DECLARATION FOR A FUTURE IRELAND

CLAIMING OUR FUTURE

a progressive movement for an equal,sustainable and thriving Ireland

Preamble

The original Proclamation of the Irish Republic in 1916 stated: *"We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible... We hereby proclaim the Republic as a Sovereign Independent State... The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally..."*

This vision for the Irish Republic has never been achieved. Opportunities to implement the vision have been squandered and political promises of radical reform not delivered. Politics is driven by short-term considerations and lacks an overarching vision of the type of society we should all be working to create.

The fruits of economic growth and prosperity and the burdens of economic difficulties are not shared fairly among all the people. There is inadequate investment in developing the necessary public infrastructure of essential services. We have damaged our environment and left future generations at risk. Yet, in spite of the many failures of implementation, the vision of the 1916 Proclamation remains valid. Therefore, to make the spirit of the Proclamation a reality we, the people of Ireland, are challenged, a century later, to state our vision and to create a Future Ireland based on progressive values.

Declaration

We will base our Future Ireland on a fundamental transformation of our current society to become a flourishing Ireland built on the core values of equality, environmental sustainability, participation, accountability and solidarity. We will prioritise the health, well-being and happiness of all over private profit and individual self-interest. We will respect and cherish all members of society equally and enable them to live life in dignity without poverty and we will ensure that no person or community is left behind. We will empower all our people and communities to reach their full potential and to have real choices in so doing. We will ensure our natural resources are publicly controlled and used sustainably for the benefit of all. We will nurture and sustain our environment.

We will create this Future Ireland by mobilising and using the creative capacity, commitment and abilities of all citizens, listening to each other and working collectively for the common good and against every form of inequality, injustice and discrimination. Through the united efforts of an active and inclusive citizenship we will realise the full potential of our own resources in achieving real and radical people led change. We will forge an Ireland that is outward looking and we will join in solidarity with all those who are working to create a sustainable, inclusive and peaceful world free from poverty, conflict and inequality, and where all countries can freely choose their own destiny. We will work to embed the values espoused in this Declaration in the constitution of our Future Ireland.

21 Guarantees

We pledge to use our human energies and resources to achieve the guarantees set out below.

This Future Ireland will guarantee to all its people:

Equality, Rights and Justice

- fulfilment of fundamental and inalienable social, economic, cultural, civil, political and environmental rights;
- equality between women and men;
- protection from sexual violence and exploitation and caring support to allow for control of fertility and family planning;
- equality for all people and diverse groups in our society respectful of diversity of age, disability, gender, religion, ethnic identity including membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or socio-economic status;
- protection from institutional abuses, isolation, segregation, discrimination and violence together with equal treatment before the law;
- the equitable distribution of income so as to ensure a guaranteed adequate minimum income for all, whether in paid employment or not, which is sufficient to live life in comfort and with dignity, achieving a socially acceptable ratio between maximum and minimum incomes;

A Participatory, Accountable and Inclusive Democracy

- a pluralist, participatory, diverse, gender balanced and accountable democracy, with strong local government and inclusive systems of decision making, which listens to all voices and reflects collective opinion, celebrating diversity of opinion and dissent;
- public participation in policy making, including for those experiencing poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, and a constructive say in decisions;
- a vibrant civil society with effective community organisations, environmental groups, trade unions, community culture groups, and cooperative enterprises which, through collective effort, build strong communities which are flourishing places of caring, sharing and well-being;
- safe and legal avenues to enter Ireland for those from outside Europe who are in need of our protection and an assurance of welcome, integration and empowerment for migrants and refugees;
- opportunities to express creativity and participate in and celebrate our social and cultural heritage as well as the traditions of other cultures in our society;

An Environmentally Sustainable and Vibrant Economy

- an environment that is protected, renewed, and made available for future generations, is freed from the use of fossil fuels, enables and promotes recycling, and values and protects its biodiversity;
- a vibrant economy that serves the needs of society, provides sustainable jobs and respects environmental limits; an economy that promotes the development of cooperative enterprises and that organises the production, distribution and consumption of goods and resources in an egalitarian and environmentally sustainable way;
- a banking and financial system that is strongly regulated and prohibits excessive speculation and rewards;
- a progressive, just and equitable taxation system that balances taxes on labour, wealth, corporate profits, financial transactions and resources, that fosters equality and that enables long-term sustained investment in our public infrastructure and services;
- decent, properly rewarded, accessible and non-exploitative work, job security, workers' rights, equal pay for men and women and a good work-life balance;

A High Quality of Life based on Solidarity

- effective, efficient, transparent and adequately funded public services available to all irrespective of income and, in particular, effective, efficient and universally accessible public health services, social services, education, early childhood care and education, and transport services;
- a secular education system that empowers young people to develop as active citizens, giving them practical experience of civic life, informing them of the rights they enjoy and should respect, and supporting them to participate in shaping their future;
- affordable, high quality, warm and energy efficient homes, both public and private, available to all as a right;
- the well-being of all children who will be cherished and loved equally and will have access to shelter, food, education and other services necessary for their happiness and development; no child will grow up in an institutional environment and no child will be subjected to sexual exploitation;
- recognition of and support for the contribution of care-work and voluntary activity to society.

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WE, THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND, NOW RAISE OUR HEADS, RECLAIM OUR VOICES, OUR RIGHTS AND OUR DIGNITY AND PLEDGE SUPPORT TO THIS FUTURE IRELAND.