Democratic Progress Institute

The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Resolution – The Irish Experience

Roundtable Meeting, Dublin, Ireland

9th – 11th April 2014

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Foreword

This report details the activities and roundtable discussion which took place during the Democratic Progress Institute's Comparative Study visit to Dublin, Ireland from 9th – 11th April 2014, carried out in partnership with the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation and hosted by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. The study focused on The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Resolution with a focus on the Northern Ireland peace process. I hope that this study can be useful to participants and can contribute towards ongoing discussions in Turkey.

DPI focuses on providing expertise, research and practical frameworks to encourage stronger public debates and involvements in promoting peace and democracy building internationally. Within this context DPI aims to contribute to the establishment of a structured public dialogue on peace and democratic advancement, as well as to create new and widen existing platforms for discussions on peace and democracy building. As part of DPI's role of reaching and securing these aims, DPI focuses on supporting a public atmosphere and environment of inclusion and frank, structured discussions whereby different parties are in the position to openly share knowledge, concerns and suggestions for democracy building and strengthening across multiple levels. DPI's objective throughout this process is to identify common priorities and develop innovative approaches to participate in and influence the process of finding democratic solutions. DPI also aims to support and strengthen collaboration between academics, civil society and policy-makers through its projects and output.

With thanks to David Comley and the staff of DPI for their assistance with this report. DPI also gives special thanks to the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Ireland, for their hosting of the visit.

Kerim Yildiz
Director
Democratic Progress Institute

Roundtable Meeting: The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Resolution
Dublin, Ireland
9th – 11th April 2014

From left to right: DPI Director Kerim Yıldız; Zeynep Ardıç; DPI Programme Manager Eleanor Johnson; Glencree's Eamon Rafter; Sedat Yurtdaş; DPI's Esra Elmas; Ahmet Faruk Ünsal; Necdet İpekyüz; Gülçin Avşar; Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem; Feray Salman; Talha Köse; Glencree's Val Kiernan; Kadri Salaz; Cem Gençoğlu; Vahap Çoşkun; Fadime Özkan.

Welcome Address by Kerim Yildiz[1]

I would like to welcome you all here to Ireland for what we hope will be a fruitful visit. I will start by giving you an insight into DPI's work. This is the first of our comparative studies to focus specifically on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and civil society. Previous comparative studies have focused on conflict resolution in general and the relevance of the Irish conflict to the conflict in Turkey. This visit will examine civil society's role conflict resolution in more detail. As you know, the Institute's activities have included participants from all of Turkey's main political parties. Unfortunately, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) has rejected our invitations as they continue to regard DPI as a mouthpiece of the ruling Justice and Development (AK) Party.

1 Kerim Yildiz, Director, Democratic Progress Institute
Kerim Yildiz is an expert in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, international human rights law and minority rights, having worked on numerous projects in these areas over his career. He was formerly co-founder and Chief Executive of the Kurdish Human Rights Project.
Kerim has received 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, and the Sigrid Rausing Trust's Human Rights award for Leadership in Indigenous and Minority Rights in 2005. Kerim is also a recipient of the 2011 Gruber Prize for Justice. He has extensive experience in human rights and actively works to raise awareness on human rights violations worldwide assisting with many cases to the European Court of Human Rights, conducting training seminars in Europe and the Middle East, and regularly contributing to seminars and conferences. Kerim has also written extensively on human rights issues, including numerous essays, articles and chapters on freedom of expression, national security and minority rights, as well as books relating to the European Convention, the United Nations and OSCE mechanisms.
He has written books on the Kurds in Iraq, Iran, Syria, the Caucuses, Turkey and the diaspora and he has most recently co-authored 'The Kurdish Conflict: International Humanitarian Law and Post Conflict Mechanisms' (Routledge, 2010). His work has been translated into numerous languages, including Turkish, Finnish, German, Spanish, Russian, Kurdish, Arabic and Persian. Kerim also serves as a Board Member and Advisor to other human rights and environmental organisations and is an advisor to the Delfina Foundation. Kerim is a member of English PEN.

However, we have otherwise managed to attract a broad spread of political voices to take part in our comparative studies.

During the visits we draw extensively on the experience of Northern Ireland by talking to key actors in the process here, directly about their experiences. Over the next few days we will try to discover what kinds of difficulties were encountered during the Irish peace process and what lessons were learned. Professor Vincent Comerford was involved in our first comparative study to Dublin several years ago. Joining us this evening he will be talking about different perspectives on the peace process in Ireland. Our other friend is Will Devas who is the Director of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, a partner organisation of DPI. I thank them for assisting with the facilitation of this visit. William will be talking about Glencree's work relating to the Irish peace process and also in relation to other conflicts around the world. As you will know, this trip is hosted by the Irish government and is conducted jointly by both Glencree and DPI.

Over the next few days we hope to discuss some of the interesting developments which are currently taking place in Ireland. One thing that I have found extremely important to consider over the past six months is that the Northern Ireland peace process has not in fact been completed over the past fifteen years. The peace process has failed in a sense because, for better or for worse, the parties negotiating fifteen years ago were unwilling to deal with the difficult issues at stake. A similar phenomenon has been seen

with the Kurdish Question. Issues of symbols and public displays of identity have not been properly addressed. Finally, the Irish experience is important for us because lots of mistakes have been made. It is possible for us to learn from these mistakes, and it is for this reason that the Turkish state has shown a particular interest in the Irish peace process.

I very much look forward to our discussions together over the coming days. Many thanks to all of you for being here.

Session 1: Wednesday 9th April 2014 – Fitzwilliam Hotel, Dublin

Topic:

A History of the Irish Conflict

Speakers:

Professor Vincent Comerford,[2] Professor of Irish History, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Will Devas,[3] Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

Moderated by Kerim Yildiz

Will Devas: Good evening and welcome to Dublin. I hope that the programme that has been prepared will stimulate some interesting discussion. I am the Director of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, which is based on the outskirts of Dublin. Glencree was started in 1974 in response to the violence in Northern Ireland, also known as 'the Troubles' and was established by Irish people who did not want the violence to be committed 'in my name'. Today I will talk about some of the lessons that I have learnt throughout our work relating to civil society and the peace process. We have been working with the

2 Professor Vincent Comerford is a professor of Irish history at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Professor Comerford graduated from the NUI Maynooth, followed by a PhD from Trinity College Dublin in 1977. He is on the consultative committee of the Irish Historical Society and a board member of the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS).

3 William Devas is an experienced development and peacebuilding professional who has led Glencree since August 2013. Glencree works to transform violent conflict within and between divided communities in Ireland, North and South, Britain, and elsewhere in the world with an emphasis on practical peacebuilding.

Democratic Progress Institute for a number of years to closely share the experiences of the Irish peace process, and I hope that this can be taken back to your own context. I do not claim to have solutions, but I hope that what I have to say will be of interest and of use.

Kerim Yildiz: The Institute shares other experiences from around the world. Over the past few years we have run comparative studies in countries such as South Africa and we have plans to run future studies in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Whilst Ireland is an extremely relevant example there are other countries that we can draw on for lessons. For example, the Turkish government was part of the Philippines peace process, which resulted in an agreement recently. I hope that we can also learn from the Turkish government's perspective as well. We will try to look at as many sides of conflict resolution as we can. I will now give the floor to Professor Comerford.

Professor Vincent Comerford: Thank you Kerim and thank you all for giving me this opportunity to speak to you tonight. I have spent my life as an academic historian and I rarely have the opportunity to speak to those who may actually be able to change things. So I regard this opportunity as a privilege. I commend you for travelling here because the older I get the more I realise that you need to go to a country in order to understand the situation. Reading a book is never the same as being on the ground. Of course, by travelling you can give others a better sense of what your position is. As an Irish person travelling abroad, it is amazing to hear the misconceptions that people can hold about places. For example, I once met a man who confused Ireland with Iceland! This illustrates the importance of travelling, getting to know people and having an opportunity to explain things.

Participants with Will Devas, Professor Vincent Comerford Kerim Yildiz

You all know that the problem that we are talking about here is connected with not one but two islands. By 1000 years ago there were four defined nationalities in evidence on the islands; the Irish, the Scottish, the Welsh and the English. The English had a much wealthier country and a much stronger state. Even 1000 years ago the English state was extremely powerful. By comparison, the others were relatively disorganised. They all had their own culture but they did not have the power of the English. This allowed England to expand. When that kind of expansion occurs, those who are driving it see what they are doing not just as an expression of power, but also as a responsibility and a privilege. The British Empire enshrined the idea that Britain had the right to rule over the two islands. By 800 years ago England had control over about half of Ireland and English settlers had begun to arrive in Ireland. These included the Fitzgerald family, who built the house in which the last DPI comparative study was held. I am sure that during your visit you will see Leinster House, which is now the seat of the Irish Parliament. This was originally the Fitzgerald family townhouse.

The complexities of modern Ireland really started to emerge in the 1500s. Two particularly significant things occurred during this time. The English king, Henry VIII, wanted to extend the power of the state over the whole of Ireland. Before this point, English political control extended only over some parts of the country and this was rarely organised or formal. The second of Henry's projects also has a European dimension. This was the bifurcation of Christendom at the time of the Reformation into Catholics and Protestants. By the late 1500s, especially during the reign of Elizabeth I, the Protestants came to be seen as loyal to the state. Most people in Ireland refused to become Protestants and continued to be seen as loyal to the Pope. Even people who would have been happy to support the English king were reluctant to give up their faith. As a result, the 1600s featured a number of religious conflicts over control of land and the state. These culminated in 1690 with the Battle of the Boyne. This was the final victory of the Protestant cause over Catholicism by William of Orange. From 1700 Ireland was ruled by the same king as England but held its own parliament. During this period the ruling class identified as British or English.

Around the year 1800 Europe became convulsed with conflicts surrounding the French Revolution. Ireland was no exception to this. In 1798 there was a rebellion which attempted to link up with the French Revolution and create an Irish republic. This was extremely divisive in Ireland. Protestants, who made up most of the property owning class, were opposed to any connection with the French. Conversely, a significant number of Catholics and Presbyterians were in favour of such a link. But the rebellion was defeated and the English connection was established more firmly than ever. In 1800 the Irish parliament was abolished and amalgamated with the British Parliament in Westminster. Would Ireland then be content to settle down as part of this new United Kingdom?

The answer for some people was 'yes', and this group became known as 'Unionists'. But the majority of Irish people, Nationalists, wanted the restoration of Irish independence or at least an Irish parliament. A chief advocate of this was Daniel O'Connell, after whom the main street in Dublin is named. O'Connell mobilised the Irish population with enormous rallies known as 'Monster Meetings' and was committed to restoring Irish independence through non-violent means. Although far from a pacifist - he sent his son to fight for an independence movement in South America - he believed that the Irish struggle should be resolved through purely political means. This divided the country, with most Catholics supporting O'Connell and most Protestants opposing him. As a result it was very difficult for the Irish Parliament to be restored.

Eleanor Johnson and Esra Elmas of DPI with Feray Salman, Vahap Çoşkun and Necdet İpekyüz during roundtable on The History of the Irish Conflict

In the late 1840s there was a great catastrophe which became known as 'the Great Famine'. This was ultimately due to the failure of the potato crop, which was the staple diet of 3 million of the 8 million people living

in Ireland at the time. When this failed, around one million people died, mostly of disease. Around 2 million citizens emigrated during the next five to ten years. This reduced the population of Ireland to 5 million in a very short period of time. The Irish people who went to America tend to blame the British government for the famine whilst the people who remained in Ireland have a more complex interpretation of what happened. However, Irish Americans view the famine as their great foundation event. Whereas the old settlers to America spoke of the Pilgrim Fathers' journey, the Irish Americans replaced this with stories of 'famine ships'. The famine can be a very emotive topic in the discussion of Irish history.

The big political question in 19th century Ireland was whether or not Ireland could restore its parliament, which was a more reasonable project than full independence at the height of the British Empire. British Prime Minister William Gladstone campaigned for Irish home rule in the 1870s but this only became a reality in 1914. However, there was a great deal of opposition to this from the Unionists, particularly around Belfast. The Unionists began to arm themselves and the Nationalists took up arms in response. By 1914 there were two armed groups who had the ability to go to war with each other.

The British government parked the Irish question until the end of World War One as they had expected the war to end quickly. During this time the situation in Ireland changed dramatically. In Easter week 1916, a small group of Republicans started a rebellion and declared an Irish republic. This effectively undermined the parliamentary project. This was in some senses a generational consequence. The older politicians wanted parliamentary rule, but the world was changing and people were dying overseas in the war. This group of Republicans wanted complete Irish independence and were prepared to fight for it. It is important to

realise that there was a general election immediately after the war. In the general election, 73 seats were won by Sinn Féin,[4] a new party which refused to take up their seats in Westminster. This changed the situation dramatically. What could the British government do about this? The resistance in Belfast was strong but discontent was growing in Dublin. The British Government's solution was partition, by dividing the island into two. This remains the current political arrangement on the Island. Northern Ireland remains part of the United Kingdom but has its own local government. The treaty of 1921 established the Irish Free State, which, in due course became the Irish Republic.

This means that there were now two states which contained minorities. In the South there was a very small Protestant minority. In the North a Nationalist Catholic majority made up around a third of the population. In the South the Protestant population was gradually accommodated into the situation, but in the North a very different story unfolded. The minority was too small to be ignored and although its members were socially disadvantaged very little was done to improve their situation. The British believed that as long as there was peace then the Irish Problem had been resolved. But this repressed anger burst out in the 1960's. The 1960's were a time of civil rights in the US, decolonisation by great powers throughout the world and a new sense of liberation amongst Catholics. There was a very important psychological liberation of Catholics in the 1960's. This led to people saying 'we are no longer prepared to be a disaffected minority'.

Their main concern regarded civil rights. I remember that in the 1950's the sentiment in the South was that a unified Ireland was unthinkable,

4 Sinn Féin is a Republican political party in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with historic links to the Irish Republican Army (IRA) paramilitary group.

but that Catholics in the North should nonetheless get a fair deal. The Troubles started shortly after this point and continued until the signing of the Good Friday agreement 1998[5]. As Kerim mentioned earlier, not everything was resolved by this agreement. Issues remain, however these are relatively manageable. Since the agreement was signed in 1998 the government of Northern Ireland has been representative of the two communities. This can be seen in the restructuring of the police, which has been one of the most important reforms. The remaining issues include flags as the official flag in Northern Ireland is the Union Jack. For Nationalists the most important flag is the Irish tricolour. Then there is the question of parades. It is a peculiarly Irish phenomenon, the act of marching up and down the street with flags and drums. It creates a sense of territoriality, the idea that you are allowed to march through a particular town. At what point can one community stop another community from doing this? This biggest remaining issue is whether or not to grant an amnesty to those who have committed acts of violence. This is extremely difficult. Some believe that the slate should be wiped clean. Others believe that those who were responsible for harming their family should be brought to justice. Others say that perhaps truth and reconciliation are needed instead. Richard Haass[6] has been working on this and failed to get an agreement on this at the end of 2013. Hopefully common sense will prevail in the end, but this is easy for an academic to say. Politicians, in contrast, have to persuade the public.

5 The Good Friday Agreement was a document signed in 1998 by almost all groups which had been party to the conflict in Northern Ireland. It paved the way for a devolved government in Northern Ireland and sought to address issues such as civil rights, decommissioning of weapons, justice and policing.

6 Richard Haass is an American diplomat who served as the US Special Envoy to Northern Ireland from 2001-2003. In 2013 he returned to Northern Ireland to chair inter-party talks designed to resolve remaining issues in the peace process.

Kerim Yildiz thanked Professor Vincent Comerford and invited Will Devas to speak.

Will Devas: Thank you very much. There are several things that I would like to say. I am part-English, part-Scottish and part-Northern Irish. I suppose that one thing we have learnt at Glencree is that even as a civil society actor who is trying to be neutral you have to acknowledge that you are part of the conflict. If you acknowledge this you have a chance of arriving at a solution. If you live on the island of Britain, you are part of the conflict in some small way. Vincent mentioned that in some small way the Unionists started to bring arms into the North. My great grandfather was instrumental in doing this. My grandfather was Prime Minster at the time in the North and he ruled over the Catholics in a very unequal way. I would like to think that my grandfather was doing everything that he could to alter the situation. I knew nothing about this until ten years ago. However, by having a small connection to this I feel that I have a small part to play in solving this conflict.

