

Submitted as feedback to the Working Group on Unification Referendums on the Island of Ireland Interim Report – 5 December 2020.

Hi Conor

Thanks to you and your colleagues for your work on bringing these issues front and centre.

I have two brief comments on your report.

The referendums North and South MUST take place on the same day. That is what 'concurrently' means. The discussion in points 10 and 13 of your report should consequently be rewritten.

In general, voting for a 'united Ireland' is to me a quite simple choice for Northern Ireland to become part of the state currently known as Ireland, without any changes to the government structures or laws of that state, ie no federal break-up of the state, no regional assemblies, no change to the state's flag or national anthem. Were any of these changes to take place, that would not be consistent with my voting for a united Ireland. Your report creates confusion around this simple choice as expressed in the Good Friday Agreement.

I certainly do not want the scenario where, after successful referendums to unite the country (do you appreciate the implication in this wording in the Good Friday Agreement that the state currently known as Ireland is currently dis-united, or less than whole?), we would be facing into years of talks about the form of a united Ireland. So I agree with the report's conclusions that it should be apparent what form a united Ireland will take before the referendums happen. As stated above though, my understanding is that the six counties move from being subject to UK laws to being subject to the same laws pertaining in, say, Kerry, before the referendum.

Also, please remember the Germany model: re-unification just happened; the details were worked out later. And Germany seems to be doing all right under that model.

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