted for an event prior to 1998, the maximum someone can serve is two years imprisonment.

Q: Do you feel British or Irish?

Francie Molloy: Irish, without hesitation!

Q: Has any violence occurred in parliament itself?

Francie Molloy: Part of the reason I am in the Speaker's chair is due to the mandate of equality today. At first, incidents did occur in the vicinity of parliament. An attack also took place on the assembly by a Loyalist in the time of severe conflict. But, considering the transition that has occurred, no major disruption has happened. The last term is the longest term the assembly has been up and running. Parties today have experience of the conflict and for that reason do not want to go back to it.

Q: Were you involved in violence yourself?

Francie Molloy: Yes, during the civil rights campaign (like the US civil rights campaign) – it was defence, a reaction to being shot at by forces, and I make no apology for being involved in that. As we moved away from conflict and into a political solution, the nature of the conflict may have changed but we are still fighting for rights and demanding equality.

Q: Does Sinn Féin attract Protestant support?

Francie Molloy: In the North, we are mostly supported by Catholic nationalists. But, in no way are we a Catholic party. We do not in any way represent or associate ourselves with the Catholic church. Sinn Féin is very much a grass-roots party, we represent ourselves, our families, and have a support base we know intimately. We do not take a high salary – it is easier to fight for something when you are at the same wage level as everyone else. The questions and answers session was followed by a visit of the assembly chambers.



Roundtable meeting at Stormont, Belfast, 26th July 2011
(Left – Right): Sezgin Tanrikulu, Catriona Vine, Bejan Matur, Nazmi Gür,
Hasan Cemal, Mithat Sancar, Kerim Yıldız, Francie Molloy, Ayhan Bilgen,
Ali Bayramoğlu, Ayla Akat

BELFAST SESSION 3:

Tuesday 26th July, 2011, Stormont, Belfast

With:

Gerry Kelly MLA for Sinn Féin

Moderated by:

Kerim Yildiz

The final roundtable discussion of the day was hosted at Stormont, and included Gerry Kelly, an Irish Republican politician and former IRA volunteer who played a leading role in the negotiations that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. He is currently a member of Sinn Féin's national executive and an MLA for North Belfast.

Mr. Kelly began with an introduction of himself, wherein he shared the following: I joined the IRA, was jailed for 15 years, escaped a couple of times, and was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998. I was a negotiator in the peace process. Northern Ireland has the oldest British parliament. Since the partition, there has been a military uprising in every generation. Northern Ireland's parliament was the bastion of British rule within Ireland.

Conflict does not come from nowhere. Discrimination was endemic against Catholics, there was no equality or fairness. I awoke to politics as a teenager, when I held a job a local civil servant. I did not come from a violent background. I made a choice in the late 60s, early 70s, to be part of the civil rights movement, which was in response to the shooting in the streets by the British army. A common view among young Catholic

people at the time was to fight force with force.

It was a long conflict. All conflict leads to either absolute defeat or victory, or to negotiations – an attempt to find a platform or structure or way of moving on. I was involved in the very early days as a secret contact for the British and for Sinn Féin. Out of that came a peace process, which led to political negotiations. If anything is inevitable about conflict, it is that you will go to the negotiation table. There has to be dialogue. Out of the negotiations came the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, which I was part of. It dealt with issues at the heart of the conflict. The process allowed the opposed views to partake. Previously, it had not been possible to bring oppositions together.

The structure Northern Ireland now has deals with three strong relationships:

1. Internal relations on British jurisdiction but part of Ireland
2. All Ireland approach – as assembly ministers, would meet with Irish government ministers on all aspects, such as health and tourism, and work together in an all-Ireland approach
3. The East-West relationship (which is important to Unionists), by way of the British Ireland Council My beliefs have not changed concerning what is right for Ireland (that is to say, self determination). Unionists have a different view. If you are a Protestant and Unionist, among 5m, you have a very strong voice. If you are a Catholic, only 1.5m among 63m, you have a very weak voice. When the IRA held a ceasefire to allow for a peace process, a weak, minority government was in place. When we got to the table, everything stalled. The ceasefire broke down for 18 months. When the Labour Party came in, they came with a historical majority. They had the

power to negotiate; that is to say, they did not have to worry about whether people would vote for them or not (a very important factor). Previously in power was Thatcher, vehemently anti Republican. She was very different to Blair, who believed, instead of trying to defeat, it was possible to achieve resolution. He led a new, external party which believed in the possibility of conflict resolution. There was also American support; there are around 40m Irish Americans – a huge diaspora. They became involved. Why? Some say to win the Irish-American vote. The US government used their popularity.

Learnings from the peace process:

1. the necessity of a strong government
2. the necessity of moving from a security mindset to a political mindset
(on both sides)

As a member of the IRA, I thought at first that the only way was to fight. There were many back channels in place during the negotiations. We spent a lot of time closing these down so that we only had a few trustworthy ones. Sometimes, you have to make unilateral rules. There is a place for legislation, but legislation in itself does not solve problems. For example, policing was only resolved twelve years after the Good Friday Agreement, in 2010 (the issue was given to an international commission, which came back with 175 recommendations).

‘One person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter’. The UK government has spoken of the IRA and other groups as ‘terrorists’. Whenever I speak publicly, with Sinn Féin, we point out, that the terrorists were the British: they colonised Northern Ireland in the same way as they did other countries.

Sinn Féin had a number of murdered representatives as well as the IRA. Even now, Unionists have difficulty in understanding this and envisage a ‘hierarchy of victims’; for example Unionists often did not see Catholics or the IRA as victims. Following Mr.Kelly’s introduction, Kerim Yildiz opened the table for discussion and a questions and answers session.

Questions and answers:

Q: Can you describe the mechanics of your involvement with the IRA and how you moved towards Sinn Féin?

Gerry Kelly: Sinn Féin is a very old organisation. The IRA is younger than Sinn Féin. As a young man in 1971, when I was around eighteen, I joined Fianna (IRA youth movement) then in 1973 I joined the IRA. I was convicted of two life sentences and imprisoned in England (aged 19), and transferred to Northern Ireland following a hunger strike. I escaped in 1983. I was rearrested in 1986 in the Netherlands having been on the run from jail in Europe for three years. I served in prison until 1989 when I was released. Upon release I joined Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin is a political party. The IRA is a secret organisation. There is huge debate about whether the two are linked. When you leave jail, you have to reapply to be in the IRA again. I did not reapply. I joined Sinn Féin and very quickly was involved in negotiations. I was trusted by Republicans as I had been on the front line. Both Sinn Féin and the IRA use the same terms, such as ‘united Ireland’; both have the same aims and objectives.

Q: Since the objectives are the same and both Sinn Féin and the IRA depend on the same constituency, which one influences the other?

Gerry Kelly: In Irish history, physical force has been very strong. The IRA has always been stronger than Sinn Féin. The term ‘Republican movement’ designates a number of organisations: IRA, Sinn Féin, Fianna Éireann, Cumann na mBan (Republican women’s paramilitary organisation), welfare organisation and others. All come under the umbrella of the Republican movement, but all have their own constitutions. Sinn Féin was banned at one stage. There was a time when Gerry Adams could not speak on television and an actor had to speak his words on his behalf!

All negotiations were carried out by Sinn Féin; the IRA kept out of negotiations except on two occasions:

1. Regarding arms: the IRA dealt directly with the international decommissioning commission
2. Regarding ceasefire: to allow for the legislation to take place

Q: Describe the management systems of the IRA and Sinn Féin.