I have been using the word 'conflict' a lot. This can in fact be a good thing, as disagreements can eventually lead to good solutions. However, this becomes harmful when it is used repressively, which is what happened in the late 1960's and 1970's. Violent conflict is always disruptive. My other points will give a feel for Glencree's work from 1994 to the present day. In 1994 the Irish Republican Army (IRA)[7] declared a ceasefire and the loyalist paramilitaries did the same. We ran four main programmes. One was political dialogue at a Track II[8] level, which brought influential people from all parts of Ireland to engage with one another. The absence

7 The IRA was a Republican paramilitary organisation, which sought to remove Northern Ireland from the United Kingdom in order to create a united Ireland.
8 Track II diplomacy involves negotiation through informal or non-state actors. It is in contrast to Track I diplomacy, which consists of negotiations between states.

of the media meant that they could talk freely. This helped to achieve the political settlement in 1998. Another thing that we do is to work with ex-combatants from all sides of the conflict, whether or not they were in uniform. This is difficult to do because these individuals have suffered trauma. We did a lot of work building relationships between groups and individuals to facilitate this. We also work with women who often kept their communities together during the conflict. Despite this, many have struggled to find a voice or gain influence in the peace process. It was very important for us to work with them because they also had suffered trauma and had things to tell. We worked with young people – the future decision makers – so that they can understand that we can have disagreements and strong views and simultaneously seek to resolve our differences in a peaceful way. I will now talk about what comes from our four broad areas of work.

When we talk about the 'peace process' the word 'process' is very important. The process started in the 1980's when Bobby Sands[9] was elected to parliament whilst effectively killing himself during a hunger strike. Individuals like this sought to be seen as political prisoners rather than criminals. It was at this point that Sinn Féin and the IRA realised that they would need to use political means to achieve their goals.

We have been on a long journey. There were many more years of violence before the arms were laid down and we are still going through this process. These are still very contentious issues. At Glencree we have learnt that if you want to build peace you need to start a process, to start

9 Bobby Sands was an IRA member who died as part of a hunger strike at HM Prison Maze, Northern Ireland. He was protesting against the removal of his 'Special Category Status' in prison, which allowed jailed Republicans to be treated under similar conditions of Prisoners of War. His death prompted a surge in activity in favour of the Republican cause.

talking, and eventually outcomes may emerge. A second important point is 'trust'. When you have violent conflict there is very little or no trust. When trying to get different parties into a room they do not need to trust each other; they just need to trust the process and the facilitators. Civil society leaders create trust by being open about their position. I like to think that Glencree is trusted, and has created a safe space for people to say things that they would never say in public. We allow participants to see adversaries as human beings whom we may eventually reach an agreement with. A political solution such as the Good Friday agreement has to be underpinned by backchannels in civil society. This important civil society work has helped the peace process to advance.

Kerim Yildiz thanked the speakers and opened the floor to questions.

Question: Could you tell us more about how Glencree gained the trust of the people that it engages with?

Will Devas: Our members have been honest about who they were and what they thought they could do. They started a process. But it took a long time to build up to this. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)[10], the main party in Northern Ireland, took a very long time to be willing to enter the room with Sinn Féin. But Glencree worked with them and after a year they trusted us to the point where they agreed to partake in the process. So it is all about skilful facilitation. You need to introduce yourselves and then discuss what you actually want to talk about. Then the next day you identify the themes of the agenda. We will facilitate but they will lead the discussion. The residential retreat is helpful. It gets people away from where they live and forces them to spend time together. People are able to have coffee and eat together as well as more

10 The DUP is the largest Unionist party in Northern Ireland.

formal activities. Processes need to be inclusive, but they cannot always be inclusive from the start. You have a room in which there are still empty chairs. These are left for groups who we wish to include in the future but are not here now. We did not implement the Good Friday agreement until everyone was on board. We have learnt that this conflict is intergenerational. The young today feel as strongly, if not more, about culture and identity issues and they have not experienced any violence at all. It has been passed down through the generations. You need to find ways of processing past hurt and suffering.

Question: You talked about negative conflicts. Was there a period that was dominated by positive conflicts? Was there a third party to these negotiations and conflict? What is the position of civil society; should it be entirely independent or should it function as a backup?

Professor Vincent Comerford: Civil society can give oxygen to a peace process. If you have a peace process without it you may arrive at a signature on paper but it would not have been a sustainable peace. A civil society which is independent of political actors is therefore very important. However, you need to hear all voices and therefore you also need to engage the more political civil society actors. These actors are also valid participants in the process. They may have the same objectives as Sinn Féin but this does not mean that what they have to say will not be useful.

Will Devas: I think that Glencree has been both a third party and also a part of the context. There are other organisations like us and they have been very useful in the process. For example, George Mitchell[11] has been

11 George Mitchell served as US Special Envoy to Northern Ireland from 1995-2001. He chaired the all-party talks which lead to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement

instrumental in helping the process. However, the solutions can only be found by those directly involved.

Professor Vincent Comerford: My point about positive conflict is that if my wife and I have an argument, we can strengthen our relationship by working through the conflict. The relationship is 'transformed', and this is how I see our role. You can transform those relationships into much tighter bonds to build a stronger future. Also, in 1974 there was an agreement which led to the establishment of a power-sharing executive; however this only lasted a few weeks. This was because it was an agreement between politicians which lacked the groundwork to make it sustainable.

Question: You mentioned 'nationalist dreams'. Is it easier to talk about an amnesty today than it was in 1996? Have these twenty years made the application of amnesty any easier? Mr Devas mentioned that he had worked with four different groups of political actors. Which was the group you had the most difficulty working with? You also mentioned that everyone needs to get involved in the peace process. This may be true in theory, but can it be achieved in practice? Do you really need to engage with all interested parties?

Will Devas: Each group had moments of extreme difficulty. It is hard to pick one over another. The focus on the work of women and young people was dialogue and capacity building. You potentially had less conflict in the room but there were absolutely moments of great difficulty. Everyone's experience of the violence is different, and this creates different challenges. On to your second question; should everyone be involved and is this practical? The short answer is 'no'. Sometimes it was not safe to do so. Some ex-combatants had not renounced violence. But there should in 1998.

be space for actors to come in at an appropriate moment. In the end, everyone has to more or less be involved in the process. Until that point was reached, progress was difficult.

Question: How did you manage to overcome the stalemates? How did third parties and civil society help to resolve this?

Will Devas: The stalemate would be a better thing for politicians to address, so I will pass on this for now. One lesson from the political process is that you need good leadership. The Good Friday Agreement was arrived at fairly quickly, but built on years of backchannel work. The leadership and perseverance helped to overcome the stalemate. Clinton[12] telling Gerry Adams[13] to 'play ball' really helped.

Question: I see parallels with my own country when it comes to dividedness and conflict. I wonder if you could tell us how many people died during the conflict? You talked about the generational aspect of this, so could you tell us more about how this new generation's attitudes differ from their elders?

Will Devas: Around 3,700 were killed. Relative to Rwanda[14], this is a very small amount. But as a proportion of the population this is still significant. If you talk to people in Northern Ireland who were alive in that period you will discover that everyone had personal experiences of the violence. They have stories that would make you cry. The harm goes beyond the deaths. There are trauma centres around and they play an

12 Bill Clinton served as US President from 1993-2001.
13 Gerry Adams is an Irish Republican politician and current President of the Sinn Féin political party.
14 The UN estimates that 800,000 people were killed in Rwanda during the genocide in 1994.

important role. If I had more time I would have talked about justice. For a lot of time a minority did not have access to justice. Others had ideological motivations. We often find it hard to agree on what the process should be, for example with regard to amnesties. At Glencree we have learnt that it is useful to give people a chance to tell their story. For some people this is enough for them to make progress. Others want to see the perpetrators in court. Different people have different needs.
The attitudes of young people are sometimes more extreme than their parents' generation, even though it was their parents who lived through the violence. We like to think that the new generation thinks differently. However, this is by no means universally true. Part of the reason why this is so is because we have not found a universal way to deal with the trauma and suffering.

Professor Vincent Comerford: Even five years ago there was much less openness to the question of amnesty. At least now you can have the conversation. In this respect, there has been a change.

Question: Every conflict has its own context, background and development. Nonetheless I feel that these issues could help us to transform relationships in the context of our conflict. But as a human rights worker in Turkey, I am unsure about what position I should be defending. On the one hand there is a lack of justice in response to gross human rights violations. It is so hard for us to be an independent third party to conflicts.

Kerim Yildiz: An important lesson that we have learnt from other conflicts is that talks often take some time to progress. For example, in South Africa there were years of backchannel talks to structure the

process. The points that Will has raised are very important. Leadership, consistency and the structure of the process are very important. The purpose of this meeting is to foster trust by looking at the role of civil society. For example, there is a role for women and young people to play. The question of third parties is important because the British government continually refused to engage with a third party for many years. They wanted to sort things out in their own way. But later they realised that they needed someone to facilitate, to enable both parties to trust the process. Jonathon Powell[15] has told me some very interesting things. He once talked about a private Downing Street[16] meeting in which Martin McGuiness[17] ended up playing with Blair's[18] children. This was something that they desperately wanted to keep away from journalists! The discussion about third parties in Turkey is understandable because they currently do not play a major role. Hopefully we will have a chance to discuss these issues further over the next couple of days.

15 Jonathan Powell is a British diplomat who served as the first Downing Street Chief of Staff under British Prime Minister Tony Blair from 1995-2007.
16 10 Downing Street is the site of the official residence of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.
17 Martin McGuinness is an Irish Sinn Féin politician who has been the deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland since 2007.
18 Tony Blair was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1997-2007.

Wednesday 9th April 2014 – Dinner at the Residence of Turkey Ambassador to Ireland Hosted by His Excellency Ambassador Necip Egüz

Kadri Salaz, Chairman of VANGIAD; His Excellency Ambassador Necip Egüz, Turkey Ambassador to Ireland; Kerim Yıldız, DPI Director.

Participants in conversation with Will Devas, Glencree CEO.

Session 2: Thursday 10h April 2014 – Iveagh House, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Topics:

The Irish Government and Lessons from the Peace Process;
Overview of the Current Role of the Irish Government in the Peace Process;
Economic and Community Dimensions of the Peace Process;

Speakers:

Brendan Ward,[19] Director, Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Sean O'Regan,[20] Joint Director General, International Fund for Ireland
Orlaith Fitzmaurice,[21] Director, Reconciliation Fund
Brian Cahalane[22], Anglo-Irish Division
Paschal Donohoe T.D.,[23] Minister for European Affairs

Moderated by Kerim Yildiz

19 Brendan Ward is Director of Conflict Resolution Unit at the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). DFA's conflict resolution unit was set up to enable the Irish government's rich understanding of conflict resolution issues to be utilised around the world.
20 Sean O'Regan is Joint Director General at International Fund for Ireland. His previous postings include Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Ireland Beijing, the General Council Secretariat and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
21 Orlaith Fitzmaurice is the Director for the Irish Reconciliation Fund.
22 The Anglo-Irish Division is a part of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs that concerns Anglo-Irish relations and Northern Ireland.
23 Paschal Donohoe T.D. is the Irish Minister for European Affairs.

Brendan Ward: Good morning everyone and welcome to Iveagh House, the headquarters of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. It was traditionally the home of the Guinness family who very kindly donated it to the state in 1927. I am the Director of the Conflict Resolution Unit, the section of the department which is in charge of peacebuilding, which also organises the department's support of civil society groups which are active in conflict resolution issues including Glencree and Democratic Progress Institute. My own experience is mainly from outside of Ireland. I spent around seven years working on the Middle East Peace Process both at home and abroad. My first experience of conflict resolution was in the former Yugoslavia working for the European Commission.

I will now give you a general overview of Ireland's approach to conflict resolution through peaceful resolution of disputes, international law and international organisations. This is both a position of principle and recognition of our position in the world as a small and relatively weak country. We give active support to the UN, EU and NATO. We provide troops to these operations and also financial support to international peacebuilding efforts. Within the UN system we are active in the 'Friends of Mediation'[24] group which is a Turkish and Finnish group which promotes mediation as a mechanism for avoiding conflict. I will now give a brief introduction to the Irish peace process and our own experience. I will start by mentioning that the Foreign Minister[25] had hoped to meet this group but is currently in London as part of the state visit to Britain. This visit is the culmination of a very lengthy process of reconciliation and peacebuilding and is rightly regarded as one of the most important political events to take place this year in Ireland and England[26].

24 The UN Friends of Mediation group was founded in 2010 in order to promote a culture of mediation amongst the governments of its member states.

25 The current Irish Foreign Minister is Eamon Gilmore.

26 President Michael D. Higgins' state visit to the United Kingdom in April 2014 was the first state visit by an Irish President to Great Britain.

Kerim Yildiz, Paschal Donohoe T.D. and Brendan Ward at roundtable meeting at Iveagh House, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dublin

After my introduction my colleagues will talk about the International Fund for Ireland which works to build support for peace amongst a large range community groups, allowing us to maintain outreach to the community. We have organised this meeting to share some of our experiences from the peace process and to allow you to see if you can draw any lessons from this experience. I should emphasise that we are not implying that our experience is directly transferable to the situation in Turkey or is a model which can be exported to other conflict-affected countries.

Tolstoy opened his novel Anna Karenina with the line "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way". I think that this is also applicable to conflicts. Each conflict has its own context and background meaning that every conflict requires its own

distinct approach. However there are some general principles and lessons which we think can be drawn from our experience which we have shared with some success with those engaged in conflict resolution in other parts of the world. The first lesson is the need to secure agreements on basic principles. This means that the parties should recognise, perhaps even before accepting it, what the basic outline of a conflict resolution agreement should look like. As early as 1973 there was a broad agreement in Ireland on the need for a power sharing agreement, reform of the police and a North-South dimension to the administration of Northern Ireland. This resulted from the Sunningdale Agreement[27]. For various reasons, mainly the inability of the Northern Irish parties to accept it, the agreement collapsed within a year. However, the same principles underlie the Good Friday Agreement, which was reached more than twenty years later. A similar phenomenon can be seen in the Middle East. Most of us know what an eventual settlement will look like; there will need to be concessions on both sides, agreements on security, water resource sharing, among other things, and this has been known for the past fifteen years.

However at least one of the parties is unwilling to accept the final outcome at this stage. What we agreed at the time of the Good Friday Agreement was that a type of constructive ambiguity was very important to allow for a variety of interpretations and to allow key elements to be discussed at a later date. This involved parties moving from fixed positions and accepting, to an extent, that the language would need to reflect the interests of the other side. Another important principle was that of inclusivity. The peace process included all of the main political parties but at the same time, consultations were also held with smaller parties and with civil society groups. Even at early stages of discussion,

27 The Sunningdale Agreement was a failed attempt to establish a power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive in 1974.

where it was not possible to include militant groups, it was still possible to maintain channels of communication to ensure that these groups were not publically excluded from the negotiation process. This provided the process with the necessary legitimacy and allowed for the building on consensus. The fact that a very wide range of stakeholders were included minimised spoilers. This was reflected in the eventual referendum on the Good Friday Agreement where the effects of marginal groups to derail the agreement were negated. Another element was the comprehensiveness of the process. The Good Friday process focused not just on relationships within Northern Ireland but also between Northern Ireland and the South, and between Northern Ireland and Britain. Institutions were set up to achieve this, such as the North/South Ministerial Council,[28] which meets to discuss issues of common interest. The British-Irish Council[29] exists to facilitate this kind of discussion.

Roundtable meeting at Iveagh House,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dublin

28 The North/South Ministerial Council was established under the Good Friday Agreement to co-ordinate activity and exercise certain governmental powers across the whole of Ireland.

29 The British-Irish Council was established under the Good Friday Agreement to "promote the harmonious and mutually beneficial development of the totality of relationships among the peoples of these islands".

