



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Rights and Peacebuilding: Dr Amanda Cahill-
Ripley, University of Liverpool

24 September 2020

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights

Rights and Peacebuilding: Dr Amanda Cahill-Ripley, University of Liverpool

24 September 2020

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Ms Emma Sheerin (Chairperson)
Mr Mike Nesbitt (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Paula Bradshaw
Mr Mark Durkan
Miss Michelle McIlveen
Mr John O'Dowd

Witnesses:

Dr Amanda Cahill-Ripley University of Liverpool

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): We will receive a briefing from Dr Amanda Cahill-Ripley from the University of Liverpool on rights and peacebuilding. Amanda specialises in economic, social and cultural rights. Her recent research explores the intersections between socio-economic rights and peacebuilding and includes research with borderlands Protestant, unionist and loyalist communities. The Committee Clerk's memos can be found in the meeting papers, and Amanda's written submission is also included in your packs. I welcome Dr Cahill-Ripley to the meeting. Amanda, will you begin your briefing?

Dr Amanda Cahill-Ripley (University of Liverpool): *[Inaudible.]*

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Can you hear us, Amanda?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Hello.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): How are you?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: I have just got you.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Sorry. We may have had some technical issues. I was just welcoming you to the meeting. You can begin your briefing.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Thank you very much, and thank you for inviting me to brief the Committee today. I am very happy to contribute, albeit virtually, and hopefully we will get through it without any more drops. First, I thank the Committee for its work to date and for taking on this complex and very important task. I wish you all the best with the mandate.

To begin, I know that the Committee has already heard from a wide range of experts. You have received many briefings dealing with the complexities and technicalities of how you go about drafting a bill of rights and around constitutional law —.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Amanda, have you got speakers on? There is a bit of an echo coming through.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Yes. Can you hear me OK now?

The Committee Clerk: Yes. I think that that is a bit better.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Thank you. Sorry for interrupting you.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: That is OK.

Today will be slightly different, because I want to focus on the question of a bill of rights and human rights through the lens of peacebuilding. I especially want to look at the role of economic, social and cultural rights and at what they can contribute to building a sustainable, peaceful and inclusive society in Northern Ireland. Some of us would say that the connection is obvious, given that this Committee itself is based on a peace agreement. The link between efforts to address peacebuilding and efforts to realise human rights is often forgotten, however, or it is taken to be so fundamental that work to support such a relationship is not carried on and is not explicit.

I am an international lawyer. A lot of work has already been done on, and there has been increasing dialogue about, how human rights can meaningfully contribute to peacebuilding. That has resulted in a number of developments at a global level. We see human rights recognised as essential to sustaining peace in new agendas, such as the UN Secretary General's Sustaining Peace agenda of 2016 and the UN's Transforming our World sustainable development agenda. It is also true to say, however, that much of the focus on human rights and peacebuilding has been on civil and political rights. There has been quite a significant gap in recognising the role of economic, social and cultural rights in building and sustaining peaceful societies. There are many reasons for that, which I will be happy to look at when taking questions later.

The emerging evidence is that those rights are crucial if there is going to be long-term conflict transformation. That is true of conflict prevention and preventing a reoccurrence of conflict. It is true of human rights and economic, social and cultural rights being very good vehicles for early warning systems. It is true of peacemaking, of course; of bills of rights or constitutions, if they are written constitutions; and of development and post-conflict peacebuilding. There are a number of reasons that that is the case. First, those kinds of violations can act as drivers of conflict. They can either be root causes of the conflict or underlying grievances that, if not addressed, can resurface and drive ongoing tensions. The second point to make is that those kinds of violations can be a direct result of conflict or can exacerbate existing inequalities. There is clearly a need to address those violations.

It is also important, however, to note that economic, social and cultural rights can be part of the transformation on a positive note. When we think about peace, we do not think just about the absence of direct violence, which, of course, is very necessary. We also think about the absence of what we call structural violence. Economic, social and cultural rights can help address structural violence and structural injustices. They can also help in practical ways by prioritising resources and using the existing human rights framework to ensure that the voices of those who are most marginalised are heard through special protections and the underlying principle of non-discrimination and equality.