Gerry Kelly: The IRA is organised according to the Green Book, its constitution. The organisation is entirely military. There is a hierarchy of service units; different brigades who would be in North or South commands; a general headquarters for staff and so on – like a military organisation. The ruling body is called the ‘Army Council’, and they are elected. There is also an executive of twelve people: the guardians of the constitution of the IRA. They are also elected. Conventions are held to elect delegates, they are re-elected for every convention. Sinn Féin is very straightforward and open. There is a constitution. A conference is held every year. There are twelve elected members, six must be female. From that, people are appointed.

Q: Was it your personal preference to move from the IRA to Sinn Féin?

Gerry Kelly: Prior to joining the IRA, I had been in jail for fifteen years, on the run in Ireland and Europe, it was difficult – not easy. If I had thought there was no other way forward, I may have continued in the IRA. But, I came to believe as did others, in the possibility of moving away from conflict, while still holding onto our goals, and I thought I had more to offer through politics. These things generally start with a very small number of people. I was part of a small number of people who believed in a peace process which was in its infancy. I hope I influenced the peace process and that my background as someone who had been involved in the struggle could bring more than a detached academic, for example, could.

Q: Jonathan Powell, Tony Blair's Chief of Staff, said that when he met McGuiness and Adams, he did not want to shake their hands as they had killed his father and put his brother on their death list. On your side, how was the emotion and feeling? What were the dynamics of the negotiations between the British government and the IRA?

Gerry Kelly: I found it hard to shake hands with the British after all the pain they had caused. But part of the dynamics was that you had to try and put yourself in your opponent's shoes and test that without knowing if it will go anywhere. At the time, they were inexperienced, but knew what they needed. We though the British government was a well-oiled machine, which knew what it was doing, but it was in fact in inertia. Both sides were testing to see if negotiations were possible. The British government probably went into negotiations in order to defeat Republicans, not to achieve negotiations, similar to the case of South

Africa – the white party probably thought negotiations would lead to the ANC's defeat. Sinn Féin's people were not as well educated as the other party at the table, and were probably underestimated. Seeing the human angle in our opponents, their families and so on, actually humanised things, and changed the dynamics.

Some talked about fatigue and war weariness. I thought, it's not the case for me. When I came out of jail, I still had energy to fight, and therefore to negotiate. If there is no energy to fight then there is no energy to negotiate. There are three things to remember in this situation:

1. Realise what you want
2. Realise you can't get it without compromise
3. Pursue your goal

Q: Can you describe the negotiation process and the use of back channels?

Gerry Kelly: One of the parties in a negotiation will always place pre-conditions, for example, 'we will not talk about that' or 'we will only talk about X if you talk about Y'. Sinn Féin tried to stay open. We did not want to talk about violence, but they did, as the British wanted to. You discuss details, then you hit significant points, for example Peter Brooke's statement about the UK having no strategic, political or economic interest in staying in Ireland – Sinn Féin disagreed.

In terms of back channels, there is always someone who wants to be an interviewer. The problem is, the British initially created a stall, by giving Sinn Féin a civil servant to talk to instead of a minister. However – Sinn Féin agreed, and went ahead with discussions with him! Another stall, was that the Brits said Sinn Féin needed a mandate, that is to say, be

elected, to be a negotiator. We could have disagreed and stalled things, but agreed and said OK. You have to work out, is this a good person? A lunatic? Naïve? Eventually, you will be sent a bona fide person. In 1993 secret talks were held. The UK told Sinn Féin that the Brits would leave Northern Ireland. But, we knew it was not genuine. The lesson learned was this: the only guarantor of negotiations is the public. Negotiations must be brought out of private and into the public so they can be guaranteed by the public. Without the public, it is not possible. The biggest negotiation is always with your own people, not your opponents. If you go too far ahead, you will lose support. You need to move ahead but you must bring people with you.

Q: Are the IRA and Sinn Féin interdependent?

Gerry Kelly: If the IRA did not buy into the process, there would not be any process. It is hard to have a negotiation without an atmosphere where people are not being killed. The IRA looked on itself as a guarantor of Irish history and fought for Irish history. Sinn Féin had to be separate. But it had to bring the IRA along. Because John Major (then UK Prime Minister) could not negotiate and reneged on his promise to negotiate after the ceasefire, the IRA went back on its promise. Influence is logical. The IRA had to be independent but also trust the leadership of Sinn Féin. They were not academics from a university but people who had lived the struggle – that was important.

Q: Have you criticised the IRA?

Gerry Kelly: Yes. It is difficult, as it means criticising comrades. Criticism must be used carefully; it can be a strong tool. Sinn Féin would not get involved in the politics of condemnation unless something is wrong.

Q: You said that conflict does not arise out of nowhere, it stems from discrimination and other things. There are fundamental reasons behind conflict. Instead of negotiation, what if democracy was available instead? If there was no discrimination, would there have been a peace process?

Gerry Kelly: Types of discrimination included: having a Unionist leader in place despite around 95% Catholic population. Conditions upon votes, for example needing to own a house. It was apartheid. People were discriminated against on the basis of their Catholicism. For example, my brother's name is Sean. My mother could not put his name on his birth certificate as it had an Irish spelling. She had to provide an English translation. You were three and a half times more likely to be unemployed if you were Catholic. Colonialism will always discriminate against the colonised.

Q: You say the IRA has finished. But it did not vanish into thin air. There are IRA members who went to prison. What percentage went into politics and what are the others doing? Is there a feeling of loyalty for those outside politics?

Gerry Kelly: The IRA has left the stage. A statement was issued in 2005 formally bringing the war to an end. In terms of how many ex members are in politics (in Sinn Féin), it is over a third – thirty percent. When you are in jail you have a choice – it can assist you or not. I escaped and killed (this was common among Republican prisoners). Many ex prisoners work within the community today. Many do voluntary work. This is still a struggle. Sinn Féin members get approximately £40,000 salary. We take home an industrial wage (£20,000) and give the rest to the party, to create other jobs. We came from the community and we went back into the community.

Q: While the IRA members got into legal politics, what was the approach of British politicians? Did they allow it?

Gerry Kelly: During the hunger strikes of 1981, ten comrades died. Two were elected representatives: Bobby Sands MP and Kieran Doherty TD. With regards to the UK, this was a key point. Theirs were the biggest funerals Ireland has seen. This shocked the British. The British brought in legislation saying you could not be elected until at least five years after you came out of jail. But we refused, and became elected representatives. I was elected for the first time in 1996 and have been reelected ever since. There are still one or two Unionists who will not look at me in the corridors here, but, for the most part, we see each other as human.

Q: You were a leader in the IRA and Sinn Féin. Was there any covert or open competition or rivalry between the two organisations?

Gerry Kelly: There was no strong rivalry between the two. In Irish history, there is a joke: the first item on the agenda is always the ‘issue of a split’. This is the essence of the peace process. McGuiness and Adams managed to come through an unbelievable change without having a major split. Some small groups formed, and continue to do so even now. But, even now, the Republicans are solid. There is always some professional rivalry but it is never serious.

Q: What was the role of women within the peace process?

Gerry Kelly: We live in a male dominated world. Within Sinn Féin, we made institutional changes, to impose positive discrimination. For example, the elected executive has to be half men and half women.

Ministers comprise five in total; three women and two men. This is not due to discrimination but due to the capability of the individuals.



Following roundtable meeting with Gerry Kelly at Stormont,

Belfast, 26th July 2011

(Left – Right): Catriona Vine, Kerim Yildiz, Kelly Kileff, Ayla Akat, Levent Tuzel, Mehmet Tekelioglu, Gerry Kelly, Cengiz Çandar, Lütfi Elvan, Ayhan Bilgen, Bejan Matur, Nazmi Gür, Eleanor Johnson

I represent North Belfast. I moved in 1996, and made a decision that we would have, in public representation; that is to say the assembly, council and Westminster, a balance between men and women. This has been maintained in North Belfast since 1996. In other areas, it is not always the same – people use the excuse that they can't find good enough women.