I mentioned that the Good Friday Agreement was endorsed by a referendum. In Northern Ireland the referendum was a straightforward agreement but in the South it was about changing the constitution to give up Irish claims to sovereignty over Northern Ireland. This represented a significant shift in Ireland as both proposals were supported by 85% of those who voted. The endorsement of the agreement was an act of self-determination and created legitimacy for the parties involved. The acceptance of the agreement was a major political triumph but in many ways it was only the start of the peacebuilding process. There have been setbacks during this time. There are still marginal groups who are deeply opposed to the process who would like to see it ended. It has been necessary from the Irish and British governments to promote conflict building effort between communities in Northern Ireland. Glencree is very active in this area amongst civil society groups. There are also issues of how to deal with the legacy of the past, which remain problematic. I think you have already heard about the work of the Haass commission on some of the outstanding issues.

An important thing for us is international support, such as that from the US and the EU. But other less obvious actors are also very important, such as Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Finland. Successive US presidents have been personally involved in supporting the peace process. For example, when the armed groups were finally persuaded to lay down their arms, the process was supervised by representatives from Finland and Canada, such as the former Head of the Canadian armed Forces. I know that there is a great reluctance in Turkey to see the conflict in South East Anatolia become an international issue. But we have learnt from our own peace process that you do not have to look to the big players to find parties to take positions of leadership. It can sometimes be extremely useful to look to a smaller player for advice and experience on specialist areas, such

as the destruction of weaponry, for example. For example, South Africa has specific experience with issues of truth and reconciliation to deal with the legacy of conflict. A further issue is the current involvement of civil society. Civil society is not just limited to Glencree and DPI. It includes churches and sports associations. An example in Ireland is the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA), which unfortunately is strongly identified with one particular community over the other. The GAA has made a very conscious effort to promote inclusivity during the peace process. When Queen Elizabeth II visited Dublin, she made a point of visiting the GAA. This was significant because there had once been a massacre of Irish nationalists by British troops at the athletics ground in 1921. Other civil society groups include schools, businesses and cultural groups. It is with these groups that the Irish government continues to promote their reconciliation work.

Another important element is Security Sector Reform (SSR). We have found this to be an important element in most conflicts where the security services have been active in conflict and have been identified with one particular side. The former police force in Northern Ireland was seen as a partisan part of the Northern Irish state. It has since been expanded and replaced by the new Police Service of Northern Ireland, which is based on the principles of accountability, impartiality, representativeness. The establishment of the Northern Irish Police Service was a result of an independent commission and an oversight commissioner from the US was employed to monitor the implementation of recommendations. One of the regrettable results of SSR is that the police are no longer seen as partial by one community, and this makes their work more difficult. These are just some of the lessons that we have drawn and some of these may, or may not, be applicable to Turkey. I will now ask my colleagues to talk about some specific aspects of the peace process and later I think

that we will have time for questions, discussion or comments on the Irish Experience. Brian Cahalane will now talk about the role of government.

Brian Cahalane: Good morning to all of you and welcome. In terms of the role of the government, it is fair to say that since 1969 Northern Ireland has been a high priority for successive Irish governments. This remains the case today. The peace process has let us down significantly, but the current government nonetheless recognises that it is still important, as shown by the state visit to the United Kingdom. This visit included important acts of reconciliation and commemoration. As we are now in a decade of commemorations from 1912-1922 it is important for both governments to set the tone for this decade and to ensure that events are marked respectfully by the different communities. During the 1970s the Irish government worked closely with the British government, even when our views differed. We also worked with representatives of nationalism in Northern Ireland, particularly those involved in the main political party at the time. Our government also made efforts to reach out towards Unionist opposition, although this was quite difficult and had to be done behind the scenes. A priority of the government was to ensure the establishment of a power sharing agreement. The majority of the Unionists did not ensure civil, political and socio-economic rights for the minority community. This made a respective power sharing agreement very important. The seats in the executive are allocated on the basis on party strength and this ensures that all communities are represented. Another important element is North-South cooperation. The North/South Ministerial Council, established under the Good Friday Agreement, allows for economic and social cooperation between the Irish government and the Northern Irish Executive. This is important to make efficiency savings and to cooperate on economic recovery and

job creation on both sides of the border.

Some of the current issues that the Irish government is conscious of are those of dealing with the past, parades and flags. The government has been working closely with the political parties as they work through this. Other issues revolve around division and sectarianism between the two communities. Great progress has been made although there are continual difficulties. Another issue is that of educational underachievement, especially in Loyalist areas where the rate of participation of young men in higher education is very poor. These issues need to be addressed. There is also a sense that the political system is not tackling some of the real issues. On the face of it politicians appear to be working together, but in reality they are still maintaining their habits of working for their own community, rather than for Northern Ireland as a whole. Another issue is the impact of the financial crisis and the inability to increase employment. It is quite difficult to move a society forward when you have major economic challenges. For example, if dissident groups are trying to continue mounting attacks on the police, high unemployment provides a fertile recruiting ground for organisations which wish to destabilise the situation. Another issue is an 'obsession with the past'; the way that atrocities committed long ago are often treated as if they occurred yesterday.

Of course it is important to commemorate, but whether it is a good idea to relive the trauma is questionable. There are also aspects of the Good Friday Agreement which are yet to be enacted. These include an Irish language act, which is a matter of great importance for identity. There is also the civil forum, which is a gap in the structure of Northern Ireland. There are no specific mechanisms through which civil society can have a voice. There also needs to be a bill of rights for Northern Ireland, given its particular situation as a divided post-conflict society. The potential for

any kind of terrorist activity to destabilise the situation and damage the prospects for long term peace and reconciliation remains very valid. The two police services are working very closely to ensure that the dissident threat does not undermine the progress that has been made.

Brendan Ward thanked Brian Cahalane and invited Sean O'Regan to speak.

Sean O'Regan: I was very fortunate to spend four years in Ankara. This was during a period of real change in Turkey. I also had the opportunity to travel very extensively in Turkey and I am very pleased to be here this morning. I run the International Fund for Ireland. We were established in 1986 as part of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985. The fund was established as an effort to address the division and segregation in Northern Ireland. Over the lifetime of the fund we have created a good reputation for doing very targeted interventions in the area of peace and reconciliation. We have built a reputation for impartiality. It is fair to say that both governments have given the fund independence and have not interfered with our work.

Northern Ireland is one of the most segregated societies in the world. Ninety per cent of areas are single community areas. Ninety five per cent of schools are segregated. 'Peace Walls' have multiplied over the past decade. I fully appreciate that it is very difficult to understand the complexity of the division in Northern Ireland. It is more than a religious division. The divisions within communities can be as profound as those between communities. The work that we do is aimed at bringing communities together from across the border, within Northern Ireland and within the communities themselves. Our work in the mid 1980's

and 1990's contributed towards to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. But as Brian has said, problems continue. We have been working over the last ten years to address these problems. Our current strategy is aimed at engaging parts of the community which are not currently engaged in the peace process and those who are feeling alienated. This is particularly the case with young people. This is the focus of our current attention.

The fund is supported by the US, EU, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand governments. These countries have a long organic connection to Ireland. Before, we focused on infrastructure and the creation of a shared space. We are now focusing on human capital and encouraging young people to develop skills to address the future challenges that they may face. One part of this involves building new political leaders in the community. We have to accept that these are long term effects. We must also accept that there will continue to be division. We just hope that we can create the conditions to allow Northern Ireland to heal. It is ultimately up to the political leadership in Northern Ireland to bring this together. The International Fund is keen to share its experience and to talk about our work and I am very interested to be contacted about this in the future.

Brendan Ward: We have been joined by other colleague, Orlaith. She will talk about our Anti-Sectarianism and Reconciliation Funds. This is a way of promoting outreach to a vast number of organisations. She will give you an idea of the basis of their work.

Orlaith Fitzmaurice: Within the department we have a Reconciliation Fund and an Anti-Sectarian Fund. These funds aim to engage with civil society in the border regions. Under the Good Friday Agreement the

Irish government enhanced our resources which allowed us to expand our work further. It is telling that our budget has been largely protected over recent years. There is strong political and public commitment to our reconciliation work. We work in every part of Northern Ireland and work with large and small organisations. One of the hallmarks of our organisation is the flexibility that we have over the use of our funds. We are open to many ideas about how to promote reconciliation. To this end, we have engaged with sports groups, young people and women's groups. An increasing part of what we do is focused on commemoration. We are currently in the decade of commemoration where we remember both the World War and the conflict in Ireland. We are aware that these events can be extremely contentious and can have very strong resonance in communities. Each community has its own narrative surrounding this. Without an approach of tolerance and understanding this is unlikely to work. We are unique in what we do. We are the only group which has an 'all-Ireland' approach. We have good access into communities which the Irish government may not be welcome in. To some extent it is helpful that we have resources that allow us to open doors and to benefit from the engagement and knowledge from our relationships. This builds into our political thinking and our policy as a government. Similarly to what Sean has mentioned we are keen to promote our work and would be delighted to speak to you further about this.

DPI Director Kerim Yildiz with participant Kadri Salaz at Leinster House

Kerim thanked the speakers and opened the floor to questions.

Question: Can you talk about the role of third parties in the peace process? You talked about actors such as the US and Finland. Could you talk about this a bit more with regard to Turkey?

Brendan Ward: For us, the role of third parties has been vital and has taken many forms. It has contributed enormously to progress. We have had personal engagement with every US President for the past 30 years, direct engagement with parties, and a willingness of Clinton to meet with leaders of Sinn Féin, at a time when it was still very much outside the mainstream political process. The US financial support has also been very useful. The EU has also provided funding and other friendly countries have signalled their interest. Some of these have also provided

expert personnel, objective monitors, commissions of enquiry and, in the case of South Africa, have shared their own experience of reconciliation to allow us to draw on the lessons that they learned. I mentioned in my talk that I recognised the widespread resistance in Turkey to the idea of internationalising the conflict. Although there is resistance to the participation of outside actors in the process, I would still suggest that outside experts could have a useful role to play. This could be in a limited way, providing specific types of expertise or participating where there is a need for trust between the parties that cannot be generated domestically. I think that these are the sort of circumstances where third party intervention may usefully be considered.

Question: I am very interested to hear the details of the SSR programme. How did the reforms take place and what have the difficulties been? You mentioned that some backward steps have been taken; why has this been the case? How have you dealt with issues of impunity? This is one of the main problems in Turkey at the moment.

Brendan Ward: In most conflict situations the security forces of the state will have been identified with one side. In our case, the reform consisted of a complete reorganisation of the police force in Northern Ireland as the police had indeed been identified with a specific community. Unlike police forces in the Republic of Ireland or the UK, the force had a paramilitary character. The reform was undertaken through a very extensive consultation throughout society, a thorough appraisal of existing arrangements, accepting input from civil society and eventually a report of the commission, which was chaired by Lord Patten,[30] a Roman Catholic with experience of Northern Ireland.

30 Christopher Patten is a Roman Catholic British public servant. Between 1998 and 1999 he chaired the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, an institution which was specified in the Good Friday Agreement.

To move onto the difficulties that we experienced; if you are going to embark on a process like this, you are going to cause one side to lose out in some way. If for 60 years a police force has always looked out for your interests, then the change can be uncomfortable. One of the Patten recommendations was that the police force should more accurately represent the makeup of society. The police roughly consisted of 95 per cent Protestants/Unionists. The Patten report recommended that this should fall to 60 per cent to reflect the demography of Northern Ireland. Recruitment should be biased towards Catholics until an acceptable balance had been reached. This obviously created problems. The police force had been seen by many young Protestant men as a very attractive career, and this option had now become restricted. But overall the reform of the police force has been successful. It enjoys a reputation for impartiality. Those who enjoyed the previous bias may not have liked this. However, I feel that the police force is gradually becoming normalised.

Now onto the issue of impunity. There were indeed cases where people were killed by the security services. There were also numerous terrorist attacks in which people were imprisoned. An element of the settlement was that an amnesty would be provided for those convicted of offenses from both communities which were connected with the problems. This meant that a fairly large number of people convicted were released from prison, sometimes after serving very short sentences, and the victims of these families obviously found this very distressing. This was not strictly an amnesty; it was a form of parole. This illustrates how much terminology matters! The early release scheme was considered an essential part of the Agreement and was recognised by both parties as a painful sacrifice which was being demanded of the victims and their families. However, the scheme has largely been a success. Terrorism is no longer a serious issue and no longer occurs on a daily basis. The pain was shared by

both communities and by the families of injured security force members. That is another element of these settlements; that painful decisions have to be made and justice is not always served.

Question: How did the economic crisis affect the peace process? Did it make people closer to each other or did it create tensions with the government?

Answer: The effect has not been positive! It has not brought communities closer together through shared suffering. If anything, declining public expenditure has caused competition between members of different communities to increase.

Brendan Ward: I mentioned earlier that we would be joined by the Minister for European Affairs, Minster Paschal Donohoe T.D[31]. I would now like to invite Minister Donohoe to say a few words.

Minster Paschal Donohoe T.D.: Good morning and welcome to you all. I am very pleased to be here and to have the opportunity to address you this morning. I have a great interest in your country and am looking forward to officially visiting in the near future in my current role. It is great to have the opportunity to meet groups such as yourselves. I will speak for a few moments from a political perspective on the peace process and on the stability that has been achieved by touching on four different areas. But before I do so I should say that our Minster for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore T.D., had hoped to meet you but he is, appropriately perhaps, involved in the first presidential visit to the United Kingdom, which is being held this week.

31 Minister Paschal Donohoe T.D. is an Irish Fine Gael politician who serves as the current Minister of State for European Affairs.

The observation that I have in relation to the peace process here comes from four different areas. I should make it clear from the start that these are not necessarily applicable to your context. You will be the best judge of what is, or is not, appropriate to take from this experience.
Firstly, I want to stress that this is a process rather than a project. It is something that is ongoing at all times. Sometimes the situation is better than at other times. But the essential fact is to recognise it as an ongoing process. The political consequence of this is that it has been a process that the governments of all different make up and compositions have always been involved with. It has always been a subject of political debate, but has rarely been seen as an issue of political conflict. Governments, regardless of their political makeup, have been very committed to it. The process tends to be more of a dialogue rather than an area of political opposition here in the Republic. The most charged political atmosphere is within Northern Ireland itself. For this reason great efforts have been made to make the process work.

Secondly, I want to emphasise the huge importance of the regional dimension and the key role that international actors can play in achieving stability and bringing about progress. For example, in the Good Friday Agreement the governments of the UK and the Republic of Ireland are both co-guarantors. If you look at the role that the EU has played in the peace process, it has tried hard to create an economic environment in which this can be achieved. It has also provided the political basis for this process such as the principles of devolution and subsidiarity. The EU has made an effort to allow these ideas to be introduced into the Irish context. The other important actor to consider is the US. Many different US Presidents have made strategic interventions at different points in the peace process, which have been very valuable.

Thirdly, I want to talk about the need for sectoral engagement. This involves understanding that engagement and support of the peace process has to be something that is not just anchored within foreign affairs. For example, much of the engagement with Northern Ireland is on issues such as infrastructure, tourism, transport and energy. This introduces far more dimensions of engagement with the North and this delivers practical benefits for communities living in these areas. This means that the peace process ends up having many different strands of engagement. For example, our Minister for Agriculture, Simon Coveney T.D., has been engaging with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). This would have been very unlikely a few years ago. But this is now normal and helps to anchor the peace process.

Fourthly, I want to talk about the economic environment in which these engagements take place. I feel that the EU, US, UK and Irish government's willingness to invest time and money in creating an economic environment in which the peace process can take place has been very important. If you were to go around Dublin at the moment you would see adverts encouraging Irish people to spend their holidays in Northern Ireland. This is very important as it encourages lots of travel between the two areas, which itself promotes understanding between people. But it also creates new stakeholders in Northern Ireland who will want to have their voice heard and I feel that this makes the economic context very important. However, I also feel that issues of economic disadvantage are of huge importance and there are still things that we need to do to address this.

I am speaking both as a politician and as an Irish person. I have seen the enormous benefits that the peace process has brought the North, and I have also seen what it was like in the UK when the peace process was at

an all-time low. I hope that the rest of your visit goes very well and that you enjoy your stay in Dublin.

Kerim Yildiz thanked Minster Paschal Donohoe T.D. and opened the floor to questions

Question: You talked about a law to protect the Irish language. I am curious about the reasoning behind such a proposal. Is the issue that the language is not used enough?