Moving on from that general summary, I want now to focus more on why those rights are important for Northern Ireland. I do not want to spend a lot of time setting out the rationale for their inclusion, because a lot of work has already done by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and by other bodies and NGOs. It is important, however, to highlight the fact that, although the report of the commission is from 2008, much of the rationale remains the same in 2020. All of these are notable: the years of protracted conflict; the effects of violence on individuals' health and well-being; the limited economic development that we have seen in the past; the disparities between urban and rural areas; the high migration, particularly of youth, for employment; the continuing structural segregation in housing and education; and the impacts on the already most vulnerable and on women and children.

Importantly, the situation has been compounded in the contemporary context by the financial crisis and the austerity measures that we saw from 2008 onwards, the lack of a functioning Executive for some time and, of course, most recently, the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which has exacerbated existing weaknesses. Moreover, we await seeing what the impact of Brexit will be, particularly in border areas. The cumulative impact of all of that is a lack of enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by many.

The question has to be this: how we deal with that? How do we make rights real for everyone in Northern Ireland? How do we make them more than an exercise on paper? As is set out in your New Decade, New Approach strategy, we need to think about how best to establish cross-community support, because that is critical to advancing the bill of rights.

Here I want to talk about, as I was asked to, my own research. It has been looking at, in particular, Protestant/unionist/loyalist (PUL) communities in rural border areas, although I did look at mixed groups as well. That illuminated a number of issues about engaging those communities with human rights and economic, social and cultural rights. This is stressing the particular need to engage all sections of Northern Ireland society, including those communities that traditionally have been quite wary of human rights and human rights rhetoric.

For time reasons, I will not go into full detail, but I am quite happy to take questions and give further detail. I will summarise the main findings. Everybody who participated in the study was either struggling to realise all of their economic, social and cultural rights in some way or else was working on the front line, helping those who were struggling. What was quite surprising to me was the high incidence of rural poverty and the impact that austerity had had on those in the community who would perhaps not previously have seen economic and social rights as being relevant to their life in particular.

What was also interesting, however, was the very firm support for the idea of human rights and for a bill of rights, although the latter was more contentious. A number of obstacles were identified in harnessing that support for human rights. Issues included the previous framing of human rights and political discourse around human rights; limited knowledge and understanding of human rights, in particular economic and social rights; and misconceptions around those rights. Moreover, there were limitations owing to the locality and the geography of the rural borderlands. The issue of limited public transport came up several times, as did a lack of localised initiatives. There was limited engagement with any human rights events that were going on, because they all happened up in Belfast. That lack of local initiatives meant that there was a lack of local engagement, training and dialogue. Added to that, mistrust was a huge problem. There was a lot of mistrust of human rights institutions and of state institutions and NGOs. There was a perception of bias sometimes, and that even extended to academics.

The other two obstacles that I want to mention are cultural and communal norms and the absence of any leadership or advocacy around human rights in those communities. I also want to mention how human rights could be used to help to build peace.

In conclusion, a number of actions can be considered to advance a bill of rights in these communities, and generally. In the PUL community, dialogue can be enabled through a number of entry points. First, stressing the universality of rights and using an international human rights standard as a starting point for discussion is very beneficial. Focusing discussion on rights that are prioritised by those in the community themselves, and that they can relate to through their personal experiences, is crucial. Human rights need to be relevant to local communities and local priorities. Using alternative language that resonates with the PUL community is also important as a starting point for conversations. Talk about and around fundamental needs, access to services and values of compassion, humanity and dignity.

Training on education human rights needs to take place in localities as well as in urban centres. Of course, this might require further investment and will require engagement with all sorts of stakeholders to try to open up those conversations. Significantly, as I mentioned, leadership from within the community is crucial. Developing some kind of local legitimate voice for human rights mobilisation and advocacy is key to bringing everybody on board.

I also want to mention, going back to the Northern Irish Human Rights Committee in 2008, that there was a recommendation around the right to be free from violence. Although not strictly an economic, social or cultural right, this is important in tackling threats to people who speak up on human rights. Back in November 2019, when I was working with PUL activists in east Belfast, the problem that was

raised, time and again, was the fear of speaking up on rights and having that conversation. That needs to be addressed as well.

More broadly, it is crucial to take steps to promote meaningful citizen participation from all sections of Northern Ireland society, across all communities, and ensuring that those marginalised voices are included. It is also important to think about grassroots work. We have seen the polls that indicate strong cross-community support for a bill of rights, but more needs to be done to explore constituent communities, especially in rural areas. It is about gathering views, but it is also about raising awareness, facilitating and providing information.