Over dinner in central Belfast that evening, the guests discussed what was described as a very eventful day. People clearly felt more conscious of the details and complexity involved in the Northern Irish situation as

a whole. It was mentioned that a number of similarities could be drawn with the case of Turkey – but also acknowledged that the specificity of every conflict situation is unique.

Most people had been especially fascinated to hear about the process of transition for many Republicans, from members of armed groups, to politicians. The stories shared by Gerry Kelly were relayed and analysed with interest and lively discussion ensued throughout the evening.

Wednesday 27th July 2011: Tour, North and West Belfast

With Patrick Lynch, Head of the Political Liaison Unit in Northern Ireland and Neil Jarman of the Institute for Conflict Research in Belfast,

Taking a coach tour around what is known as the ‘interface’ areas (spots where segregated Nationalist and Unionist areas meet); the group saw the Falls and Shanklin, residential areas and sites of many bombings and much violence in the past. The areas are still divided with roads blocked for safety and houses barricaded by metal fences. The group observed the famous ‘Belfast’s Murals’ – brightly coloured murals adorning walls with images of Bobby Sands and other famous figures from Northern Ireland’s past. People were very interested in learning more about these areas and numerous questions were posed to the guides concerning the possibility of eventual integration, of taking down the dividing walls, as well as the extent to which both communities interact. The tour further detailed and enriched the group’s understanding of the current and past issues at play in Northern Ireland’s situation today.

BELFAST SESSION 4: Wednesday 27th July, 2011, Stormont, Belfast

With:

Dierdre Griffith, Executive Secretariat, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister and Sir Bruce Robinson, Head of Northern Ireland's Civil Service.

Moderated by:

Kerim Yildiz

Ms. Griffith and Sir Robinson discussed the system currently in place within the Northern Ireland government, which protects and implements the principles of the Good Friday Agreement.

A summary of what was discussed is below:

Assembly:

- This is the prime location for 'devolved matters', that is to say, social and economic issues such as health, transport, agriculture, policing, prisons, criminal law, as well as for 'accepted matters', that is to say, defence and other things legislated for by Westminster.
- There are a number of mechanisms in place which accommodate both Unionist and Nationalist parties. Many flow directly from the method employed by elections – this determines the number of members represented from each party, for example. The system of nomination goes back to the largest Unionist and largest Nationalist parties. Both have different aims, but work together to head up the Administration and the Executive. The more seats a party wins,

the more seats they have at the Executive. The system is called the D'Hondt system.

- Using the d'Hondt system ensures fair allocation of positions of power amongst the parties in the Assembly. A Statutory Ministerial Code also binds all parties to work together. Legislation must also be supported by both parties. Ministers are supported by civil servants. All are appointed based on merit, they are not political appointees.

Working together:

- If a decision is to be taken regarding finance, for example, cross community support is needed.
- The Good Friday Agreement looked at how Northern Ireland interacts with the island of Ireland as a whole, and with the UK.
- The North/South Ministerial Council looks at areas of British interest, as well as the British Irish Council. So, there are structures in place to support the different institutions of political parties.
- As there is no 'opposition', as such, it is vital that there are scrutiny committees to monitor development within departments.

The briefing was followed by questions and discussion, moderated by Kerim Yildiz. Much interest and curiosity was expressed by guests with regards to the technical details of power sharing and the reality of shared decision making.

Q: How do the First and Deputy Ministers get on politically with regards to controversial issues?

Sir Bruce Robinson: Surprisingly well. They have fundamentally different objectives for Ireland, but at a practical level, they are both keen to improve things for Northern Ireland. Sometimes, if issues are

controversial, things need to do to the Executive. It can sometimes take longer to resolve things are more negotiations are sometimes needed.

Due to the 1998 Northern Ireland Act, legislation taken at Westminster must not negatively impact on people from different groups, for example political views, race, sex, religion and so on. So many controversial issues have already been taken into account.

Q: Could this system be compared to the Presidential or Parliamentarian system?

Sir Bruce Robinson: No, it is unique. There are some aspects which are similar to the Presidential system, but it is more similar to the Parliamentarian system. Everything goes back to the Good Friday Agreement. That said, because of the requirement for working with both majorities, the two main parties can often be seen to work as one – but this is an enforced coalition not a chosen one.

Q: Are there constitutional warranties in place?

Sir Bruce Robinson: No. The Good Friday Agreement is used, as is custom and practice, which have evolved over many years. The Agreement and legislation are the fallback position when parties are not able to agree. Often, if ministers cannot agree, the status quo remains.

Q: If the main parties can't agree, can it fall back on a third party?

Sir Bruce Robinson: No. The whole system is predicated on the fact that the main parties agreed a way to work together. The ministers continue

to talk, even when they disagree.

Q: How are international relations dealt with?

Sir Bruce Robinson: The First and Deputy First Ministers have two overseas offices; one in America, and one in Brussels (this recognises the importance of the US and Europe in the history of Northern Ireland). Relationships with Brussels are important; lots of legislation flows from there. Links with Washington D.C. are more political in nature. The US has been a good friend to Northern Ireland, much of Northern Ireland's foreign direct investment has come from there. Visits from Clinton and others are important. In the same way that Scotland and Wales have their own relationships with other countries, so does Northern Ireland. But, it is unable to legislate on an international relations matter.

Q: Is there any visible difference between Northern Ireland and Westminster on subjects?

Sir Bruce Robinson: Members sometimes don't agree with decisions taken at Westminster but overall the relationship is positive. The British-Irish Council supports the cooperative. Ministers have meetings with the Prime Minister at 10, Downing Street, looking at economic issues and so on. The relationship is generally good humoured and positive.

Q: How do people feel about the system that is in place? Are they critical or supportive?

Sir Bruce Robinson: Many people do not fully understand the system. 70 percent voted in support of the referendum. There is criticism, as with any political system, but it is not so much the system that is criticised,

but rather practical things, such as oversubscribed schools and hospitals. Issues are more about these things than the system itself.

That said, there is discussion. Many parties would prefer a voluntary coalition. But this would exclude some parties and go against collaborative aspirations. Hopefully, the generation of children here today will grow up without a history rooted in troubles and the past, and will come up with new ways to govern.

Q: How do you practically carry out your consultation process?

Sir Bruce Robinson: Through the following ways:

1. A written consultation document, for example regulations on types of plants
2. Peace, sharing and integration: members of the public are invited to public meetings
3. Bodies, for example, the Equality Commission and the Human Rights Commission (Northern Ireland based), are given the opportunity to comment. ‘Equality screening’ of all policies occurs at every level.

Northern Ireland’s population is 1.8m, all groups are very well represented, there are many opportunities for the grass-roots community to express their views to elected MPs.

Q: In Turkey, the constitutionality of laws is checked by a constitutional court. Is there an equivalent in Northern Ireland?

Sir Bruce Robinson: Legislation must be checked with the Human Rights

Commission. Legislation must be made in cooperation with the Northern Ireland office agreements in relation to technicalities. The Attorney General of Northern Ireland attends executive meetings and advises on the legality of law.

Q: Who checks if laws are in keeping with the Good Friday Agreement, if there is no constitutional court?

Sir Bruce Robinson: The planning for devolution was extensive and took place over many years. Also, Northern Ireland was a devolved government until 1972. So responsibilities already existed – it was not contentious. Devolution was also planned in Scotland and Wales, so there were more models to build from. Contentious issues that did arise include equality, and control of the judiciary and the police. So a second stage of devolution of policing and justice occurred three years after the restoration of devolution (it was previously retained by the Secretary of State to Northern Ireland). There were negotiations between parties around how that would happen, until April 2010.