Minster Paschal Donohoe T.D.: This is a very good question. The Good Friday Agreement contains concepts such as 'Parity of Esteem' with regard to culture. How the Irish language is recognised in the North is an area of discussion at the moment. I would have to say that my own experience is that how you teach the language and how you allow it to be used in everyday situations does far more to increase its use than the rule of law. I know that use of Irish has dramatically increased through new teaching methods.

Visiting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade: Feray Salman; Kadri Salaz; Eleanor Johnson (DPI); Ahmet Faruk Ünsal; Esra Elmas (DPI); Kerim Yıldız (DPI Director); Necdet İpekyüz; Zeynep Ardıç; Sedat Yurtdaş; Brendan Ward; Cem Gençoğlu; Paschal Donohoe T.D.; Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem; Val Kiernan (Glencree); Vahap Çoşkun; Fadime Özkan; Yılmaz Ensaroğlu (DPI Council of Experts); Talha Köse; Gülçin Avşar;

Question: Is there a difference between the reception of the Northern Irish and those from the Republic with regard to this London meeting? Are the reactions to the visit different?

Minster Paschal Donohoe T.D.: I have spent a lot of time talking to people from my constituency about this. The overwhelming reaction has been that of great interest. I have not met a person yet who has a negative thing to say about it. This is because there is a large Irish community in the United Kingdom and also because of the kind of speeches that have been made by the Queen and the President.

Question: In Turkey there is strong opposition to external intervention in the conflict. How did the Irish get the US involved in way that was appropriate to the situation?

Minster Paschal Donohoe T.D.: I am conscious that our two situations are very different. There are a number of dimensions which have made this work in our case. Firstly, reasons of immigration have meant that there was a strong affinity of interest between Ireland and the United States. There was an understanding that the intervention was driven by enlightened self-interest. When they got involved it was because they wanted to see the peace process work. Secondly, the US interventions have always had a positive impact on all actors involved in the peace process. This immediately led to a reduction in violence. People saw an immediate benefit. The other important thing is not to see intervention by outside players exclusively through the prism of America. For example, the EU has been extremely important to our own process.

Session 3: Thursday 10h April 2014 – Fitzwilliam Hotel, Dublin

Topic:

The Role of Civil Society in the Negotiations of the Northern Ireland Peace Process

Speakers:

Tim O'Connor, Former diplomat[32]

Shirley Graham, Head of Hanna's House[33]

Moderated by Kerim Yildiz

Tim O'Connor: Thank you everyone and welcome to Ireland. I would like to thank the Democratic Progress Institute and the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation for the invitation to speak here today. You are visiting us during a very special time in our history, due to the first state visit by an Irish President to the UK. I am not sure if anyone has told you, but today is also the sixteenth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement. I happened to be a member of the Irish government's backroom team during these negotiations. Every year that passes, the Agreement survives, builds credibility and strengthens the principles within it. My own background is in the Irish Diplomatic Service. In

32 Tim O'Connor has spent almost 30 years in the Irish Diplomatic Service and has worked extensively on issues relating to the Northern Ireland Peace Process. During this period, he has served as Secretary General to the President of Ireland and as Consul General of Ireland in New York.

33 Shirley Graham has led Hanna's House, an organisation set up to bring women together from the whole of Ireland to consider the legacy of the conflict and how it has impacted their lives. http://www.hannashouse.ie/

1986 I started work on the Northern Irish peace process. This became a bit of an obsession for me, as conflict resolution can be a very addictive exercise! We would like to help you all in any way that we can because many of the successes of our own process can be traced back to support from the international community. We therefore believe that we have a responsibility to share our experiences. I want to tell you a little about the Agreement itself and the background to the negotiations. When the negotiations began in September 1997 we were at a very particular moment. The context was very important, and at this time there was a window of opportunity through which we could start to make progress.

First of all, 30 years of violence had created a sense of 'conflict fatigue'. To quote Abba Eben,[34] the former Israel Foreign minister, 'Men and nations behave wisely once all other options have been exhausted'. In our case, there was a stalemate between the British Army and the IRA. Both sides could inflict damage on the other but neither was able to land the knock-out blow. New political blood was beginning to emerge, such as the British Prime Minister Tony Blair and the Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern.[35] They were full of possibility and hope, and they wanted to get something down on paper. They did not have political baggage from the past. Sinn Féin also needed a political solution. A trusted external facilitator, US Senator George Mitchell, was also present. The final element was more complicated. In a conflict situation you will only secure a peace agreement if a critical minimum of those engaged in the conflict regard their self-interests to be better served by supporting change. If people are happy to continue with the status quo then they must be persuaded that the deal is going to benefit them in the long run.

34 Abba Eben served as Israel's Minster of Foreign Affairs from 1966–1974.
35 Bertie Ahern served as Ireland's Taoiseach (Head of the Irish Government) from 1997-2008.

Necdet İpekyüz, Cem Gençoğlu, Kerim Yildiz and Gülçin Avşar at roundtable meeting

The Agreement which was finalised 16 years ago today contained eight elements:

1. The constitutional framework
2. The political institutions
3. A civil-rights framework
4. The issue of decommissioning arms
5. The administration of justice and policing
6. The issue of political prisoners
7. Creating a capacity to review the Agreement
8. The need for any agreement to be endorsed by a referendum

The issue of justice and policing was particularly sensitive, and there were some important things that we failed to do correctly. Sometimes the best thing was to agree on something in principle but to agree to work out the

details later. For example, we decided that there should be a committee to look into policing. What we agreed here were the terms of reference for the commission. This commission was formed and reported back nine months later with new arrangements for policing, which were very difficult and extremely controversial. But it was this which eventually provided the basis for the new Northern Irish police force.

The role of civil society in the negotiations was quite controversial. You had to be courageous to engage in this politically. A relatively small number of people will get involved in a fairly high profile way. The other controversy is the tension between the political parties and the NGOs. The political parties are elected, and therefore claim to represent civil society! In the negotiations, the political parties were the primary representatives. There was one political party in Northern Ireland, the Women's Coalition,[36] which effectively was an NGO as well. In the Agreement itself there are two references to civil society. Those relating specifically to Northern Ireland have been implemented, however, those relating to North-South relationships have not. Whilst there were new political arrangements, there was no agreement on the creation of this new civil society forum. I guess that one of the benefits of the Good Friday Agreement was the way in which it got more people involved in political life, which helped to normalise politics. In a conflict that has been going on for 800 years, the real victory of the Good Friday Agreement had been to reach a point where all sides could agree to settle their differences through peaceful, democratic means.

For 800 years violence had always been an acceptable political instrument.

36 The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition was a political party that was founded by women in Northern Ireland across religious divides and became one of the parties at the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.The party operated between 1996-2006.

Today this does not appear to be the case. The differences remain but we have found a more mature way of dealing with them. This is what has been affirmed by this week's talks in London[37]. Although Ireland has been an independent state for 92 years, this is the first time that such a state visit to the UK has occurred. This is the ultimate expression of a normalised relationship between our two countries. We wish you all well during the rest of your time in Ireland. We do not want to 'teach' you anything. We only want to share our experiences.

Kerim Yilmaz thanked Tim O'Connor and opened the floor to questions.

Question: Is it important for the parties to accept non-violent principles as part of the negotiations?

Tim O'Connor: We had a declaration of support which was a preamble to the Agreement. This meant that all the parties had signed up to pursue purely peaceful means. These principles were built into the opening section the Good Friday Agreement, and this made a statement about how we intended to proceed.

Question: According to your experiences, what would have happened if one party had rejected any kind of international support whatsoever?

Tim O'Connor: The conditions for full negotiation do not exist. In order for a peace deal to be reached, representatives from all sides need to be prepared to settle things peacefully. There is a benefit to coming to a political agreement. If they do not see this then it is very difficult to force someone to do something that they do not want to do. Many of the

37 In April 2014 Irish President Michael D. Higgins made the first state visit of an Irish President to the United Kingdom.

Northern Irish political parties were very unhappy with their position. The Unionists had very little power in Westminster. They were driven toward bringing power back to Belfast. You have to look at the interests of the people involved.

Kerim Yilmaz thanked Tim O'Connor and invited Shirley Graham to take the floor.

Shirley Graham: Thank you everyone for inviting me today and welcome to Dublin. I will try and keep my talk quite focused. What I am going to talk about is the organisation that I have led for the past five years. It is the only feminist cross-border peacebuilding organisation on the island. It is called Hanna's House, named after the Irish suffragette Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington.[38] Inspired by the work that she had done, an organisation was set up to bring women together from all over the island to consider the legacy of the conflict and how it has impacted on their lives. It allows us to think about how conflict affects men and women differently and how they have access to different peacebuilding organisations. It has been funded for the past four years by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, a British social policy and development charity which has long supported radical thinkers, actors and movements. They were particularly interested in looking at the conflict in Northern Ireland through a gendered lens as there had been little previous research on this.

We went to different regions of Ireland, convening high-level conferences in major cities to bring together women from all parts of civil society. We collected together all the issues that participants wished to discuss. One theme was 'embracing diversity'. One of the main outcomes of the

38 Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington was a suffragette and Irish Nationalist who campaigned extensively in the early twentieth century for women's voting rights.

conference in Derry was the agreement that access to education was an important step in accessing other power structures. Women would often become the sole economic and care-giving person in their family and community. This lack of access to education had come at a very high price. Many of the participants had gone back to education in adulthood when they had the time to do so. They emphasised that understanding different cultures, different perspectives and Human Rights were key to them being able to promote peace and to reconcile differences. The second high-profile conference was in Galway, focussing on violence against women and a women's right to security. This was particularly important in light of a 2006 Amnesty International report which showed that one in five women in Ireland had experienced domestic violence.

Shirley Graham (Hanna's House) and Tim O'Connor (former Irish diplomat) at roundtable meeting

As we went around the country the women talked about how they had been very involved in the peace process, both formally and informally. However many felt that they had not been included in equal numbers as part of the Good Friday Agreement. This was discrimination against

women. The Irish parliament is 85 per cent male, which means that men are overrepresented. Similarly, 78 per cent of the Northern Irish Assembly is male, as is 80 per cent of the British Parliament. Tim talked about the three-strand agreement, and this is an illustration of the problem. Mary Robinson[39] famously said that 'a society without the voice of women is not less feminine; it is less human' and this is important to consider. There seems to be an acceptance of this tradition of discrimination.

As a result of our work at Hanna's House we were able to gather together all of the women's perspectives. Women in the South were not particularly aware of what women in the North had gone through. As a result of this we put forward several submissions to political bodies to allow people with an interest in the gendered perspective to talk to those involved in the Good Friday Agreement. We wanted the Good Friday Agreement to have UN Resolution 1325[40] woven into it. Many elements of civil society in the Good Friday Agreement have not been implemented. If there was a civil forum there would be a way for these women to have a voice without having to become a politician. The gender-related obsession related to these political stereotypes distracts from the ideas of women politicians.

As a result of some of this lobbying work we invited the President of Ireland to come to our final cross-border conference in Dublin. He spoke to the Irish government, the Northern Irish Assembly and the British Parliament and claimed that they need to speak to each other within the framework of this international agreement. There is more to these acts than foreign police. There is a lot of activism going on in the North and the South around this now. We want to achieve one of several things.

39 Mary Robinson served as President of Ireland between 1990 and 1997 and was Ireland's first female president.

40 United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 called for the adoption of a gendered perspective that included the special needs of women and girls, particularly in cases of post-conflict reconstruction.

Either Northern Ireland needs to have a separate action plan, or else there needs to be a more coordinated action plan between the Irish and the British states.

The Northern Irish Assembly has set up an all-party group on UN Resolution 1325 and they regularly meet with civil society. However, as the leader of the party herself says, the group tends to be given less priority than other all-party groups. This is an ongoing struggle.
One of the final points is a gender quota system for all political parties. The legislation requires every political party to have a 30-30 representation of women and men. If they are unable to reach this quota they will be penalised financially by the state. Large amounts of worldwide research have shown that gender quota systems are necessary in this respect. Over the past few decades the proportion of women parliamentarians has actually decreased. This battle needs to continue to be fought against this discrimination.

Kerim Yilmaz thanked Shirley Graham and opened the floor up to questions.

Question: My problem as a human rights activist in Turkey is that women's rights organisations are often badly organised. We want to create an access point for women in these conflicts. We had several meetings but they were not very productive. It was ultimately a failed experience. One the one hand, there are many violations of human rights in conflict zones. On the other hand there is often poor investigation of these violations. How do you balance the work of women's rights groups in these cases?

Tim O'Connor: This situation is universal. There is a tension between the established political parties and the NGOs. But in my view you have to continue to stay engaged and involved. From a conflict perspective it is all about showing that the political process is ultimately still the only way forward. When I started in 1986 it was unthinkable that we would ever have a solution. There is no simple answer but gradually you start to build up the base and more and more people start to get involved. I know that this is a long answer but I think that you need to keep going and should not give up.

Shirley Graham: The latest report from Hanna's House holds the Northern Irish Assembly to account. If you have these international human rights frameworks you need to have ways of holding the government to account. Aside from these conferences and the events here we are highlighting these inequalities. Recently in Northern Ireland we set up a women's forum which has been supported by the department of internal affairs. This group aims to reach out to grassroots women's organisations. It was only set up in February, so we have not had a chance to see how it works yet. But the gist is that these seven organisations feed their perspectives together on a monthly basis. We are also in the process of producing a 'stakeholder's toolkit'. In May of this year (2014) there

will be a series of forums where women can meet to discuss policy issues. A lot of women want the Good Friday Agreement to be implemented.

Tim O'Connor: There had never been agreement before the Good Friday Agreement, except for the 1974 Sunningdale agreement, which collapsed very quickly. There had been no history of the two parties agreeing so it was safer to presume that the process would fail. The advice given to journalists in Northern Ireland was 'to be pessimistic, and you will not be far wrong'.

Question: Was there any specific communication policy during these negotiations? One of the main problems in Turkey is manipulation of the media. As a result many people do not have enough information about what is going on.

Tim O'Connor: No, not really. Everyone was trying to use the media to their advantage.

Shirley Graham: To an extent! The Women's Coalition became messengers between different political points of view. They made it possible by being able to represent a different perspective and a neutral voice. This was an important informal role. The media was very hard on them at the time. They were often bullied by other politicians.

Question: Do you think that the Good Friday Agreement could have been successful without the involvement of women?

Tim O'Connor: The women's groups were the ones that pushed for broadening bases. There were many actors and players who all came

together to create an agreement. Even at the last minute, there was a big problem with the Ulster Unionist parties, which lasted for four hours. But we got it done. In the end it was a handwritten letter from Tony Blair to David Trimble,[41] the head of the Ulster Unionists, which persuaded the Unionists to play ball by assuring them that the British would stick to the principles of the Agreement. It was very tense. I think that everything counted, and that the women were part of a range of very important factors.

41 David Trimble led the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) from 1995-2005. The UUP is one of the main Unionist parties in Northern Ireland.

Thursday 10th April 2014 – Dinner Reception at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin

Participants were joined by His Excellency Necip Egüz, Turkey Ambassador; His Excellency Niels Pultz, Denmark Ambassador; Her Excellency Dr Ruth Adler, Australia Ambassador; Brendan Ward, Head of Conflict Resolution Unit, Irish Department of Foreign Affairs; Richard Whelen, Board Member, Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.

Her Excellency Ambassador Dr Ruth Adler, Australia Ambassador to Ireland; His Excellency Ambassador Niels Pultz, Denmark Ambassador to Ireland; Brendan Ward, Irish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Kerim Yıldız, DPI Director with His Excellency Ambassador Niels Pultz, Denmark Ambassador to Ireland

Kerim Yıldız: On behalf of the Democratic Progress Institute and the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation I would like to welcome you all tonight. I would particularly like to thank our guests, His Excellency Ambassador Necip Egüz, Turkey Ambassador to Ireland; His Excellency Ambassador Niels Pultz, Denmark Ambassador to Ireland; Her Excellency Ambassador Dr Ruth Adler, Australia Ambassador to Ireland; Brendan Ward of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Glencree Board Member Richard Whelen. Our organisation has benefitted immensely from your help on previous Comparative Studies in Ireland and it is an honour for you to share your experiences with us. Discussion of the Irish peace process allows us to learn from some of the mistakes that were made, hopefully allowing us to take better informed action the future. Glencree and DPI have therefore made an effort to be very inclusive when selecting who to involve in these kind of studies.