We need to think about *[Inaudible]* decisions. Using the human rights framework as a lens can support investment in regional infrastructure to facilitate engagement with human rights and peacebuilding work. An international framework is helpful in thinking about core obligations and, of course, progressive realisation. Some work done on human rights budgetary analysis, and that is also a useful tool.

The Committee has a crucial role to play in advocating for the economic, social and cultural rights that are essential to the success of building a sustainable, peaceful and inclusive society for everyone in Northern Ireland. I think that these rights should continue to be viewed as an integral and imperative element of peacebuilding policy and practice within the Northern Ireland Assembly's work.

I will finish there. Thank you very much. I look forward to your questions.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Thank you very much, Dr Cahill-Ripley. Your presentation was useful. You are quite clear about the benefits, as you see them, of having social and economic rights in a situation like ours and in the context of peacebuilding and lasting peace. Will you give us some detail on how they are best enforced?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Within Northern Ireland?

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Yes, within the North.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: OK. I think that they are best enforced as legally enforceable rights within a bill of rights. There are lots of other models and directive principles, but I think that the problem with not having legally enforceable rights is that the community can become disillusioned: if there are rights on paper but those in the community cannot actually exercise the right to an individual remedy, they can become disillusioned. In practice, the question then becomes one of how you ensure that those rights are limited in the way that you want them to be limited and that they speak to the values of the society and the communities who will access them, so I think that they should be legally enforceable.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Thank you. I want to follow on from that. Your research looks at the different perceptions, particularly the perception of people living along the borderlands and in rural settings. Your research suggests that their perception, or misconception, was that this was Belfast-centric and that these groups were only in urban centres. We have all sorts of divisions in the North, and, down through the years, we have seen a rural-urban split, or maybe even an east-west split. Differing levels of infrastructure investment have reinforced that, and there is systemic discrimination and inequality. How, then, do you address that through the enforcement of rights, and how do you reach those people?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: I totally agree with what you say. There are interesting ways in which that has been addressed in other contexts. For example, the peace agreement in Colombia included a provision around the protection of an adequate standard of living in "rural livelihoods" — I think that that was the wording. Therefore, I think that it can be a question of recognising those discrepancies in the text of documents and within the provisions. However, I also think that it is about ensuring that you have that feed into the process of the drafting of the bill of rights, and that involves an investment in outreach and in gathering views from various groups. A lot of grassroots groups are working in the west in particular, which is where I have experience. I think that you need to gather those views, discuss what rights mean to people and tackle the misconceptions. However, as I said, it is a question of this having to come from the grassroots up as well and then thinking about how that is reflected in the provisions.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Thank you. I have one last question. You touched on the specific outline in NDNA of particular circumstances and the impact of Brexit. How much more or less

important do you think that rights will be post-Brexit? What will be the impact of Brexit on the need for a bill of rights here?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: OK, the million dollar question. Who knows how Brexit will end up, given that we are not sure what agreement will be in place. We will lose the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights but not the European Convention on Human Rights. We have talked in the past about the European Convention on Human Rights-plus. I think that it is really important, as well, to think about the European Social Charter, which, although it gets forgotten, will also still be applicable after Brexit. I think that the work of the European Committee of Social Rights is really important in that it has a collective complaints mechanism as well as thematic national reporting.

Until there are any further moves to withdraw from the Council of Europe, for example, we will still have those in place. I think that there will be an impact, but we need to be reassured that those mechanisms are there. It is important to look at the European Committee of Social Rights in terms of economic and social rights and then make sure that the bill of rights reflects the added, if you like, values that are applicable in the context of Northern Ireland.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Brilliant, thank you very much.

Mr Nesbitt: Amanda, thank you for your presentation. You detected some sort of a tension in the PUL community between support for rights and support for a bill of rights. How did that come about?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: It came about in a series of one-to-one interviews and focus groups with various community groups and local church leaders, for example. The discussions were about why rights have not, perhaps, been utilised so much in that community. What came out of the discussions was that, while people may be ideologically opposed to some ideas within human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, my research found that there was very minimal resistance or opposition to rights as an idea. When we went on to the discuss the bill of rights, that was more contentious because people felt either that they had been excluded from the discussions or, even if they agreed with the bill of rights in theory, that there had not been enough consultation on what should be a part of it. There was a tension there. Whilst my findings were that there was general support for it, there was more wariness around how that might happen and who would be in charge, and I think that it is linked to the idea of mistrust of institutions.