Q: What is the Republic of Ireland's role? Is it a consultancy role?

Sir Bruce Robinson: A set of structures are in place, engaging the Irish government, by way of the North – South Ministerial Council. There are arrangements for six areas of responsibility, to be dealt with through sectoral meetings. They include agriculture; responsibility for rivers and lakes throughout the island and so on. Clearly, geography does not recognise the political difference in these areas, so everyone needs to work together for a solution. The Secretariat is set up with civil servants working together (from Belfast and Dublin), looking at issues of common interest. The main areas today are economically associated, for example,

tourism. America is a key market. Many people in the USA are of Irish descent, and want to visit the island of Ireland, they are not necessarily attached to politics. Financial support for tourism is jointly funded; two thirds by the Republic of Ireland and a third by Northern Ireland.

Q: Does the conflict of the past facilitate the agreement? That is to say, because people do not want to return to conflict? Does it motivate politicians to enforce the system?

Sir Bruce Robinson: It is easiest to get agreement around financial issues. If politicians see that standards of living can be raised, it's a win-win situation. There is a spectrum wherein agreement is always being tested by the degree that people feel the community benefits from a decision. The key issue regarding change is acceptability. If there is acceptance by the community of a need to move forward, you move to issues which the community may feel neutral about but may want to change (so move towards negotiation). The threat of violence is a concern for all, but, there must be a testing of ideas before it can be said that the threat of violence drives a desire to make progress. It is an ongoing challenge; the violence of the 1970s and 1980s produced a very considerable ghettoisation of the community, the reduction in people living together. There are friction points – interfaces between the two communities. There is a need for more dialogue regarding what people's concerns are, as part of dealing with the threat of violence. The riots three weeks ago are an example of violence, fundamentally between interfaces.

Q: Have people's sentiments guided parties and power sharing or do political parties guide the people?

Sir Bruce Robinson: Enormous political progress has been made. Arrangements on the five party coalition (which sits in the room we are currently sitting in), is working. It's not easy, from time to time exceptionally difficult issues arise. But friction between communities is still there, partly due to people retreating to their own communities in the 1970s and 1980s, to feel safe. We need to work hard to dismantle the negative aspects of that. Differences are 400 years old (some would say 800 years old); many generations of difficulty. We are only in the first generation of addressing that.

Residual problems have to be tackled and are big, but are far smaller than previously. Political leadership is vital. But in some instances, the community itself has helped; been ready for change, and signalled that to political parties.

Q: What is the language of the parliament and of the community?

Sir Bruce Robinson: English is the main language used. Quite a few departments also produce information and materials in Irish and other European languages (due to immigration). Language is a contentious issue in Northern Ireland, with some difficulties. Schools operate by two different systems. One is exclusively English, whereas the second is mainly English with some Irish. Assembly members can use Irish in the assembly but they have to repeat what they say in English afterwards, there are no interpreters.

BELFAST LUNCH DISCUSSIONS: WEDNESDAY 27TH JULY, STORMONT CASTLE



Stormont, Belfast, 26th July 2011

(Left – Right): Gizem Akyil, Kelly Kileff, Catriona Vine, Ayla Akat, Kerim Yildiz, Sevtap Yokus, Levent Tuzel, Cengiz Candar, Bejan Matur, Mehmet Tekelioglu, Nazmi Gür, Ayhan Bilgen, Lütfi Elvan

Hosted by the Right Honourable Hugo Swire MP, Minister of State for Northern Ireland.

Expert guests included:

Alasdair McDonnell, from the SDLP party

Peter Weir, a DUP MLA

Reverend Norman Hamilton, of the Presbyterian Church

John McCallister of the UUP party.

Much discussion ensued over lunch, which was followed by a tour and walk around Stormont's grounds. This was followed by a roundtable discussion with the Right Honourable Jeffrey Donaldson MP, of the Democratic Unionist Party.



Stormont Castle, Belfast, 27th July 2011

(Left – Right): Nazmi Gür, Levent Tüzel, Levent Gök, Mehmet Tekelioglu, Ayla Akat, Hugo Swire, Sezgin Tanrikulu, Nursuna Memecan, Kerim Yıldız, Lütfi Elvan

BELFAST SESSION 5: Wednesday 27th July, 2011, Stormont, Belfast

With:

The Right Honourable Jeffrey Donaldson MP, of the Democratic Unionist Party

Moderated by:

Kerim Yıldız

Jeffrey Donaldson is best known for his opposition to UUP leader David Trimble (who was pro the Good Friday Agreement) during the Northern Ireland peace process, especially from 1998 to 2003. He joined the Orange Order as a young man and was part of the Ulster Defence Regiment, and was initially part of the UUP. Jeffrey Donaldson gave an overview of his political life, before opening up the table for questions and discussion:

I was a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons representing Northern Ireland but was also a representative in the Northern Ireland government. I was very involved in the peace process from 1990 through to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

I served in the British Army in Northern Ireland, and then entered politics. I have been involved in political life since then, for around 25 years. I am very committed to the peace process, having fought in the conflict, and believe in the principles of democracy and non violence.

The Mitchell Principles formed the foundation of the Good Friday Agreement. Those principles have been transferred to other situations of conflict, for example Iraq, as a basis for further negotiations. The challenge is, how do you integrate into negotiations, people representing armed groups? I believe Northern Ireland should be part of the UK but accept that others believe otherwise. I have no objection to nationalists using peaceful means, but reject the use of terrorism, on both sides. I believe non violence is the only way. So, to incorporate an armed group into negotiations, they had to first sign up to the Mitchell Principles. That is to say, not use violence to change the outcome or influence the outcome of negotiations, and only use peaceful means to resolve differences.

A peace process is not a one off event, it is ongoing. It can last several years, and often, several agreements, marking several parts of the process are needed. We learned, that we cannot agree on all details, all at once. Agreement continued after the Good Friday Agreement. Changes continued to take place, such as by way of the St Andrew's Agreement. It is not about a single agreement or event, but rather a process, which over time will result in stability. Political institutions have been established in Northern Ireland, that provide protection for all minority interests. Anyone in Northern Ireland can choose to be recognised as Irish or British. There are two passports available, even though in international law, this is part of the UK, we need to accommodate both identities. This is also reflected in institutions – all controversial decisions must be endorsed by the cross-community vote.

For me, it has been as much a personal journey as it has been a political one. One must seek to influence people in one's own constituency. The challenge lies in bringing people with you.

I fought against the IRA in the army. Members of my family were killed by the IRA. But today I share parliament with IRA leaders. I have come to terms with what has happened and prefer to share power with them rather than continue fighting. The hurt is still ongoing, it will take years for people's wounds to heal – it could take generations. Society is still divided by 'peace walls'. Now, the challenge is to create a shared society, removing the peace walls, in order to build trust. We have dealt with the big issues such as institutions, constitutional arrangements, and now different challenges exist.

Kerim Yildiz then opened the floor for discussion:

Q: What does the future bring?

Jeffrey Donaldson: It is always possible violence could resume. Some armed groups do not accept the peace process. But any violence has strengthened the resolve of parties to forge peace, it reminds people of the dark days of the past and that work must be done to continue. Regarding our constitutional future – opinion polls suggest there is strong support for Northern Ireland to remain in the UK. 51% of Catholics want Northern Ireland to remain in the UK. This is due to two factors:

1. the economic situation in the Republic of Ireland is not good, it is better in the UK
2. many nationalists feel their rights have been recognised since the peace process, so they are happy with the status quo and are not pushing for change.

The next generation may change things again. But I do not foresee any major change.

Q: What were your expectations and concessions in the peace process?