DPI's work focuses heavily on Turkey and the Irish experience, but also on the UK, South Africa and other parts of the world. Throughout our work, we have immensely enjoyed working with the Ambassadors serving in these countries. Tonight I would particularly like to thank His Excellency Necip Egüz, Turkey Ambassador to Ireland, for the warm welcome that he has given this delegation during the study. We are looking forward to another very productive day tomorrow.

His Excellency Ambassador Necip Egüz: Good evening everyone. I would like to thank Glencree and DPI for hosting this event tonight. It has been a pleasure to meet each of the members of this delegation. Glencree has been a very important institution in the Northern Ireland peace process and is in a unique position to share its experience of conflict resolution. I am sure that this event in Dublin will be very useful for all of us.

I am sure that you are all aware of the critical issues facing our own situation. Turkey is a beautiful country. There will be an even brighter future waiting for us when we have resolved these issues. Once again, I want to thank DPI and Glencree and I hope that the members of the delegation will soon visit Ireland again.

Brendan Ward: Good evening. On behalf of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here in Dublin we are very pleased to have you and our distinguished guests here tonight. This shows the strong international support behind the drive to solve the problems in Turkey. I wish you all the best for the rest of your stay.

Session 4: Friday 11th April 2014 – Boston College, Dublin

Topic:
Journalism and the Media in a Violently Divided Society

Speakers:
Eoin Ó Murchú, Former Chair of the Political Correspondent Union and veteran journalist[42]
Richard Moore, Former Government Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs[43]
Kevin Cooper, Veteran press photographer[44]

Moderated by Kerim Yildiz

42 Eoin Ó Murchú is a renowned veteran journalist who has worked for over 40 years in a variety of Irish and English language media. He began his journalistic career with The United Irishman and later wrote for The Irish Socialist and the Irish Press. In 1994 Mr Ó Murchú was appointed correspondent and then political editor of the Irish language radio station, Raidió na Gaeltachta. He retired in July 2011. Eoin also served as the Chairperson of the Irish Parliamentary Press Gallery. He has been deeply involved with the Northern Ireland conflict for all of his adult life, both as an activist and as a journalist.
43 Richard Moore has worked as a journalist in regional and national media across Ireland. He was News Editor of the Irish Press before transferring to work in Government in the mid-1990s. Mr Moore worked as both a press and policy advisor with the Rainbow Government '94-'97 (Fine Gael, Labour and Democratic Left) and continued under both the Fianna Fail/PD and Fianna Fail/Green Party governments up to 2011. He has served in key advisory roles in Government most notably as the Press Adviser and Spokesman for the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform where he dealt with Northern Ireland matters, including the St Andrew's Agreement on devolution of power to Northern Ireland in Oct 2006.
44 Kevin Cooper is a press photographer with over 25 years' experience. During the Northern Ireland conflict Mr Cooper covered both Unionist, Loyalist and Nationalist, Republican events as well as all the local political party conferences.

Kerim Yilmaz: Good morning everyone and welcome to the final day of this roundtable event. Our first speaker, Eoin Ó Murchú, will tell us about the important role that the media can play, for better or for worse, in conflict resolution. This has certainly been the case in Turkey. It is also very important to hear his experiences, to learn how the media can play a positive role in these issues.

Kerim Yilmaz invited Eoin Ó Murchú to address the group.

Eoin Ó Murchú: Maidin mhaith. I wish you a very warm welcome to Ireland. The last time I spoke to a delegation with DPI I discussed the role of the media in the Irish peace process. What I will give today is our particular experience. Proponents of the media like to suggest that the media is an open, free arena of debate which can help people to understand an issue. However, my own experience has been that the media can play the opposite role by making things more difficult to understand and simplifying issues in prejudiced ways. It could never be assumed that the media would be a natural ally in the Northern Ireland peace process.

The first talks between the parties were initially attacked by those, particularly in the South, who saw them as an unacceptable compromise. During the process itself the people involved believed that many difficult questions would not be made the sticking points of the process. This included issues of criminal charges and symbols of identity. The solution was to put these to one side when they could not be resolved and to concentrate on other points, such as peace, economic development and the reduction of public fear. The other point to remember in this context is that the British government had come to the conclusion that a solution

needed to be reached. The Unionist party has seen its existence tied into its connection with Britain. However, they were forced to bow down to the pressure that the British government was putting on it.

Participants during roundtable at Boston College, Dublin, Ireland

This point was never seriously analysed in the Irish media. An example of this was the agreement reached in St Andrews in Scotland. The big question for the DUP had been whether to accept the deal brokered by the British government or to push for the establishment of joint British and Irish authority over the North, which would have been significantly worse for the party. It was this worse alternative which forced Unionists to make compromises. What was lacking was any serious analysis on this in the media itself. This had the tendency to leave the population outside of the process. The media were outsiders rather than participants, at least when it came to commercial media. The question which arose

from this was how to put pressure on the media to play a more positive role. For example, the peace process in Ireland is facing two serious challenges, which reflect the unfinished business of the process, such as On the Runs[45] and symbols of identity. These issues have caused immense confusion and anger and a sense that the two mediating governments had not been engaged in the last two to three years of the conflict. This reflects the fact that there is an economic crisis and that this has taken all of their attention, this has created a vacuum. The role of the media to fill this vacuum has not been to explain the dangers and types of solutions. It has instead been to take up the themes which caused the dissention and to exaggerate them. For example, what to do about the crimes committed in the past? The British government will not prosecute soldiers for crimes. However, there is great pressure from the Unionists that Republicans should face criminal charges. Either the war is over or it is not. If it is, then you have to draw a line under the past and conduct a truth and reconciliation process. The process of continuing to try and win the war in a non-military fashion has bogged this process down in a very dangerous way. You either have peace or war, but you cannot have a 'peaceful war'.

This brings us back to the question of how we can get the media to play a more significant role. The media no longer has a monopoly over the exchange of information, due to technologies such as social media. These infiltrate the discussion of politicians and journalists. The question is how the two governments engage in the process. This is something that they will engage with the media on. We have moved on significantly from before, but the dangers of falling back are still very acute. So the essence of the Irish lesson is that the commercial media reflects both the desire to

45 On the Runs describes a group of people who are suspected of committing paramilitary activities during the Troubles or had escaped from prison after being accused of these crime.

make money out of sensationalism and also the prejudices of those who own the media. It is these contradictions which need to be understood in evaluating the role of the media. It is part of the media and reflects the dominant elements of society. This is why the debate needs to be extended into all elements of civil society and to push forward in every avenue to demand a serious evaluation of the conflict. This discussion and debate is the essence of the peace process. Do not be content with the role of the media! It is vital for those who want to see lasting pace to put pressure on the media to act in a more responsible way.

Kerim Yilmaz thanked Eoin Ó Murchú and invited Richard Moore to speak about the government's perspective on the media's role in conflict.

Richard Moore: Thank you very much. It is a pleasure to meet with DPI once again and to see you in Dublin today. I understand that some of you here are journalists, and this was my own career before I moved into government. The perspectives that I share today will be based on my experience as a press attaché. This is a very interesting time in Ireland due to the Presidential visit to the UK. Most adults under the age of 40 in this country are quite surprised that such a state visit has not taken place before now. Two years ago the British Queen visited the Republic of Ireland for the very first time, the first visit by a British monarch in 100 years.

The visit is significant because of the huge Irish diaspora in the UK. In two years times we will commemorate the centenary of the 1916 rising. Most commentators will agree that relations between the two countries have never been as warm and friendly as today. Even up to the 1990's Irish people in the UK were stigmatised by the shadow of IRA atrocities. We

have now come full circle thanks to the peace process to the point where Irish nationality is almost a badge of honour. The Irish people in the UK are now able to wear their colours with pride. It is only over the past ten years that we have celebrated St Patrick's Day in London. So we must ask ourselves, 'how did we get to this point?' An awful lot of the process has been tortuous. Many people have wondered why 3000 people had to die before the problem could be sorted out. Obviously you have people using arms during resistance, and these people have a language of their own. The governments that are trying to bring people together also have to have their own choreography and to develop their own language which is pluralistic and accepts differences in society. It was a very slow dynamic, which unfortunately was built on previous deaths in the conflict. The process also involved taking risks. The risk takers in the 1980s were politicians from both sides who had slowly started to understand that there needed to be compromise on both sides. Governments in this type of situation had to forge their own way through this process, which involved working behind the scenes and the development of a language that both sides could find accessible. This was a long process which can be traced back to the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, which entitled Southern Irish people to have a presence in the North. The Good Friday Agreement still contained the language of conflict and the emphasis on arms to maintain each side's position.

I cannot overestimate the importance that the language of statements played for the governments on both sides. The language would be analysed by the media, particularly in the North, and this would feed into the negotiations on both sides. The language had to be very carefully used. During the whole confidence process, there was a sense of 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed'. The process of getting people to advance in baby steps was built on careful use of language. A stray word

would drive people back into their enclaves and put pressure on the leaders to abandon the process.

I was very aware in my own role, both in the Department of Foreign Affairs and in the Department of Justice, that the language of trying to bring the process forward had to be carefully crafted. I had worked in government for 15 years, but whenever I was asked to interpret a comment I would break out in a sweat! The slightest mistake could have resulted in significant turmoil. People with goodwill on both sides have to take small steps. They sometimes have to overlook incautious language. They need to have a breadth of vision about where they are going and what the benefits will be. Although it has taken a long time for there to be an Irish State Visit to the UK, it is important to remember that these processes do take time. Traditions, habits and entrenchments are very hard to remove. Those who grew up using insular language find it difficult to change. My experience perhaps leaves me less critical than some about the role of the media. There is no doubt that at the early stages of the process there were problems. But the role of government is to hold the hands of 'those of goodwill' and to help them along in this process.

Kerim Yildiz thanked Richard Moore and invited Press Photographer Kevin Cooper to take the floor.

Kevin Cooper: Thank you and welcome. Today I will draw on my experiences as a trade-unionist, a human rights activist and as someone who was involved with other elements of civil society. Northern Ireland has a very hungry media population and a very diverse media. Its media is derived from Belfast in the North, Dublin in the South, from England and from Scotland. This entails a diverse selection of newsrooms and

journalists. I am currently in my late fifties, which means that I have lived through the conflict. My family and I consider ourselves as Irish and Nationalist, but I also consider myself as left-wing. I am a member of the SDLP.[46] My family grew up in East Belfast in the Protestant Unionist area. I grew up in a working class estate with people who later became members of Loyalist paramilitaries. I also went to school with those who went on to join Republican paramilitaries, the largest of which being the Provisional IRA.[47] I fell into journalism by accident, starting out with a small Irish language publication. Although I do not personally speak Irish, I understood that language and culture is a very important part of people's expression. I therefore became their first ever press photographer.

In Monty Python[48] the actors ask 'what did the Romans ever do for us?' In Irish language circles there is a tendency to ask 'what did the Irish government ever do for us, in terms of funding?' So I tried to put this to the test. We asked the Irish government for a cross-border grant to promote Irish language, and were successful.

46 Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) is a social-democratic political party in Northern Ireland.
47 The Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) was the largest and most active Republican paramilitary organisation during The Troubles. Its members regarded themselves as successors to the original IRA, which was active from 1922-1969, when the organisation fractured into the Provisional IRA and the Official IRA.
48 Monty Python was a British television comedy programme which ran from the late 1960s to 1980s which was shown on the BBC.

I went on to become an National Union of Journalists (NUJ) representative in Belfast and represented many of their issues. The NUJ is the largest union of its kind in the world. We have offices in London and Dublin but have no full-time staff in Northern Ireland. Instead the gaps were filled by myself and other journalists. In any conflict, journalists come under huge pressure to be influenced. Some of it is propaganda, but there is also physical pressure applied to journalists. After the Good Friday Agreement one of our colleagues, Martin O'Hagan,[49] was shot dead because of the work that he was doing at the time. He was probably the first journalist to be shot for his journalism, yet he was not the first to be killed during the conflict. For example, a young journalist was killed by a bomb in London, but this was by accident. Similarly, a Polish man who worked in the Post Office, as well as working as a part-time correspondent, was killed in crossfire. You can understand the feeling of journalists in terms of the physical threats. There were bombings of newsrooms. Because of a piece published in the Belfast Telegraph,[50] their office was once targeted. The other thing to understand is the way that people assume that foreign correspondents are solely responsible for journalism at times of conflict. In fact 95 per cent of journalism is conducted by indigenous correspondents.

Journalists can also be influenced by the owners of the newsroom. The NUJ is organised right across the political spectrum and we protect everyone's right to be a journalist with their own editorial policy. We realised that the presence of a diverse media was very important. You cannot solve a question unless you understand where different people are coming from. You need to understand the depth of feeling and the emotions of people,

49 Martin O'Hagan was a Northern Irish journalist who was murdered in 2001 in connection with his reporting on The Troubles.
50 The Belfast Telegraph is a daily newspaper published in Northern Ireland.

certainly in terms of state intervention and journalism. Section 31,[51] a broadcasting ban, was brought in by the Irish government, which was followed by the British government's own broadcasting ban.[52] This had a negative impact on broadcasting because it caused journalists to become more fearful and defensive in their reporting.

There are other factors in the role of the British and Irish States. The Irish state was not neutral in this conflict! They had their own political objectives, and so did the British government. Very often journalists would have their phones tapped by the state to let them know that their writing was not welcome. It was difficult for journalists to defend their sources. Boston College, the building that we are sat in today, was involved in the 'Boston tapes' project. This was a programme designed to record the perspectives of ex-combatants whilst they were still alive on the promise that they would only be released after their deaths. However, the government attempted to use these tapes as evidence, which left journalists in a very difficult position. The political process was not purely the domain of politicians as civil society also played a role. Trade unions and civil society organisations played a very active role in the mediation and facilitation of the process.

Kerim Yilmaz thanked Kevin Cooper and opened the floor for questions.

51 Section 31 of the Irish Broadcasting Authority Act (1960) enabled the Irish government to censor certain broadcast material. It was evoked during The Troubles to prevent members of the Provisional IRA and other paramilitary groups from appearing on television or radio.

52 In 1988 the British government prohibited the broadcast of direct statements by representatives or supporters of 11 Irish political and military organisations under clause 13(4) of the BBC Licence and Agreement to the BBC and under section 29(3) of the Broadcasting Act 1981 to the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

Question: What was the relationship in this conflict between local and national media?

Eoin Ó Murchú: Most of the local media was owned by the same people as the national media. For example, Sir Tony O'Reilly[53] owned most of the local newspapers and others were often owned by established families in the area. In many ways, the regional media was more reactionary than the national media.

Richard Moore: Local papers in the South tended to be part of the community whilst national ones were not. Local papers, by their very nature, have to reflect the opinions of the community. A local paper would probably bring in more tangible ways to address the conflict on the ground. In the North I believe that some local papers were generic but that others were not. The national papers tended to set the dynamic or agenda.

Kevin Cooper: There is confusion when you say 'national media' in Northern Ireland. The indigenous media was consumed alongside the Irish, London and Scottish papers. In terms of reader numbers, the local papers would be more significant to them. However, since the peace process there has been a growing readership of the London tabloids. In terms of broadcast media, it would be similar to Dublin. Whether the community predominantly watched RTÉ [54] or BBC[55] would depend on the social group. That said, the signal was always weak and therefore not everyone could get RTÉ! But part of the Good Friday Agreement was the

53 Sir Tony O'Reilly is an Irish businessman who led Ireland's Independent News & Media Group between 1973 and 2009.
54 Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ) is the national public service broadcaster of the Republic of Ireland.
55 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is the main public service broadcaster in the United Kingdom.

extension of the RTÉ signal to the North.

Eoin Ó Murchú: The Irish language media had tended to be much freer of controls because the ruling class did not speak Irish! It was easier to have an open debate and most things could be discussed. The print media is small in circulation, but those print journals that do exist also tended to have a much broader range of views expressed. However, these generally presented more Nationalist views.

Question: Is there anything about this process, with regard to the media, that you wish you had done differently?