Mr Nesbitt: We have to look at the particular circumstances that apply here. Is it fair to say that your assessment is that all those particular circumstances arise because we are a divided society emerging from conflict?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Whilst some of those particular circumstances can be reflected in other parts of the United Kingdom — for example, austerity measures can be seen as impacting negatively on economic, social and cultural rights in England — yes, the history and background of Northern Ireland make it particular. You are at a different starting point because of the years of protracted conflict and because of the reasons that I mentioned, such as lack of investment, restrictions on people's lives in the past and the effects of that violence on individuals' well-being. Yes, I think that those are a result of the conflict.

Mr Nesbitt: Finally, on economic, social and cultural rights, if we enshrine cultural rights in statute, how do you assess the implications for bodies such as the Parades Commission?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: My research was very much focused on economic and social rights, not cultural rights. It excluded a deep engagement with the cultural part. I felt that the issue of cultural rights demanded attention in its own right because it is contentious. It is a big area. My research focused very much on adequate standards of living, the right to health and the economic and social side. I am sorry to say that I have not worked on cultural rights.

Miss McIlveen: Thank you very much for your presentation.

I am interested to know how you carried out your research. I understand that it focused on the border areas. What type of engagement did you have?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: The research was carried out a while ago now, in 2015. I carried out that research. It was a small pilot study, and it engaged with a number of community groups, from victim support

groups to people based in churches and church leaders. It included front-line workers at food banks as well.

It was a small-scale study. There were one-to-one interviews and focus groups. The idea was to tap into what I saw as a gap in academic literature in the NGO world and the civil society world, looking at that area and those people's views.

The idea was then to seek further funding to do a wider study that would cover more areas in Northern Ireland and to expand that to get a more representative sample. That is how it was carried out.

Miss McIlveen: Where are you in taking the next step towards doing a broader piece of work?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: After that, I worked at an international level at the UN. That distracted me for a while. I have just finished some work with poverty truth commissions in the United Kingdom. I now want to apply for funding. The funding situation is difficult at the moment, but I would really like to carry out some wider studies. That is important in light of the mandate for the Committee and the bill of rights more widely.

Miss McIlveen: Your paper mentions a number of obstacles. One is the way in which human rights have been used and framed in political discourse, and their association with being pro-republican or anti-state. Will you expand on that, please?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: There was a generational aspect, but what came through in the data and discussions was that people very much felt that human rights had been utilised much more by Catholic nationalists or the republican community. They had been much more astute in exercising human rights as a tool for addressing their needs.

There was an interesting reflection that some of that might have been self-inflicted and that there had been a reluctance to engage with different human rights initiatives. For example, of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, people would say, "Oh well, you know, it's biased. It's not for me". They would also then say, "Well, actually, if we tried harder and engaged with these bodies, we might get more out of it".

It was an interesting discussion around framing. For some of the older generation in the study, it was very much seen that the civil rights movement, the background maybe to the conflict, had become very much linked with human rights, so it was not for them.

Miss McIlveen: OK. Thank you.

Ms Bradshaw: Mike asked my first question, so I will move on quickly. I want to ask about the notion that a bill of rights could contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation here. I worked in a PUL community in an inner-city area for 13 years before moving into full-time politics. I want to pick up some of the words that you used, such as "structural", "injustices" and "rural poverty". I am conscious that we, as legislators, and the Executive are responsible for the allocation of resources, whether that is building a road to rural areas so that factories can set up there or building more houses in our inner cities. Going back to my first sentence — how the Assembly delivers for everyone — to what degree can a bill of rights address an understanding of how devolution works and decisions being made that people may perceive as injustices but that are based on objective need?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: That is a very interesting question. I come back to my point about looking first to the international human rights framework. It is useful in that it provides a framework for core obligations at a minimum threshold. Obviously, decisions have to be made with limited resources, and they have to address need. The value-added element of that international human rights framework is that it provides for that. It gives you a framework to start from on what is the basic minimum threshold that needs to be met, which is a good basis or starting point. We can then start to ask what we can do on top of that, based on need. The international framework can be utilised to help with those kinds of questions about resource allocation.