Jeffrey Donaldson: I was a senior negotiator with the largest Unionist party in the negotiations. I served in the army before I entered politics. When Sinn Féin joined negotiations, I had never previously met them. I had never met Gerry Adams or Martin McGuinness before that point. I did not shake their hands initially. It was very difficult; I questioned whether I was doing the right thing. These people were responsible for many deaths, including those of my own family members. But I was convinced it was the right thing to do. Mandela said ‘you do not make peace with your friends, but with your enemies’. To make peace for my family and

my community, I had to negotiate with Adams and McGuiness.

Before we entered negotiations, we were at least decided on one thing: violence would not be used to determine or influence the outcome. That was all I wanted. Compromise is inevitable in negotiations, there must be some give and take otherwise it is a waste of time. You must decide first, what is your bottom line? Your opponent will not know what your bottom line is. But over time you must establish what they can and cannot accept and what you can and cannot accept. The trick is recognising what you need, what they need, and how to meet in the middle. Therefore you need contact with your opponent, and ‘track two’ methods, such as negotiating away from the negotiation table in a more relaxed environment and communicating with each other to reach agreement. At the negotiation table, people acted, they played on a stage, and were dramatic. So, compromises often weren’t possible at the negotiation table, but were crafted elsewhere.

Q: What was the level of Unionist support for negotiating with Sinn Féin?

Jeffrey Donaldson: One party stayed, and one party left. I was previously in the party that left negotiations. This was a huge mistake. It left Unionism weaker. It took almost ten years to correct the mistakes we made. I realised, if we were going to influence people, we had to be at the table.

As the two main parties were divided, so were the Protestant people; many were sceptical. In the village I live in, during negotiations, a dissident IRA unit exploded a bomb in the village. My family were very upset at the extent of the damage done (no one was killed though). The

next morning, some villagers were very angry, and asked me why I was negotiating with people who were bombing (even though the bombers in this instance were not linked to Adams and McGuiness). There was a strong feeling among many that it was wrong to negotiate. The bombers (IRA) had worked deliberately in order to sabotage the negotiations and get people to leave.

Q: What lessons are to be learned from the Northern Ireland experience?

Jeffrey Donaldson: My previous party was not good at persuading people, and bringing them along. It is primarily the responsibility of political leadership to bring people along with them and get support. This prepares people for negotiations. Leadership cannot be provided by a third party. It must be done by the leader in order to win trust. How? You have to go into communities, talk to them, explain why you are doing what you are doing. It is a difficult but very necessary process.

Q: What are relationships like between interfaces in the community?

Jeffrey Donaldson: I grew up next door to a Catholic family and we played together as children, at the height of the troubles. But then we went to different schools, and learned to play different sports and so on. The big challenge today, is – people can live together but are educated separately, play different sports and so on. We need a situation where people live, work and play together. We are not there yet. In my community there are mixed activities that take place. But the next day, children go to different schools. I understand that parents have the right to choose, but we need to embrace mixed education in order to move forward.

This is not a religious conflict – Northern Ireland is predominantly

Christian. Both Protestant and Catholic faiths clearly teach that violence is wrong. So it cannot be a religious conflict. If you talk to killers about theology, they do not understand the differences between the two religions. People involved often do not go to church. It is simply a label, but they do not exercise faith. What it boils down to, the real question, is, to which nation do you belong? You are either British or Irish. We have arrived at a compromise that accommodates both identities. There is a religious factor, but killings did not happen because people disagreed on religion, but because they disagreed on politics.

Q: What is the importance of age in the conflict? Who is more radical, or more supportive, the young or the old?

Jeffrey Donaldson: Older people who have experienced 30 years of conflict are generally very supportive of the peace process and want a better future for their children. The main reason for which Unionists are willing to compromise with Nationalists is so that children can grow up in a peaceful environment, not living in fear. That motivates peace more than anything else. It is almost 20 years since the first IRA ceasefire in 1994. Young people today tend to take peace for granted and not understand the experience as much as those who lived it. This is not a criticism. I want young people to look to the future, not live in the past. Young people are supportive of the peace process but have a different perspective.

While there may be equal support among young and old people, socially, there is a big difference. People from socially deprived areas are more sceptical than others. They feel like the peace process has not done enough for them and there is some unrest. Differences in opposition

and support for the peace process are therefore more about social and economic differences than other factors.

Q: Have you been prosecuted for your involvement in violence?

Jeffrey Donaldson: No, as I did not break any law. The British Army is a lawful organisation.

Q: Which aspects of the peace process have caused people difficulty?

Jeffrey Donaldson: The prison release created problems. One IRA member had been given nine life sentences for killing nine people. But he only served seven years. Families felt that this was a great injustice, but a necessary compromise. In return, armed groups were required to disarm. A period was set for disarmament. In this agreement, there was one flaw: it did not directly link the release of prisoners to the disarmament process. So prisoners were released but no arms were given up, and after two years many prisoners had been released but not a single arm had been given up. It is important to show the public that something tangible is being gained from paying a price. This was the one major flaw of the agreement process. Europe was a major supporter of the peace process and a major funder – this is important in terms of addressing issues. But, despite foreign states' involvement, the people of Northern Ireland had to endorse the agreement.

Q: You say the conflict is more about politics than religion. Why do all Protestants feel British? What does it mean, to feel British or Irish?

Jeffrey Donaldson: One can be British and Irish at the same time. It is the same in Scotland. The laws and culture may be different to those of

England, but it is still part of the UK. This is based on the principle of self-determination. What makes me British? I was born British. It is my birthright. Some want to change that. All I ask is that they don't try to do it by using violence. Why do all Protestants feel British? Because the UK is predominantly a Protestant country.

Q: Are there any statistics on released prisoners? For example, how many have found jobs?

Jeffrey Donaldson: Probably five to ten percent of released prisoners are actively involved in the political process. Many are also in community leadership roles and doing community roles. It is difficult to quantify, but possibly 40 to 50 percent take on community roles. The remainder are unemployed or have gone back to their previous work or trade. Some return to crime and violence. A small percentage have been sent back to prison (around five percent).

Q: What has the role of civic society and the media been in terms of broadening bases for peace negotiations?

Jeffrey Donaldson: There is strong support amongst civic society for the peace process. Business leaders, and especially religious leaders spoke out in support of the peace process. Some religious leaders were in dialogue with armed groups, to persuade them to enter into dialogue. Those genuinely religious and involved in churches have played a very positive role and had a positive influence in promoting healing and reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Q: Were Catholics treated as second class citizens prior to the agreement?

Jeffrey Donaldson: People from socially deprived areas, whether Catholic or Protestant, were discriminated against.

Q: Do you envisage Northern Ireland will set up a truth and reconciliation commission in coming years?

Jeffrey Donaldson: I am not convinced a commission is the way to be with the legacy of the past. Why? Because there are many different opinions among victims.

The three main views are:

1. We have come so far, we just want to put the past behind us. It is hurtful to reopen the past. We have moved on, but not forgotten loved ones; we have come to terms with the past.
2. We accept no one will be brought to justice for the death of our loved ones but we would like to know the truth of what happened.
3. We want to know the truth and have justice – that is to say, people should be convicted.

I doubt we should pursue a commission. People will not tell the truth. Martin McGuinness, for example, appeared before an inquiry in London Derry. He was the local leader of the IRA in that area. He said he could not tell them everything he knew, as he had taken an oath under the IRA. So it is not possible to get the truth. We would raise hopes and they would be cruelly dashed. I want to see healing and recovery. I have worked with families through the current process and re-examined the past. In over 50 percent of cases, families are more hurt and harmed than healed or helped. I would be concerned that any such process would reopen old wounds, and have the

capacity to cause more harm than good.