Eoin Ó Murchú: The discussion of the crisis was not as good as it could have been. The British government especially came to the conclusion that the old way could not continue. However, the media did not do much to explain this. This left large parts of the population as onlookers rather than as participants. To have real peace you need to include the people who have suffered and the people who want change.

Richard Moore: I think that certain Southern newspapers have regrets about how they handled the situation. During the 1980s, for example, the Sunday Independent[56] was very much opposed to violence but also took a proactive role in vilifying and condemning the ethnic split. For example, John Hume,[57] who took many risks for peace, was vilified in the 1980's to such an extent that it looked like the peace process would fall apart. There was a dialogue of 'you cannot talk to terrorists'. But at the end of the day, you have to make peace with your enemies.

56 The Sunday Independent is a Sunday newspaper published in the Republic of Ireland.
57 John Hume led the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) in Northern Ireland from 1979-2001.

Kevin Cooper: From a Belfast perspective, one of the problems was the understanding of subtly moving a conflict-affected society into a position where peace could happen. There was not a particularly clear understanding that conflict reporting must create a space for change, at least amongst those in the national media in Southern Ireland. This was true to a lesser extent in the North. I should explain that during the Hume-Adams talks,[58] Hume came under immense criticism because the talks were being conducted in secret. I think that it is also fair to say that the longer the conflict went on for, the less that the national media took interest. They started to pull their correspondents out of Northern Ireland. The real coverage towards the end of the conflict came from regional sources as the international media had lost interest in the conflict. Even when you have despair there are always backchannels and there are always members of civil society who are prepared to push for change. You cannot underestimate the role of players in this sense to create the space in which change can occur.

Question: Has anyone in the press been a victim of executions during the conflict? If so, what has been the judicial response to this?

Eoin Ó Murchú: Martin O'Hagan[59] was shot in 2001. Within a week I was given the names of the people responsible for the crime which included various Loyalists. The Chief Constable assured us that the killers would be tracked down, however to date no one has been prosecuted for the murder. Those in journalism feel that states are relatively poor at

58 The talks between John Hume and Gerry Adams resulted in discussion between the British and Irish governments during the Northern Ireland peace process.
59 Martin O'Hagan was an Irish journalist who was killed by the IRA in 2001. He is the only journalist to have been killed as a result of his work during the Troubles.

bringing charges against people who murder journalists. In the Martin O'Hagan case, the motivating factors are not clear. There are suspicions that the murder was not purely driven by Loyalism. For example, those in the security media-briefings identified three people involved with the murder gang, and I was briefed that the person who was meant to have carried out the shooting was allegedly part of the British government. However in Northern Ireland we love conspiracies! We should be careful not to rule out simpler explanations first. Where it took place in mid-Ulster, there was a precedent of the British state being involved in similar murders. The Police Ombudsman's Office[60] detailed numerous problems and proved collusion in previous murders.

Richard Moore: Over the past 25 to 30 years the number of journalists killed in the conflict has been relatively low compared to other similar situations elsewhere.

Question: On the one hand you have secret factional negotiations and on the other hand you have the people's right to be informed about these negotiations. What has the opinion of the press been about this situation? We have had a similar situation in Turkey. Those newspapers which have not been fond of the developments may put their own spin on these developments. Things that they could tolerate are spun dangerously by the media. Do you have any thoughts on what you did in these situations? For example, when backchannel negotiations were revealed when they should not have been?

Eoin Ó Murchú: People have a right to know the context rather than the detail of the discussion. The life of a contact can sometimes be

60 Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland is designed to provide a complaints mechanism for the police and the public.

endangered if their identity is revealed too soon. The British government was involved in backchannel negotiation despite categorically denying such involvement in parliament. The most important priority was to get the process off the ground.

Question: Were there cases where the government provided briefings about backchannel negotiations?

Eoin Ó Murchú: Lots of people in journalistic and political circles believed that backchannel negotiations were going on but lacked any proof. I think there is a question about the way in which the government was straightforwardly dishonest. However, in order for the IRA to be willing to take part in the peace process they needed to have some reassurance that the British government were part of the process.

Richard Moore: There are always going to be backchannels. When you are in a very delicate position in government and you are trying to set up signals and meetings, it is almost impossible to do your work in the public eye. Publicity can drive people back into their corners. Government needs to operate with a degree of secrecy in an honest and forthright way. The use of language was also important. In 1991 the British Secretary of State declared that the British government had no economic interest in remaining in the North. This sent a message to Republicans that the British would not necessarily be there forever, which helped to move the process along.

Kevin Cooper: As a journalist, I would always say that you have to be ethical in your reporting. These things should be put in the public domain within the appropriate context. Governments and political

parties can make statements which choreograph their public image, allowing supporters to better understand the change that is happening. These public statements are important in creating understanding. One of the things that I worked on were talks between people who were not supposed to be in the same room together. The photos that we took during these secret negotiations were kept back by news agencies until an appropriate time arose to make them public. It would have been very easy for me to get a big fee from releasing the photos, but I would never have been given access to these situations ever again.

Question: You mentioned that during the Good Friday Agreement there was a sense that 'nothing was decided until everything was decided'. What were the first steps in the Agreement, and what were the essentials in getting both parties to take part in the Agreement?

Richard Moore: During the Good Friday Agreement the process was similar to other subsequent agreements. I was in St Andrews[61] for the three or four days of talks in Scotland in 2006. In terms of the overall principles, 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed' necessitated a lockdown during the talks in which there were often different discussions going on between different parties in different rooms. A document would be passed from one side to another, amended and then sent back. When it came to making the final agreements it was essentially about bringing both parties together, physically, in the same room. If you could get them to sit down and have a cup of tea together 'the Other' could become demystified. You have to take baby-steps. If you are in a process where you are trying to agree on a document but you are only able to agree on part of it, it is likely that the process will be significantly knocked back.

61 The St Andrews Agreement was signed in 2006 by the British and Irish governments and major Northern Irish political parties. It brought about the restoration of the Northern Irish Assembly.

The position papers were passed back in such a way that the process could move forward. The first agreement, the Good Friday Agreement, made it possible for both sides to move forward.

Eoin Ó Murchú: There were difficult issues which involved strong, entrenched views. You have to move onto areas where agreement is more likely as this creates a better atmosphere. You can then go back to revisit the more difficult issues. You are then not bound by the smaller points if the larger thing is not agreed upon. For example, there was a division on three strands of the talks between the North and the South and Britain. The relationship between the two countries was easy to resolve but it could only come together after everything had been agreed. They worked on the principle of 'fudge, nudge and budge'. This left the big questions unresolved, such as charges against criminals who were on the run and symbols of identity. So it is important to put the big issues to one side, at least initially.

Kevin Cooper: I was involved in labour politics at the start, which was then a loose coalition of people on the left. For a short period I was actually in the talks, but it is important to understand that there were criteria set up before the talks and principles that people had to sign up to. For the brief period that Sinn Féin were outside the talks they feared that they were in breach of the principles that had been laid down. But when it had been agreed that they had met the principles they re-entered. The process as described was that each of the parties would have offices in the building where the talks were due to take place. However, there were lots of discussions between parties and plenary sessions to determine what had been agreed and this slowed the process of reaching a wider agreement. However, some of the principles of the Agreement had not

been decided upon. Some of the remaining issues had either been fudged or left on the back-burner. An important one was how to deal with legacy of the past, and this is still a hot subject.

Question: Journalism, by its very nature, is often sensationalist. What is needed in the peace process is to bring the negotiating parties away from the pressures of aggressive reporting. How can this be achieved? Did the parties put pressure on their own media outlets to tone down the sensationalism?

Eoin Ó Murchú: All parties were brought to a beautiful castle in England and the journalists were kept well away. This was designed to prevent the politicians from being influenced by the day to day coverage and to prevent them from listening to the sensationalist stories. Many meetings ended inconclusively however they did eventually culminate in the Good Friday Agreement. The original process was to take the participants away from the constant coverage. Of course individual politicians would brief journalists; however they had to be cited as 'anonymous sources'.

Richard Moore: At the St Andrews talks I was one of the ones locked outside the gates! The 'media beast' has to be fed. This is even truer today in the age of 24/7 news and social media. In St Andrews it would have been almost impossible to come to an agreement if people were commentating on the process in real-time. The media tends to report on things in a very frank and open way, and allowing the public to consume this raw information results in pressure being brought on the conference delegates. Saying that, our job at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was to go out twice a day and 'feed the beast'. We would usually say something rather innocuous. It would not mean an awful lot but we still did it. At the end of

the day at St Andrews, I remember thinking to myself that a deal was never going to be reached. It was very hard to tell what the deal actually was.

Eoin Ó Murchú: Although we were not told not to publish things, the briefings given officially to the press could not have contained much substance. However, we could rely on our anonymous sources. The slant that I would have got from these would have had the predictable bias. We often discussed our views of what was going on according to the sources that we had. All of it could be denied if things became difficult, but it allowed the better journalists to explain and understand the complex issues that were being discussed.

Richard Moore: If you deal with journalists over a period of time you can sometimes do deals with them. For example, if a journalist is intending to release an unhelpful story you can often persuade them to delay it in exchange for a better story a day later! There is always a hidden voice to these private sources.

Question: After this division between Northern and Southern Ireland, was there a moment of population movement between minority Catholics and Protestants across borders? If so, did these minorities face any kind of oppression?

Kevin Cooper: Throughout the conflict there were huge population movements across Northern Ireland and England, however there was often a distortion about what was going on. At the start there were attacks on homes from both communities. There was a very real fear that the Loyalist paramilitaries and police would attack Republicans. There was a lot of talk in both governments about how to secure the safety of Nationalist communities and there was a big displacement. The 'peace

lines' in Belfast were followed by informal community-built barricades. The British government then brought in troops. The Catholics welcomed the arrival of soldiers as they saw this as an improvement on the existing police. Therefore there was an agreement that the impromptu walls should be taken down and replaced with barbed wire.

When things were settled down these barriers were supposed to be dismantled. However, these physical barriers have just been reinforced over time. In fact, since the Good Friday Agreement even more barriers have been constructed in the streets. It is a terrible indictment that we still have these physical barriers left and that the mistrust remains. It is the building of trust that is so important and civil society can be key to achieving this. We are a long way away from normality. Many Catholics that I knew in West Belfast went to England or down to Dublin. There were many displaced Nationalists. One of the problems in the Unionist community is that they tend to send their community members to college in England. These people tend to remain there rather than returning, which results in a 'brain-drain'. There has been a lot of work around trying to persuade people to come back. However, the economic crisis has made this even harder. This is nonetheless a very important thing to do to ensure that there is a future in Northern Ireland.

Question: It can be very difficult for a journalist to play a natural role in conflict resolution. How has the Good Friday Agreement affected this?

Kevin Cooper: I once went to a conference on 'peace journalism' and many of the attendees did not know what the term meant! I would argue that peace journalism is 'ethical journalism'. In conflict societies

it is very important to hold the mirror up to society as a whole and show the conflicting sides exactly what harm the violence is causing. As a journalist, you need to argue that the issues must be represented in an open and transparent way. If you go to communities on the ground you will find a lot of remaining problems. Jobs, investment and education prospects are all few and far between. The recent Belfast riots[62] occurred because young people do not have any hope or stake in the peace process. I think that when people talk about ethical journalism, it is about being gracious enough to say that 'things are not good' when this happens to be true. You should not gloss over the truth.

Question: Was anything done in the press to change the opinions of the public towards the conflict, such as human interest stories?

Eoin Ó Murchú: The process went through several stages, at least in the Southern media. Hostile then neutral then hostile. Human interest stories tend to be very one-sided. For example, Irish television glosses over the pain felt by victims of British Army actions. These practices of journalism need to be challenged by political forces and civil society to demand a more even-handed approach. All communities have been left with a legacy of pain and suffering. These legacy issues are the most difficult and threatening ones. We require more pressure from the government to deal with these issues from a peacebuilding point of view.

Richard Moore: The type of media that you are talking about makes a big difference. On a tangent, when the Good Friday Agreement was put in place in the mid-1990s the Northern Ireland Office[63] spent millions of

62 In December 2012 rioters from Loyalist groups clashed with police in Belfast over the decision to reduce the number of days that that British flag would be flown over Belfast City Hall.

63 The Northern Ireland Office is a British government department responsible for

pounds on human interest stories. They put out a whole series of adverts on television and radio including those which showed young boys and girls from different traditions playing together. This was quite a big deal at the time in terms of bridge-building between the two communities. Van Morrison released a song containing the lines 'would not it be great if we were like this all the time' to try and enforce this message.

Kevin Cooper: There were several publications that journalists were involved with. A legacy programme from the BBC conducted an interview with the victims. There was also the show 'Lost Lives' which has now become the reference to account for everyone who was lost during the conflict. The producers tried as hard as possible to verify the details because at the height of the coverage many details had not been accurate. This was an attempt to say 'these were the people who died and these are their stories'. I work for an organisation called 'WAVE',[64] which helps those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). We have run a number of projects around victims' groups to try and create a story around their legacies. Many people are very bitter about what happened to them. But others have been very generous and shared platforms with former combatants. In terms of the role of journalists, there have been several related projects throughout the peace process. However, you must remember that there are certain groups that do not want to take part in this reconciliation. 'Pain Through Memory' was set up to help deal with the legacy of the past. This report was set up by the Vice Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Ireland and Britain. These groups commissioned a lot of research about how to deal with the past and their members were from a diverse set of backgrounds. I was a member of the 'Death Reflection Committee', which participated in this.

Northern Irish Affairs.

64 WAVE Trauma Centre is a grass roots charity offering care and support to people bereaved, injured or traumatised as a result of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland.

The trouble is that because it is outside the political process, it has still not been agreed. Part of the Haass process was to look into legacy issues. As a society we have to think about how to heal the wounds and how to prevent these mistakes from being repeated.

Session 5: Friday 11th April 2014 – Boston College, Dublin

Topic:
Rights and Identity as Part of a Peace Process

Speaker:
Walter Jayawardene, Communication Manager of Irish Council of Civil Liberties[65]

Moderated by Kerim Yildiz

Kerim Yildiz: I want to ask our dear friend Walter to speak next. He is half Irish, half Sri Lankan and has an extensive experience of human rights issues in Ireland. Today he is going to tell us a bit about civil rights movements here in Ireland and about the role he sees for the Irish Council in these issues.

Walter Jayawardene: I was asked to speak about civil liberties and the question of identity. The recognition of identity was a cornerstone of the Good Friday Agreement. I will first say a few things about the Irish Council for Civil Liberties. We were founded by former President Mary Robinson[66] along with several other prominent legal professionals in the 1970s. We were founded in response to the political climate that was emerging against the backdrop of the Troubles, including the increasing limitation of civil liberties. We tend to work on domestic human rights issues in relation to fair trial rights, police accountability,

65 Walter Jayawardene is a Human Rights specialist currently working for the Irish Council of Civil Liberties, Dublin.
66 Mary Robinson served as the President of Ireland from 1990-1997.

judicial accountability, protection of minorities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights in Ireland.

I will first speak about the question of inclusion and respect for identity, which is connected to the Good Friday Agreement. In the Republic of Ireland the Good Friday Agreement has slightly different significance to that in the North. However, it acts as a font for certain political values through which the Irish government can conduct itself. It has guidelines on political language and the way in which to promote inclusion of minority communities living in Ireland. The degree to which this applies beyond the level of rhetoric is another question.

In recent years you will find that there has been major progress in Ireland regarding the way in which the public discusses human rights issues such as LGBT rights, particularly with regard to equal marriage rights. Perhaps less effectively, the Traveller community[67] has not been addressed as effectively. The Traveller community has been the victim of casual prejudice and racism, which is incompatible with the idea of acceptance of identity. A number of articles have appeared over the past few days which have engaged in hate-speech against the Travellers. This shows how the rhetoric of inclusiveness and Republicanism does not always apply. This is the kind of work that we do. When it comes to the Good Friday Agreement and issues of identity, it comes down to the importance of principles. Although our organisation was not directly involved in the Good Friday Agreement, we are indirectly involved in upholding the standards set out in the Agreement, as seen through our work on police accountably. There is still much to be achieved. There have been several serious scandals in Irish policing, stretching back several decades, which have shown police accountability in the Republic of Ireland to

67 "Irish Travellers" refers to a nomadic Irish ethnic minority group.

be extremely lax. Some of the precedents set in the North could well be applied to the South.

