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The letter from high profile nationalists appealing to Leo Varadkar not to abandon the north

3-4 minutes

OPEN LETTER TO TAOISEACH LEO VARADKAR

A Thaoisigh, a chara,

WE are writing this letter to you as Irish citizens living in the north of Ireland to express our frustration and growing concern over the deepening nature of the ongoing political crises in the north.

We are committed to human rights and cherish our Irish cultural traditions and our Irish national identity, as do hundreds of thousands of others living in this part of our country.

We value equality for all citizens yet continue to be denied rights afforded to all others living on these islands.

We fully endorse the recent call from human rights groups and others on this island for no regression on rights and equality and respect for the principle of equivalence.

In 1998 the overwhelming population of the country voted in favour of the Good Friday Agreement.

In recent years we have observed a concerted undermining of the political institutions established under the Good Friday Agreement and a laissez-faire approach being adopted by the

two governments as co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement.

We believe that the current crisis has come about fundamentally due to a failure to both implement & defend the Good Friday and St Andrew's Agreements.

The result has been a denial and refusal of equality, rights and respect towards the section of the community to which we belong, as well as everyone living here.

The impending reality of Brexit now threatens to reinforce partition on this island and revisit a sense of abandonment as experienced by our parents and grandparents.

The fact that a majority of voters in the north of Ireland voted to remain within the EU must not be ignored.

Against the stated will of a majority of voters in the north, and notwithstanding recent announcements, Brexit pushes us all into unchartered territory, with huge uncertainty for business and the economy, and continuing doubts about what this will mean in reality for Irish and European citizens living in this region.

We, our children and grandchildren should not be forced out of the EU against our democratic will.

All of this is offensive and unacceptable to us and many others.

Despite the British government's co-equal and internationally binding responsibility for overseeing the Peace Process with the Irish government, we have no confidence in its commitment to do so with impartiality or objectivity.

This is most recently instanced in the British Government's refusal to move on legacy inquest rights. The Conservative Party's political pact with the DUP has now become a grave threat to political progress.

We appeal urgently to you taoiseach, and to the Irish government, to reassure us of your commitment to stand for equality and a human rights based society and your determination to secure and protect the rights of all citizens in the north of Ireland.

Read more: [Taoiseach responds to concerns of northern nationalists in open letter](#)

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