Q: What is the proportionate percentage of victims in Northern Ireland (that is to say Protestant/Catholic/Northern Irish/UK citizens)?

Jeffrey Donaldson: There is a database of incidents which breaks down the religion of people killed; it is accessible online. The IRA killed more Catholics than the British Army did, and Protestants killed an equal number of Catholics and Protestants. It is not simple. Even in terms of conflict within communities, statistics do not reflect the complexity of what occurred.

The group left Stormont on Wednesday afternoon to fly to Edinburgh, where they travelled to Glen House, a spectacular 5,000 acre estate in the heart of the Scottish borders. They were welcomed by Mark Muller QC and Baroness Elizabeth Smith (British peer and widow of former Labour leader John Smith) and shown around the nineteenth century house and grounds. That evening, the group enjoyed a traditional Scottish dinner, joined by Baroness Elizabeth, and the meal was followed by drinks by the open log fire and billiards. The peaceful atmosphere of Glen House and the secluded and private nature of its location were extremely conducive to discussion and many participants fed back that they felt very much at ease there. The group had noticeably begun to gel by this stage and engaged in free and comfortable conversation with one another.



Stormont, Belfast, 27th July 2011

(Left – Right): Levent Tüzel, Mehmet Tekelioğlu, Nazmi Gür, Sezgin Tanrikulu, Nursuna Memecan, Mithat Sancar, Cengiz Çandar, Levent Gök, Sevtap Yokuş, Ayla Akat, Ayhan Bilgen, Lütfi Elvan

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

28-29 JULY

EDINBURGH SESSION 1: Thursday 28th July, 2011, SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, EDINBURGH

With:

Jim Hume, Liberal Democrat MSP

Christine Graham, SNP MSP

Moderated by

Kerim Yildiz

Roundtable discussion with:

The first discussion of the morning began with a roundtable with Jim Hume, who gave a brief introduction of the political situation in Scotland and the process of devolution, before taking questions, along with Christine Graham. I (Jim Hume) was elected in May 2007, and speak on rural affairs, the environment, housing and transport.

So, why was devolution introduced to Scotland? London, to many Scots, seems very far away. Westminster is not very accessible. Scotland has its own identity, its own legal system, there is a distinct sense of being Scottish. There has been talk of home rule, but it has not seriously been discussed since the middle of last century. There was a rise in nationalism throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The campaign for devolution gained momentum in the 1970s. The rise in oil prices led to an increase in

support for independence. The Scotland Act 1970 legislated for the referendum on devolution to take place. In this referendum, 40 percent of the electorate needed to vote yes, for devolution to occur, and it was not passed. Margaret Thatcher was the UK Prime Minister at the time, and the Conservatives had ruled for eighteen years. The Scottish Constitutional Convention was established in 1988 and the blueprint for the structure of parliament (completed in 1995). The SNPs were hostile to the convention, as they wanted full independence, and so were the Conservatives, who were in favour of a No vote.

Blair made devolution one of his first acts of government following his election. It was predicted by the former Labour minister in 1995 that 'Devolution will kill Nationalism stone dead'. Ironically, today, the SNP have the majority in the Scottish parliament. An overwhelming Yes vote was the result of the referendum in 1997. Westminster still constitutes the supreme legislator, with devolved competencies in Scotland including justice, health, education, culture and local government. Westminster maintains control over foreign policy, defence policy and economic policy. Many political commentators today label Scotland a 'quasi-federalist state', but there is a democratic deficit, and the West Lothian question continues to cause controversy (the West Lothian Question refers to issues concerning the ability of Members of Parliament from constituencies in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to vote on matters that only affect people living in England). Prescriptions are free in Wales and there are no tuition fees in Scotland, which causes much controversy in England. In order to solve this, England should have its own devolved parliament.

Questions were then posed to both Jim Hume and **Christine Graham**:

Q: What is the SNP's perspective on devolution?

Christine Graham: We want independence. We want status for Scotland and power over its economic and defence policy and other aspects such as tax and benefits. Arrangements for devolution are not satisfactory. Scotland does not deal with tax or benefits and other things. We receive 'pocket money' from Westminster, and have very little flexibility in terms of how to spend it. Some 90 percent of the money Scotland is allocated is already committed, for example, to education and transport.

Only around ten percent of the sum has flexibility. This is a major issue in times of recession, as parliament does not have the flexibility to deal with increasing health and unemployment issues which are ongoing. SNP is a social democratic party, left of centre, and encourages the wealthiest to support those who can't support themselves. If Scotland were independent, things would be very different. We are against the use of nuclear weapons. We believe Scotland could lead Europe in green renewable energy such as wind, wave and solar. We would not have led the war in Iraq and envisage a more rebuilding focused role in Iraq, rather than a combative one. Scotland's relationship with the USA would also be a very different one to that of the UK's.

Q: What is the main obstacle to making Scotland an independent state?
After all, you have the majority.

Christine Graham: This is the first big opportunity the SNP has had to democratically turn the views of the people towards independence. Alex Salmond (SNP leader) is committed to a referendum in the next few years on the issue of independence.

Q: What do the polls show?

Christine Graham: It varies, but around thirty percent show in favour of independence; sometimes it is higher. But I am distrustful of polls. I am always surprised when people ask whether Scotland could survive on its own. Yes! Any state can! Look at Portugal and other states who have achieved independence. Things may be better or worse, but a state will survive. Some think we must have the UK government to survive, but in reality this is not necessary.

Q: Are you in favour of EU membership?

Christine Graham: Personally no, but my party is.

Jim Hume: Alex Salmond won the SNP majority, not due to people wanting independence, but due to his personality. Westminster must approve of independence before it can occur.

(At this point, friction arises between Hume and Graham over this issue).

Christine Graham: Westminster is not supreme, the people are supreme! If people decide to be independent, God help any nation which tries to stop them! Some people in England say it would be good for us to go – I respond by saying, we will! And we shall take our gas, wind and water resources with us and sell them to England!

Q: Is there a history of nationalist violence in Scotland?

Christine Graham: No.

Q: What is the situation with regards to language in Scotland?

Jim Hume: North and Western Scotland are traditionally Scottish speaking areas. In Southern Scotland, there is no history of Scottish being spoken. It is a geographical question. Many people can't speak the Scottish language. In parliament, people rarely speak Gaelic – only two or three people have in the whole of its history.

Christine Graham: Scottish Gaelic is a minority language but more is being done to maintain it. Glasgow and the highlands have many Gaelic speakers. Scotland is a country that values education and is very strong on protecting education and the health system.

Q: Scotland is a unique case, and can be a symbol for other small nations. The Palestinians and Kurds, for example, look to Scotland, to gain understanding. Do you think Scotland has a role to play in assisting other states going through change?

Jim Hume: Scotland has always been very outward facing towards the rest of the world.

Christine Graham: It is interesting what small nations can do. A large country has so many fingers in so many pies, but smaller nations can sometimes say and do things differently, and have more flexibility than a large nation that has to be 'macho' on the world stage. For example, Norway has worked as an intermediary in the Middle East. Smaller nations such as New Zealand can play important roles. Scotland views itself as similar to Norway or New Zealand, for instance.

Q: What kind of difficulties did you face at first in the SNP?

Christine Graham: The voting system in the Scottish parliament is set up to prevent one party from having an overall majority. So the fact that the SNP has that is very significant! Even I didn't expect it! All the 'scare stories' that had been said would happen if the SNP came into power have not happened. We have proven ourselves competent to govern an independent Scotland. But, the Scottish people are not self confident enough (I am!) – they are still not believing they can run their own affairs. This is the job of the party – to build the confidence of the people. When that comes, there will be no problem with independence.

Q: Have there been any legal difficulties, such as arrests?