Kerim Yildiz thanked Walter Jayawardene and opened the floor for questions.

Question: Did you work towards broadening bases with regard to implementing the Good Friday Agreement?

Walter Jayawardene: There are two key areas where we would focus on the Good Friday Agreement. One is the national human rights institutions, until recently including the National Human Rights Commission. According to the Good Friday Agreement, there is supposed to be equality between the respective Commissions of the North and the South. This has not been the case in recent years. The Republic's agency was gutted of funding and was unable to do its work properly. The Good Friday Agreement sets out why this gutting was unacceptable. The other aspect is the question of policing standards. Given the changes over the past 15 years, we have gone from a very unaccountable police force to one that is perhaps the most accountable and well-regulated in the world.

That is not to say that there are not problems, but it is interesting to see that the Good Friday Agreement has resulted in a very solid model of police accountability. In the Republic we are a decade behind the progress that has been made in the North. In 2005 the government attempted to correct this by appointing a Police Ombudsman, however this was ineffective. Revelations of phone-tapping have emerged in recent months. The side-lining of whistle-blowers to corruption and the secret recording of clients and lawyers over three decades has recently come to

light. This is an aspect where we can look to the Good Friday Agreement to create a framework for police accountability.

Walter Jayawardene speaking at roundtable

Question: Were the police retrained?

Walter Jayawardene: Yes and there has been increased cooperation between the North and the South on this. Since 2005 there has been a standing Human Rights Advisory Committee within the Irish police service. There is not a full policy in place yet although there has been quite a lot of progress. Some of the issues are less to do with education and more to do with policing standards, particularly when it comes to creating proper accountability mechanisms.

Question: If you put the human rights violation related to the conflict on one side and those that are unrelated on the other, could you say that

the human rights situation in general has improved after the Good Friday Agreement was signed?

Walter Jayawardene: Since the Good Friday Agreement there has been an increased acceptance of a more nuanced approach towards Irish identity. That was what the 1998 Agreement enshrined. Attitudes towards inclusion will be much slower to change along with attitudes towards alternative cultures in Ireland. These have been hard to change in many respects. Most people in the Republic would not have grown up in a situation where there was an 'Other', aside from the Unionists in the North. The foreigners and travellers were not seen in this way and therefore the Good Friday Agreement has had less on an impact here. However, the Republic is gradually starting to become more open in these respects.

Question: Ireland is party to the Council of Europe and therefore the European Court of Human Rights. How significant are judgements from this institution in helping to improve human rights in the Republic of Ireland?

Walter Jayawardene: Very significant! In intractable areas where the state has not been able to solve issues, court cases have been brought to the European Court of Human Rights.

Question: What specific issues have been brought to the European Court of Human Rights?

Walter Jayawardene: In 2010 the question of reproductive rights was brought to the European Court of Human Rights. It was on the basis of

this that the Irish government agreed to allow extremely limited access to abortion[68]. The Irish courts decided to follow the lead of the European Court on this.

Question: Turkey is not really implementing the judgement of human rights issues. How is Ireland going about this?

Walter Jayawardene: Ireland is fairly prompt at doing this. It does not want to be cast in the same light as Turkey or Russia. Recent cases against the Irish state have not particularly touched on the conflict.

Kerim Yildiz: It is very important to mention how judgements from the European Court of Human Rights can be very useful for states dealing with conflict resolution. Sometimes a state could be embarrassed to suddenly expose themselves to big changes. However, when the judgement comes out from the European Court, they can legitimately say 'we are under legal obligation to talk to terrorists', it can often make the life of the government easier.

68 ECHR 2032 is a case of the European Court of Human Rights. It found the Republic of Ireland to have violated the European Convention on Human Rights by failing to provide an accessible and effective way for a woman to establish whether she qualifies for a legal abortion.

Session 6: Friday 11th April 2014 – Boston College, Dublin

Topic:
The Role of Civil Society in Peace Building

With:
Father Tim Bartlett, Lecturer at Maynooth University, Advisor to the Catholic Bishops[69]
Michael Culbert, Director, Coiste na n-Iarchimí[70]

Moderated by Kerim Yildiz

Kerim Yildiz: I am honoured to have Father Tim Bartlett and Michael Culbert here with us today in Dublin. Both of these speakers have experience of working with DPI and other members of the team on previous Comparative Study Visits. This group is particularly looking at the role of civil society in conflict resolution. We have a very diverse group of individuals from NGOs with us. Some of our friends have served as Wise Persons in Turkey, to explain the development of the Peace

69 Father Tim Bartlett is the former adviser to Cardinal Seán Brady, the leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland. A native of Belfast Tim grew up in the City during the 'Troubles'. He has been a member of the Inter-denominational group on 'Faith and Politics' and was the spokesperson for the Catholic Church on the reform of policing. He was a member of the 'Bill of Rights' Forum established by then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to make recommendations on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. He is the secretary of the all-island Council for Justice & Peace of the Catholic Church. He is also a member of the Inter-Church Meeting Committee on Social Issues. Fr Bartlett taught theology at St. Mary's University College in Belfast.

70 Michael Culbert is the Director of Coiste na n-Iarchimí, the network for republican ex-prisoners. He was a social worker until 1978 when he was sentenced to 16 years in Long Kesh prison. After his release Michael completed his master's degree and started working with Coiste, initially as a full-time counsellor and then as their regional development worker. He was appointed to the position of Director in 2008.

Commission to Turkey's society. Our speakers this afternoon will share their experiences, and what they have learned from the conflict.

Michael Culbert: Fáilte go hÉireann. Welcome to Ireland. The first thing that I would like to say to you is that it is a bit strange that when you come to Ireland you speak English rather than Irish. I do not think there is a country in the world where the narrative is not contested, about boundaries, nationality and ethnicity. It is the same here in Ireland. On this note, I first want to open with some thoughts on the use of language. Too many people have bought into a false narrative about what has happened on the island. The problem for me is that when you have a false narrative, you identify bad problems and develop solutions which do not work! I hope to give an accurate representation of core issues, which should lead to a good solution.

In the 1970s, I joined the IRA as a young man. I was a civil servant and had a family. On the face of it this seems like a big risk for me to have taken, but I did it anyway and soon became part of IRA activities. I am quite a nice person, I am educated, and I am a sportsman. I am just an ordinary person. But I was doing a strange, extraordinary thing. Looking back I do not quite know how I did it. However, a person's circumstances will influence his character. In 1978 I was living away from home and was captured by British paratroopers. In a sense, I felt quite relieved as I had not been executed. I was processed through the courts and spent 16 years in prison for various IRA activates. During this time I missed out on my children's childhoods.

I do not know if many of you have ever met an IRA activist. I hope that I can break down the stereotype a bit. We did kill people. We did do

horrendous things and had extraordinary motivations. Towards the end of my imprisonment, I found myself and a few other comrades debating the future and direction of our struggle. One advantage of being in prison is that you have time to study and reflect. We were, to an extent, used as a 'think tank' by our colleagues outside. We debated the morality of taking lives. Our analysis was that the political movement, which was gaining traction alongside the armed struggle was gaining more and more momentum. Quite a few of our former cell mates were going into Sinn Féin politics. We were considering that more energy should be put into the political side. The war was being fought towards an end, and we wanted to reach an eventual political settlement. We proposed to our comrades that we should consider the unthinkable; to bring about an end to the war.

Beyond the prison walls, we suspected that the British government was talking to the IRA. Eventually in 1984 the IRA called a ceasefire. However, this was conditional and eventually collapsed the following year. At this stage I had left prison but I was still involved in political activities. However I knew that my comrades inside were continuing to act as a think tank. The prisoners were adamant that they should not be used as pawns in the process. They were in prison, and that was that. Talks went on between the British government and political parties in the North, excluding Sinn Féin. The US government were very interested, along with the British and South African governments. Lots of powerful parties were interested in resolving the Irish conflict. Those who were not very interested were those who supported the British connection in Ireland. Almost 20 years have gone by and they have not still totally bought into the idea of equality of citizenship, because they were very used to Irish politicians lacking political strength.

The Good Friday Agreement took place, despite the fact that my comrades were somewhat excluded. It just goes to show that you cannot completely believe politicians. Eventually the political prisoners were released, resulting in a non-military situation and a level playing field for negotiation. Since the Sinn Féin party has been successful in elections, we have been instrumental in helping to maintain the peace. We are working very hard to build on that peace. Some peacebuilding efforts have been reasonably successful. We will work with anyone who will work with us in a meaningful manner. This includes former British Army personnel, to whom we sympathetically give tours around conflict areas.

A policy which we have had to adopt has been one of trying to move on without forgetting the past, and simultaneously preventing this from distorting our vision of future. The people who are most likely to kill you are those who were engaged in the fighting in the past. A major part of our work is convincing our former comrades not to engage in military activities. We try to convince them that things are better without war. We have to convince people that those who we had previously seen as enemies are now just our opposition. This is a totally different concept.

Participants and DPI Director Kerim Yildiz at roundtable meeting

We are the people who fought the war. We meet people from literally all over the world. Because we are primary researchers on what went on people tend to believe what we have to say. The hard work is within our own communities. The problems are small communities who cannot get used to the fact that the peace is here for good and that they can no longer engage in military activities.

I am happy to answer any questions that you have about anything at all. We have worked with people engaged in conflicts all over the world. All we have is an answer to our own situation, not necessarily to yours. If this can help you in some way then this exercise can only be a good thing.

Kerim Yilmaz thanked Michael Culbert and invited Father Tim Bartlett to speak.

Father Tim Bartlett: Hello and welcome to Dublin. I was born in Belfast in the north of the city in 1965. I was four years old when the conflict began again. My story is similar to Michael's although I was younger when The Troubles began. Our stories represent a division in our communities vis-à-vis the conflict. I want to convince you that you all, as non-state actors, have a crucial role to play in conflict resolution through the exercise of soft power. Our experience affirms this. Primacy always rests with politicians but other sectors of society also have a critical role to play.

Let me explain my own journey and show how the faith sector has had a crucial role to play in the peace process. I grew up in a part of Belfast where every road was Catholic Nationalist on one side and Protestant Unionist on the other. It was a very tense situation. As a boy, I would go to bed at

night kneeling in prayer, praying that no one would assassinate my father during the night. Similar murders occurred quite regularly in the streets around me. The windows of our house would regularly be smashed by stones. I was unable to play traditional Gaelic games in the street because of the risk of being attacked. I grew up living in an atmosphere of intense fear, which was felt on both sides of the community. It was learning how to pray that led me to my religious vocation as a priest. Fear can be a good way of humbling yourself. Quite early on I decided that I wanted to spend my life proclaiming the gospel of peace from the Christian radiation. Some of my friends joined a paramilitary organisation. I fully understand and sympathise with their journey. I do not so much stand in judgement of others, but I made my own choice. These reconciliation efforts were the way to peace. Coming from the narrative of Christianity, which I had discovered myself, I was impressed by the emphasis on conflict resolution rather than taking up arms.

I eventually became a priest in the Catholic Church. I then became involved with religious ministers from the other community who also believed in dialogue and reconciliation. I discovered that when I was quite young, the religious leaders in our community had started to come together when the politicians were not able to. This modelled the possibility of good relationships where difference did not need to dissolve your convictions or identity, but where you could live in plurality. If you go back to those documents, you will see that they contain the vocabulary of what eventually became the Good Friday Agreement.

Over time Ireland has become a more secular society. However, the church continues to maintain many connections, including those with senior politicians. They also had chaplains in the prisons. They would meet in the parishes and often religious clergy were called upon as a

neutral party. For example, let us say that a bomb had been abandoned. In such a situation, the paramilitaries would often phone up the local clergyman and ask him to contact the police. So there was a kind of soft power being exercised here. Over time other civil society groups started to take on similar roles as neutral arbiters including human rights groups, women's groups and businesses.

Participants with Michael Culbert and Father Tim Bartlett at roundtable meeting

One of the difficult things in the relationship between the church and the communities is that the church claimed to stand above the violence. I think that Michael would rightly claim that the Church did not say enough against the violence committed by the British state. I think this claim would be correct. However, I think that in cases where the Catholic Church did criticise the British government, people tended to listen and take notice because of its reputation for neutrality. The language of the

Good Friday Agreement was very much the language that the church had been using about reconciliation and recognition of spaces for the other community.

To conclude, one of the big mistakes being made in conflict resolution is the side-lining of civil society and faith groups. One proposal in the Good Friday Agreement was to create a civil forum. However, this was dropped after a few years. Even at an international level, faith traditions need to be engaged with. Even at a UN level we cannot push aside religious considerations. This particular conflict was about Britain and Ireland; it was not fundamentally about religion. Faith groups can have a key role to play in trying to nudge politicians in the right direction. After all, we do not need to get votes!

Kerim Yildiz thanked Michael Culbert and Father Tim Bartlett for their contributions and opened the floor for questions.

Question: How do you feel about the act of 'forgiveness'?

Fr Tim Bartlett: What I did not mention was that at aged 20 I was already training to be a priest. On a summer's afternoon in 1987 I arrived back at my family home to find it surrounded by the police and the army. A policeman came up to me and would not let me through. He told me that my father had been kidnapped from the house. Eventually news came through that he was in hospital. When I saw him I barely recognised him, as he had been so badly beaten. But two women from the other community had seen the incident happen and came to help him after he had escaped. My father was a gentle man who had never spoken anything other than peace. The rage that I felt when I saw him

in that state made me want to join the IRA. If someone had given me a gun, I am convinced that I would have gone out and shot those people. It is not easy and we should never pretend that it is easy. The hurt and the memory keep coming back and raising important questions. The other thing is that the part of our community that said that violence is not the best was forward, the majority, find this difficult to talk about. So issues of forgiveness, memory and dealing with the past are some of the most difficult issues at the moment. And it is better to have some kind of plan to tackle this.

Michael Culbert: I have a particular interpretation of forgiveness. I see it as religiously spiritual. I come from a background of Catholicism and I get the impression that when people talk to me about forgiveness that it has something to do with heaven. I do not like this idea. Did Eisenhower forgive the Japanese? Did Churchill forgive Hitler? I very much doubt that they did. We were fighting a war. The problem in Ireland was that there were constantly hurdles being put up. When you do not fully want to treat people correctly then you can create another problem. In armed conflict, there is only one way to defeat your opposition. But as time has gone on the conditions on the ground have changed both socially and economically. We could not carry out a guerrilla war today. The conditions dictate what you can or should do.

The problem which I see in your situation in Turkey is that during an armed conflict, those doing the fighting rarely listen to the peacemakers. When you are engaged in fighting you are convinced that you are right, and because you know that you are right you continue the fighting. There has to be morality on both sides. Guerrillas need to weigh up whether their campaign has a reasonable chance of success, and so does the state

when considering how to punish those convicted of crimes. There has to be a fairness with which you treat your enemy. Without this, you could call a ceasefire tomorrow and everyone would remain bitter. People have argued very strongly that there almost needs to be a stage management of the process in order to allow for necessary activities to take place. Reconciliation between enemies will form part of this.

Question: You talked about the difficulty of encouraging forgiveness in society. Does this also apply to the Protestant community? Also, throughout the conflict, did the Catholics and Protestants have a joint project to address the question? Today we have been informed in a very biased way. I would have liked to have heard from the Protestant side to know why they acted in the way that they did.

Father Tim Bartlett: Within the Irish Nationalist community there was one church; the Catholic Church. Protestantism has broken into many churches. This has made the Nationalist side easier to study. The leadership had a very constant view that the violence was not justified and the IRA's violence was not supported by the vast majority of Irish people. I would argue that the reason why Sinn Féin won so much electoral support was because the people were saying 'we did not support your violence, but we support your ideals'.

Going onto your question of possible bias; this is a good observation and perhaps we should reflect this in future presentations. However, the Protestant church is more complex because of the many different forms that Protestantism takes. The vast majority of Protestants would have been willing to engage with their Catholic counterparts to condemn the violence. The local religious leaders would often go together when the

politicians could not. For example, when the IRA came to decommission their weapons, both religions were seen as honest brokers so both a Catholic priest and a Protestant minister were asked to witness the act of decommissioning. These people could verify that this had occurred.

I think it is much more difficult for many in the Protestant community to accept that former members of the IRA are now in the government. I think that the situation is more difficult for the Protestant community to accept and tolerate. Theologically, Catholics believe that there needs to be a transformation of individuals and society. In Protestantism, it is quite fundamentalist. It wills you to reject your past completely and change overnight. I disagree with Michael fundamentally in terms of a human family. It is always wrong to take up arms unless it is absolutely a last resort. There is nothing deeper in us than how we feel when we are harming another. The more conflict that goes on, the greater harm this causes.

Michael Culbert: It is very possible that Hitler would have stopped at Belgium if Britain had not declared war on him. But maybe he would not. You never know. In a situation where you have a large political bloc in opposition to a state apparatus I would often wonder why more people do not stand up and challenge the status quo. People from the IRA's perspective held the view that they did not have any political representation and therefore our struggle was ultimately justified. Perhaps change would have come about without armed conflict, but this was never guaranteed. I would much rather talk in the political world than the theological world. The historical alignment of the people who migrated to Ireland and their commitment to Old-Testament religious ideas, created a major blockage to their ability to interact on the political

stage without a religious element kicking-in. They often hold a very conservative ideological perspective which is drawn from their religion.

Father Tim Bartlett: It is important to say that during the process of engagement between the different church leaders we made efforts to rediscover what the scripture has to tell us about conflict resolution. It tells us to be just to each other, to forgive and to reconcile our differences. Most conflicts in the world today have a religious dimension. I believe that Christianity and Islam need to seek the best from each other so that we can pursue a shared ideology of pluralistic peace. This does not address the hard political questions of the conflict, but it does create an environment of listening, honesty and perseverance with the process.

Question: Say that you have someone who has lost a family member. How do you talk to that person about these perspectives if they are not particularly religious?

Michael Culbert: It would be very difficult to do this directly. However, there have been many cases where people have done so. There was a case where a man's mother was killed in an IRA bombing. He just wanted someone to say sorry to him, and no one had. Another claimed that the only thing that he wanted was for those responsible to come to court and to do their time in jail. This shows the differences in how people think that we should move forward. It is a difficult situation, and I think that the latter option is regressive. However, people have been hurt! We have wholeheartedly apologised for the civilians who were killed by us in error. But we do not apologise for the killing of combatants as we consider these to have been perfectly justified. Given the chance we would have killed many more during the war. We considered it justified at the time.

Fr Tim Bartlett: I would first listen very carefully, before responding with a great deal of respect for their feelings. Some people who I have met would have every justification to either be angry or to forgive. It's a complex individual situation. However, I disagree with Michael in the sense that he underestimates the degree to which the British government are willing to move to a position of dealing with the past together. The IRA has given certain apologies. I still disagree, and believe that the memories and hurt linger. For example, a very famous assassination of a Catholic judge took place in Belfast where the gunman shot the Judge and his 19 year old daughter in front of his family. Relatively recently, Sinn Féin placed one of the women who had been arrested and convicted for the murder into the senior civil service of the government. This caused immense upset and hurt to the family. Do not forget that this was a largely Catholic Nationalist organisation that had shot a judge coming out of Mass[71]. This became a huge issue in our politics and was difficult for Sinn Féin to manage. The other thing is the difficulty of talking to victims, as Sinn Féin has never apologised for the killing of military actors. Whilst I sympathise with them, the overwhelming majority of people killed in Northern Ireland were totally innocent people. For example, my father's workmates were shot in their beds simply for being Catholic. Similarly, innocent children were caught in crossfires and killed on the street with plastic bullets. I disagree with Michael because his perspective is too neat for my liking. The reality is very messy, on all sides.

Question: The United Kingdom is accepted as a cradle of democracy and civilisation. What were the essential factors that created this situation? Secondly, was the attitude of the British government toward Northern Ireland informed by a feeling of dominance? Thirdly, what was the role of

71 Mass describes the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church; a key part of Catholic worship.

the Vatican in the peace process? Did they provide you with any support?

Michael Culbert: I do not know where you got the phrase 'cradle of civilisation'! Also, democracy does not fit very well with colonialism. I find this very difficult to accept. When we talk about the island of Ireland we regard ourselves as the first colony of the English. You raise an interesting point because a lot of people use the language of the Unionists and Loyalists. The British leaders historically took people from other parts of their country and planted them in Ireland. This is why we still use the phrase 'planters'. They were moved to Ireland after the reformation. In the past, political divisions were often religious divisions. Over time they became Irish, but their loyalty remained with the people who planted them. When the IRA campaign started here, people who were still loyal to the British aligned themselves with the British government. They were also from a Protestant background. If those people joined the British armed forces on the basis of their loyalty, you must ask if I am killing 'a Protestant' or 'a member of the British Army'. I would claim that I had killed them because they had taken up arms, but Unionists would argue that they had been killed because they were a Protestant. The simple narrative which was given to the world was that there was a problem with the locals and that they were killing each other. This was the result of lazy journalism. Britain has never acknowledged that they had a colonial arrangement in Ireland. But that was centuries ago and it is difficult to explain. So it is not a religious problem, but there is a religious element to it because religion has always been a backdrop to the politics.

Father Tim Bartlett: I agree with Michael. It is telling that when the BBC reports on Northern Ireland they always talk about Catholics and Protestants. It is actually about the British and the Irish! But they do

not want to own it; they would rather portray it as a conflict between backwards people who are fighting over religion. This was not what it was about. The UK plays a very clever game and could not care less about Northern Ireland except for two things. Firstly, the British government do not want to let go of something under duress, as seen during the war over the Falkland Islands. We do not know how history would have unfolded had the IRA not run its campaign. Secondly, the British government cares about money. Strategically, the British government only started to engage politically with the problem once bombs started to go off in London and Manchester. We do not have democracy in Northern Ireland. We always had a devolved local parliament, a Protestant government for a Protestant people. This denied Catholics of jobs and housing, and was the impetus for the civil rights movement in the 1960's that is which culminated in The Troubles. But I would argue that the IRA then moved towards their own agenda, pursing the future of a united Ireland by employing violent means. So we did not have British democracy in Northern Ireland. That is why one of the first acts of the British government, when they took over direct rule in the 1970s, was to change some of the discriminatory laws.

Moving onto the role of the Vatican; as someone in my present line of work, I can tell you this. The disposition of the Vatican to any conflict situation is to leave it to the local church. Pope John Paul II visited Ireland in 1979 and was only able to visit the South because of security issues. However, he made a moving speech on the border to appeal to all Irish people to stop fighting. The Vatican did not really get very involved in the conflict. Interestingly there is also a Catholic church in Britain. The relationship became quite strained at times, even though many of the attendees of the churches were Irish Catholics.

Question: The majority of Americans are Protestants. Who do they support in this conflict?

Father Tim Bartlett: The majority of Americans are actually Irish Catholics. The Irish diaspora is much more powerful politically than the Unionist diaspora. The American government played a critical role in bringing Margaret Thatcher[72] into discussions and to move the IRA away from violence. Irish America was hugely significant in bringing the peace process forward.

Michael Culbert: Irish Americans constitute the backbone of the Democratic Party.[73] When you look at the East Coast of the US, you will see that it is populated by the descendants of people who had to leave Ireland due to famine, which Nationalists blame on the British government. There is a lingering resentment towards the British amongst these people. Those in America provided many of the weapons which we used against the British.

Father Tim Bartlett: The Catholic community tends to be more cohesive than that of the Protestants.

Question: What are the challenges that Sinn Féin must address before they implement their 'Green Paper for Irish Unity'?[74]

Michael Culbert: It will be very difficult to sell this to people. We need

72 Margaret Thatcher served as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for the Conservative Party from 1979-1990.
73 The Democratic Party is one of the two major political parties in the United States.
74 The Green Paper for Irish Unity is a document published by Sinn Féin designed to provide a roadmap for Irish reunification http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/sf/sf230205greenpaper.pdf

to get a couple of things on the table. The Republican campaign has not stopped altogether; only the armed element of it. We still want a united Ireland but we are prepared to convince as opposed to fight. If you do not convince in a few years, I do not think that you will be able to convince in a generation. I do not think that the logic of the situation matters. People care very much about small issues. We are in the process of convincing people. This brings me to something that I wanted to get into earlier; the idea of opposition to government. If you do not know your opposition, you are more prepared to fight them. So we are constantly breaking down stereotypes and negative images that people have of Republicans. As I said when I came in, I may be the first IRA man that you have met. But the next time you may approach the situation with a different set of ideas. When you interact and you talk, you can actually reach a compromise. It is always easier to talk than to fight.

Question: You have replaced the term 'enemy' with 'opposition', but you still will not apologise for the killing of British soldiers. Is this not a contradiction? Do you think that without the 'think tank' that you helped to run in prison that the peace process would not have started?

Michael Culbert: I think that the peace process was starting anyway. There was a lot of media coverage on this. I think that this was probably the initiator for us in prison, to start researching and thinking about the political situation. To clarify what we did; we had conversations on many topics and we would send status papers to our comrades outside. Another important factor was the change of the British government. They allowed people into the prisons to talk to the inmates. Whilst the people outside were also talking, there was a parallel dialogue within the prison, and both came to the conclusion that a peaceful solution

was key. The British government also allowed IRA activists to leave the prison to hold meetings throughout Ireland to discuss a progressive move forward. No one was arrested and people were allowed to hear what the IRA had to say. People were free to agree or disagree with them. 20,000 IRA personnel were imprisoned during the war. You have to wonder how many evaded capture. You cannot have 25,000 captured without there being many more people who are active behind them. These people had consulted with the Republican movement all over Ireland and they needed to consult with the IRA.

Father Tim Bartlett: A broader observation is that a consensus over peace came about because creative people were prepared to think about possibilities. I facilitated conversations with other clergymen and politicians, which have never been made public, and which would be quite explosive even today. Many others did this and played a bigger part than I did. It is all about dialogue, dialogue, dialogue!

Kerim Yildiz: Thank you very much. This has been a rich discussion and has contained many useful lessons. I want to thank you both very much for coming to talk with us so frankly today.

Friday 11th April 2014 – Dinner at Johnnie Fox's traditional Irish Restaurant, Dublin Mountains

On the final evening the participants dined together at Johnnie Fox's traditional Irish Restaurant in the Dublin Mountains.

Participants with Kerim Yıldız, DPI Director, outside Johnnie Fox's

Landscape of the Dublin Mountains

Appendix

Civil Society in Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Study Visit to Ireland 9th -11th April 2014

Participants from Turkey:

- Zeynep Ardıç, SETA
- Gülçin Avşar, Avukat, İstanbul Barosu
- Vahap Çoşkun, Dicle University, Member of Wise Persons Commission
- Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, DPI, Member of Wise Persons Commission
- Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem, Dicle University, Member of Wise Persons Commission
- Cem Gençoğlu, Samsun Dost Strajejik Araştırmalar Merkezi
- Nejdet İpekyüz, President DISA
- Talha Köse, Şehir University
- Kadri Salaz, VANGIAD
- Feray Salman, IHOP
- Esra Elmas, Bilgi University, Senior Advisor, DPI
- Ahmet Faruk Ünsal, MAZLUMDER, Member of Wise Persons Commission
- Sedat Yurtdaş, DITAM
- Ipek Kötan, Interpreter

Participants from Ireland and UK

- Kerim Yildiz, Director, DPI
- Eleanor Johnson, Programme Manager, DPI
- Colette Nkunda, International Programme Coordinator, Glencree

Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

- Eamon Rafter, Education Development & Training Officer, Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
- Val Kiernan, Administrator, Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
- David Comley, DPI

DPI Board and Council of Experts

Director:

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.

DPI Board Members:

Nicholas Stewart QC (Chair)

Barrister and Deputy High Court Judge (Chancery and Queen's Bench Divisions), United Kingdom . Former Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales and Former President of Union Internationale des Avocats.

Professor Penny Green (Secretary)

Head of Research and Director of the School of Law's Research Programme at King's College London and Director of the International State Crime Initiative (ICSI), United Kingdom (a collaborative enterprise with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and the University of Hull, led by King's College London).

Priscilla Hayner

Co-founder of the International Centre for Transitional Justice, global expert and author on truth commissions and transitional justice initiatives, consultant to the Ford Foundation, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and numerous other organisations.

Arild Humlen

Lawyer and Director of the Norwegian Bar Association's Legal Committee. Widely published within a number of jurisdictions, with emphasis on international civil law and human rights. Has lectured at law faculties of several universities in Norway. Awarded the Honor Prize of the Bar Association for Oslo for his work as Chairman of the Bar Association's Litigation Group for Asylum and Immigration law.

Jacki Muirhead

Practice Director, Cleveland Law Firm. Previously Barristers' Clerk at Counsels' Chambers Limited and Marketing Manager at the Faculty of Advocates. Undertook an International Secondment at New South Wales Bar Association.

Professor David Petrasek

Professor of International Political Affairs at the University of Ottowa, Canada. Expert and author on human rights, humanitarian law and conflict resolution issues, former Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of Amnesty International, consultant to United Nations.

Antonia Potter Prentice

Expert in humanitarian, development, peacemaking and peacebuilding issues. Consultant on women, peace and security; and strategic issues to clients including the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, the Global Network of Women Peacemakers, Mediator, and Terre des Hommes.

DPI Council of Experts

Dermot Ahern

Dermot Ahern is a Former Irish Member of Parliament and Government Minister and was a key figure for more than 20 years in the Irish peace process, including in negotiations for the Good Friday Agreement and the St Andrews Agreement. He also has extensive experience at EU Council level including being a key negotiator and signatory to the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties. In 2005, he was appointed by the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to be a Special Envoy on his behalf on the issue of UN Reform. Previous roles include that of Government Chief Whip, Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs, Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Justice and Law Reform. Dermot Ahern also served as Co-Chairman of the British Irish Inter Parliamentary Body 1993 – 1997.

Dr Mehmet Asutay

Dr Mehmet Asutay is a Reader in Middle Eastern and Islamic Political Economy and Finance at the School of Government and International Affairs (SGIA), Durham University, UK. He researches, teaches and supervises research on Middle Eastern economic development, the political economy of Middle East including Turkish and Kurdish political economies, and Islamic political economy. He is the Honorary Treasurer of BRISMES (British Society for Middle East Studies) and of the International Association for Islamic Economics. His research has been published in various journals, magazines and also in book format. He has been involved in human rights issues in various levels for many years, and has a close interest in transitional justice, conflict resolution and development issues at academic and policy levels.

Christine Bell

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.

Yilmaz Ensaroğlu

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

Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres

Former President of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Perù; Executive President of the Centre for Democracy and Human Rights of the Pontifical Catholic University of Perù.

Professor Mervyn Frost

Head of the Department of War Studies, King's College London. Previously served as Chair of Politics and Head of Department at the University of Natal in Durban. Former President of the South African Political Studies Association; expert on human rights in international relations, humanitarian intervention, justice in world politics, democratising global governance, just war tradition in an Era of New Wars and ethics in a globalising world.

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.

Avila Kilmurray

A founder member of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and was part of the Coalition's negotiating team for the Good Friday Agreement. She has written extensively on community action, the women's movement and conflict transformation. Serves on the Board of Conciliation Resources (UK); the Global Fund for Community Foundations; Conflict Resolution Services Ireland and the Institute for British Irish Studies. Avila was the first Women's Officer for the Transport & General Workers Union for Ireland (1990-1994) and became Director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland in 1994. Avila was awarded the Raymond Georis Prize for Innovative Philanthropy through the European Foundation Centre.

Professor Ram Manikkalingam

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).

Professor Monica McWilliams

Professor of Women's Studies, based in the Transitional Justice Institute at the University of Ulster. Was the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from 2005 2011 and responsible for delivering the advice on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Co-founder of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition political party and was elected to a seat at the Multi-Party Peace Negotiations, which led to the Belfast (Good Friday) Peace Agreement in 1998. Served as a member of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly from 1998-2003 and the Northern Ireland Forum for Dialogue and Understanding from 1996-1998. Publications focus on domestic violence, human security and the role of women in peace processes.

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.

Professor Naomi Roht Arriaza

Professor at University of Berkeley, United States, expert and author on transitional justice, human rights violations, international criminal law and global environmental issues.

Professor Dr. Mithat Sancar

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