Christine Graham: No, everything is done peacefully and democratically, it is all done through the ballot boxes and through protests.

Q: Do armed groups exist?

Christine Graham: Some radical groups have existed in the past. This is rare though. It is counterproductive to independence. Violence never arises but some legal issues arise – like a divorce! (Who keeps the dog, the cat, and so on – it is similar but entails oil, gas and so on instead).

Violence took place on a small scale 20 to 30 years ago. For example, a post box was blown up as it featured the name Elizabeth II, rather than the Scottish Elizabeth I. There were also protests in Edinburgh in response to the union of the crowns; a this was decided by nobility and not the will of the people.

Many people would defend the right to protest. The real test is to allow people to protest even when they find something abhorrent. It is very

worrying when protests are banned in the UK. The danger is that you drive groups underground. We are very democratic in allowing people to protest, whatever it may be against.

Q: What difficulties would there be if independence came about?

Jim Hume: A large percentage of the British Army are Scots. Christine's view would not envisage a large army, and this would mean many redundancies. Scotland sometimes tries to distance itself from the British Army but there are many Scottish Generals in the British Army. Also, the SNP says that oil would fund Scotland, but that would have to be agreed first! Shipping could be another area of contention.

There is no Berlin Wall between Scotland and England. We do not want to see any division, we want free trade and no barriers.

Christine Graham: Taking down the wall in Berlin was a metaphor. The political will will take a nation where it wants to go and where it wants to stop. It is never really a problem, if your heart and soul wants something.

Q: How do you view the Northern Ireland peace process?

Jim Hume: There was repression of the Catholic community by the British (for example denial of educational rights and so on). So inbuilt hatred developed and the formation of 'tribes'.

Christine Graham: Northern Ireland is similar to Israel and Palestine; you have to go back many years to see the cause. The troubles have ruined communities and created ghettos, which have compounded problems. There has been progress, but people still remember bombings, and associate politicians with past events. I would like to see a unified

Ireland, but it must be done democratically.

Q: If you had economic independence from the UK, would you still seek independence?

Christine Graham: The UK is not a nation; it comprises four nations. Scotland is deprived as a nation, as it is not in the UN or the EU as an independent state. It cannot give a view on the world stage, it cannot decide on big things such as whether to go to war, how to make the best of ourselves, choose whether to give funds to third world states and so on. I cannot be truly independent until I can do everything for myself. It all turns around the concept of nation, and what a nation can determine for itself economically. At the moment, Scotland is impeded from choosing for itself. It is hard to have people speaking for you all the time at Westminster. Look at Iraq – 20,000 people marched against the war in the streets of Edinburgh as a result of weapons of mass destruction not being located. If Scotland had been independent, we would not have entered Iraq and lost so many lives.

Jim Hume: The difference between Scotland and many other nations seeking independence is that the Scots are not an oppressed people. They are not deprived of rights (as in the case of South Africa, for example). There is no repression of Scots. Christine would like more powers for Scotland as London is far away, the problem is that the UK is tilted so that most of the economic activity happens in the South. Federal governments such as Germany are better as there are more economic capitals, such as Frankfurt, Hamburg and so on. The UK could be seen as a very early EU.

Christine Graham: But, Scotland does not have the powers that other

nations do. If you define a nation, it has a voice and decision making powers. After the vibrant debate and discussion, which undoubtedly sparked much interest among the group, lunch was held in the Parliament's member's restaurant, accompanied by John Home Robertson, former MP and MSP.

Lunch was followed by a visit to the old Scottish Parliament, led by the Right Honourable Lord John Mccluskey, eminent Scottish lawyer, judge and politician, who served as Solicitor General for Scotland, the country's junior Law Officer from 1974 to 1979, and as a Senator of the College of Justice, a judge of Scotland's Supreme Courts, from 1984 to 2004. Lord Mccluskey was recently appointed Chair of the Scottish Government's panel reviewing the UK Supreme Court's jurisdiction over Scottish human rights matters. The tour encompassed the Scottish courts and law libraries, and included questions and answers.



The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, 28th July 2011

(Left – Right): Hasan Cemal, Cengiz Çandar, Sezgin Tanrikulu, Ayla Akat, Mithat Sancar, Ali Bayramoğlu, Nursuna Memecan, Levent Tüzel, Levent Gök, Mehmət Tekelioglu

Trequair House, Innerleithen, The Scottish Borders

Following a short visit to Edinburgh's Royal Mile, the group travelled to Traquair House, in Innerleithen. The final dinner of the week was held in the main dining room of Trequair, and a number of heartfelt speeches were made by participants from all political parties, all of whom noted the significance of the visit, and its historic nature – it was affirmed that this was in fact the first time that the parties had come together in such a visit, and that the value of their shared experience in the UK was immense. The table raised their glasses to the prospect of many more shared experiences and discussions among parties, and conversation about the week's experiences continued throughout the evening, aided by a private and reassuring environment.



*Trequair House, Innerleithen, The Scottish Borders, 28th July 2011
(Left – Right): Levent Gök, Kelly Kileff, Nazmi Gür, Mehmet Tekelioglu,
Mark Muller, Levent Tüzel, Bejan Matur, Kerim Yildiz, Nursuna Memecan,
Ali Bayramoğlu, Mithat Sancar, Cengiz Çandar, Sezgin Tanrıku,lu,
Eleanor Johnson, Sezgin Tanrıku,lu*

Media response

Journalists who accompanied the visit played an important and very useful role; writing reports which followed each meeting and visit in detail, and feeding back to Turkey on a daily basis. Throughout the visit, the accompanying journalists' work made the headlines in all major publications in Turkey, as well as featuring heavily in other forms of media including television and internet. Participating journalist reports and other media commentary made top stories across Turkey four to five times per day, and by only the fifth day, over 2,900 newslinks had been published about the visit and the meetings conducted. Over 90% of the news on DPI and the visit were favourable (negative coverage came from MHP, who were critical as they had somehow not received an invitation to the study). Media coverage of the visit continues in Turkey to date, and there have been follow up televised discussions on the issues covered during the study. The study has undoubtedly served to broaden bases for public awareness through the media on sharing experiences, and has encouraged the progression of debate in Turkey as a whole.

Concluding observations

This is the first visit of its kind in Turkey's history; bringing together all of the major political parties, including the government party. The significance of this accomplishment cannot be underestimated; this was the first time politicians from opposing parties came together for travel, discussion and shared experiences. Members of parliament were selected by their leaders (including the Prime Minister of Turkey) and the visit was conducted publicly.

Alongside the members of parliament and other participants were well respected journalists from national publications such as Milliyet, Radical, Yeni Safak, Zaman, Taraf and Evrensel Gündem. Well respected academics and members of renowned think tanks also accompanied the study.

During the first few days of the week-long visit, the Members of Parliament where visibly nervous and did not mix among themselves, but rather stayed within their own political parties. As the week went on, this changed, with all participants becoming noticeably more relaxed and mixing together, regardless of political orientation. This was most evident during mealtimes and on walks in the grounds of Stormont and Glen House; where people who had not previously spoken, happily engaged with one another and discussed the programme's events at length and with enthusiasm.

Key issues were willingly discussed in a highly productive way, and the informality of the environments at every stage of the visit greatly facilitated such open dialogue.

All participants affirmed that they had learned a lot, and had gained extensive amounts of new information and ideas. Many commented that they had previously thought they had a good understanding of the UK experience, but realised they did not have following the study. Numerous participants commented that similar, future comparative studies would be extremely useful to continue the learnings gathered on this visit. Many suggested that visits to Wales would be useful in terms of gaining a comprehensive understanding of UK devolution, and also thought that a similar visit to the Republic of Ireland would be invaluable in terms of completing their understanding of the role of third parties in peace processes, how their constitution has changed and so forth. It was noted it would be useful both for the government party, and for the opposition to meet key players from the Republic of Ireland. It was also suggested that visits to South Africa and Spain would be of great use, to learn from peace and negotiation processes there (it was noted that questions surrounding ETA, for instance are of great interest within Turkey as a whole) and many also mentioned that Quebec would be a highly relevant location in terms of understanding linguistic rights.

It was noted by participants that the organisation of the entire visit was excellent. The informality of the accommodation was much appreciated, and allowed for discreet one to one discussion as well as group dialogue, which took place through eating and drinking and walking.

All participants expressed the view that talking directly to people with first hand experience of relevant issues, including ex paramilitaries to those at ministerial level, was invaluable.

Participants confirmed that the visit report would be submitted to their leaders and respective parties, and all believed that much wisdom could

be assimilated from the report and the visit as a whole.

To reiterate the above section on media coverage: journalists who accompanied the visit played an important role; writing reports on a daily basis, which followed each meeting and visit in detail. Throughout the visit, the accompanying journalists' work made the headlines in all major publications in Turkey as well as featuring heavily in other forms of media including television and internet. Over 90% of the news on DPI and the visit were favourable. By only the fifth day, over 2,900 newslinks had been published about the visit and the meetings conducted. Media coverage of the visit continues in Turkey to date, and there have been follow up televised discussions on the issues covered during the study. The study has undoubtedly served to broaden bases for public awareness through the media on sharing experiences, and has encouraged the progression of debate in Turkey as a whole.

There is no doubt that the visit created a new, highly positive platform in Turkey. The media, political parties, NGOs, academia and many other organisations engaged in the event and discussed its significance at length. Discussion and commentary on the visit and its content are still continuing in Turkey, and are likely to carry on. Many participants have been invited by the media in Turkey to offer feedback on their experiences in the UK.

London, August 2011

DPI

Appendix

A selection of media articles by participants of the DPI Comparative Study, July 2011

Çandar, Cengiz (23 July 2011), Asla vazgeçme!, Radikal

Sancar, Mithat (26 July 2011), Temas dönüştür!, Taraf

Bayramoğlu, Ali (26 July 2011), Kürt sorununun çözümü için modeller, Yeni Safak

Cemal, Hasan (26 July 2011), Barışın koşullarını oluşturmak, Milliyet

Çandar, Cengiz (26 July 2011), Kulaklar Londra'da, akıllar 'bölge'de

Cemal, Hasan (26 July 2011), Barışın koşullarını oluşturmak, Milliyet

Cemal, Hasan (27 July 2011), Güçlü hükümet kararlı lider!, Milliyet

Bayramoğlu, Ali (27 July 2011), Bisiklete binersen pedalı çevir, yoksa düşersin..., Yeni Safak

Çandar, Cengiz (27 July 2011), Kürt sorunu'na Kuzey Irlanda dersleri, Radikal

Sancar, Mithat (28 July 2011), Barış, bir süreçtir; bir sonuç değildir, Taraf

Bayramoğlu, Ali (28 July 2011), Parlamentoda bir terörist, Yeni Safak

Sancar, Mithat (28 July 2011), Kuzey Irlanda: Bölünmüş toplum, sancılı barış, Taraf

Cemal, Hasan (28 July 2011), Çatışmayı bırakarak siyasal olarak anlaşabiliriz dedik, Milliyet

Cemal, Hasan (28 July 2011), Barış dostla değil, düşmanla yapılır, Milliyet

Bayramoğlu, Ali (29 July 2011), Asiler ve asker, Yeni Safak

Çandar, Cengiz (29 July 2011), Düşmanın olsa bile konuşacaksın, Hürriyet

Sancar, Mithat (30 July 2011), Britanya'da ne arıyorduk, Taraf

Cemal, Hasan (30 July 2011), Bağımsız olmak istiyoruz ama barışçı yollardan şiddetle değil, Milliyet

Çandar, Cengiz (30 July 2011), 'Kürt sorunu'na skoçya dersi: Hem 'ayrılıkçı' hem de 'şiddet karşıtı', Radikal

Cemal, Hasan (31 July 2011), Asker, seçilmiş sivil otoriteye tabidir, Milliyet

Bilgen, Ayhan, (01 August 2011), Çözüm de çözümsüzlük de siyasetin sorumluluğunda, <http://www.yeniozgurpolitika.org>

DPI Board and Council of Experts

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Kerim Yildiz

Kerim Yildiz is Director of DPI. He is an expert in international human rights law and minority rights, and is the recipient of a number of awards, including from the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights for his services to protect human rights and promote the rule of law in 1996, the Sigrid Rausing Trust's Human Rights award for Leadership in Indigenous and Minority Rights in 2005, and the Gruber Prize for Justice in 2011. Kerim has written extensively on human rights and international law, and his work has been published internationally.

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Legal expert based in Northern Ireland; expert on transitional justice, peace negotiations, constitutional law and human rights law advice. Trainer for diplomats, mediators and lawyers.

Cengiz Çandar

Senior Journalist and columnist specializing in areas such as The Kurdish Question, former war correspondent. Served as special adviser to Turkish president Turgut Ozal.

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SETA Politics Economic and Social Research Foundation. Member of the Executive Board of the Joint Platform for Human Rights, the Human Rights Agenda Association (İHAD) and Human Rights Research Association (İHAD), Chief Editor of the Journal of the Human Rights Dialogue.

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Martin Griffiths

Founding member and first Executive Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Served in the British Diplomatic Service, and in British NGOs, Ex -Chief Executive of Action Aid. Held posts as United Nations (UN) Director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, Geneva and Deputy to the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, New York. Served as UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes, UN Regional Coordinator in the Balkans and UN Assistant Secretary-General.

Dr. Edel Hughes

Senior Lecturer, University of East London. Expert on international human rights and humanitarian law, with special interest in civil liberties in Ireland, emergency/anti-terrorism law, international criminal law and human rights in Turkey and Turkey's accession to European Union. Previous lecturer with Amnesty International and a founding member of Human Rights for Change.

Professor Ram Manikalingam

Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam, served as Senior Advisor on the Peace Process to President of Sri Lanka, expert and author on conflict, multiculturalism and democracy, founding board member of the Laksham Kadirgamar Institute for Strategic Studies and International Relations.

Bejan Matur

Renowned Turkey based Author and Poet. Columnist, focusing mainly on Kurdish politics, the Armenian issue, daily politics, minority problems, prison literature, and women's issues. Has won several literary prizes and her work has been translated into 17 languages. Former Director of the Diyarbakır Cultural Art Foundation (DKSV).

Jonathan Powell

British diplomat, Downing Street Chief of Staff under Prime Minister Tony Blair between 1997- 2007. Chief negotiator in Northern Ireland peace talks, leading to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Currently CEO of Inter Mediate, a United Kingdom -based non-state mediation organization.

Sir Kieran Prendergast

Served in the British Foreign Office, including in Cyprus, Turkey, Israel, the Netherlands, Kenya and New York; later head of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office dealing with Apartheid and Namibia; former UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Convenor of the SG's Executive Committee on Peace and Security and engaged in peacemaking efforts in Afghanistan, Burundi, Cyprus, the DRC, East Timor, Guatemala, Iraq, the Middle East, Somalia and Sudan.

Rajesh Rai

Rajesh was called to the Bar in 1993. His areas of expertise include Human Rights Law, Immigration and Asylum Law, and Public Law. Rajesh has extensive hands-on experience in humanitarian and environmental issues in his work with NGOs, cooperatives and companies based in the UK and overseas. He also lectures on a wide variety of legal issues, both for the Bar Human Rights Committee and internationally.

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