Ms Bradshaw: I suppose that the point that I am getting at is that, especially in inner-city areas, people see a new housing development being built across the divide and think, "Oh, them-uns always get everything and we do not". It is about how a bill of rights would facilitate that and allow people to

see that we are moving past conflict and that we, as an Assembly, are prioritising spending. It is about how that could contribute to the reconciliation process.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: It comes back to the question of building trust, not just between communities but between those communities and the state. If you can show that it is being done in a fair way and in adherence with rights provisions, you can start to rebuild that trust. If there is transparency and recognition, through training and information sharing, that that is the framework that we are using and that is how we will embody it in our bill of rights, the argument can be made that it is being done fairly.

Ms Bradshaw: OK. Thank you.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): We will go to members who are with us via videoconferencing. Mark.

Mr Durkan: I am OK.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): You do not have anything. John.

Mr O'Dowd: Can you hear me OK?

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): We can, yes.

Mr O'Dowd: Thank you, Dr Cahill-Ripley. That was another interesting presentation to the Committee. I found it interesting because, in the communities where you were, in what we refer to as west of the Bann — the border communities— the Protestant/unionist/loyalist community, by and large, is in the minority. At this stage, we are concentrating on central government, in which political unionism still has an overall majority, although not necessarily in the Assembly. In the unionist community west of the Bann, services are provided by largely nationalist- and republican-run councils. A bill of rights would be a counterweight to that and a protection against abuse of power. Is there any realisation that, as we move forward, even in terms of the demographic changes across the North, a bill of rights is about protecting people from the abuse of power?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: That is a really important point. My research was carried out a couple of years ago now, but I think that that realisation is coming about, albeit very slowly. The idea that human rights were a tool to bash the state and were seen as anti-state is diminishing, particularly with youth, who do not recognise that. However, I am not sure whether that translates into seeing it as a positive protection against abuse. It depends very much on the generation and the age of the people to whom you are talking. There seems to be a big disparity between younger people who think about human rights in a much more international way and see it as a positive thing no matter where you are and the older generation, which still sees it as more contentious. That has not yet been fully embraced or appreciated.

Mr O'Dowd: I also suspect, however, that, in the nationalist community and, indeed, the broader community, the rights agenda is an abstract idea. You realise that you do not have rights only when you go looking for them or when you have been abused by power. That power might be your local council, health service or whatever. I am not talking about political power either. How do we break that down? I took a few notes when you were speaking; my observations are largely about the PUL community, but I think that they apply across the board. When it comes to language, outreach and leadership, how do you make rights relevant to people, in the sense that they are concerned either about the absence of rights or about how they involve themselves in the framing of a relevant bill of rights? Later on in the meeting, we will discuss how we promote the Committee's work in various ways.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: That is an absolutely crucial question. Although austerity has, in my opinion, had a terrible impact, particularly in relation to poverty, there could be a silver lining. The people who would normally have found it difficult to realise those rights for themselves, perhaps in relation to food — that is the example that stands out the most — with the increased use of food banks, for example, or availability of healthcare, have found themselves questioning things. They have worked all their lives and are still working, but they cannot afford to feed their families or get healthcare. They are asking the question: why is that? There is an opportunity to say to them: you have a right to food and a right to healthcare. For some people, it is as if they do not know that those rights exist.

Other people might ask: how do I exercise that right? Maybe it is a combination of things. We need to have those conversations, but it is no good my rocking up to tell people how to do that. It needs to come from a legitimate voice from within a community whom people trust and who can take on that role and promote the usefulness of human rights. Alongside that, there is a role for others to help with training on human rights and how they can be exercised. That can be achieved through civil society organisations. For example, there is a group in Scotland called Making Rights Real. It is a new civil society organisation that is working to go into communities to teach them about their rights and how to exercise them. That is really needed. Another example is Participation and the Practice of Rights in Belfast, which has done some amazing work. Those initiatives need to be taking place outside Belfast and in these areas, and, to do that, it needs engagement, particularly from faith-based and community groups. We need to get those people on board to help to spread the word.

Mr O'Dowd: There is concern among some that a bill of rights denudes or takes away the power or the responsibility from politicians in that we would become rubber stampers rather than legislators or people who are elected to lead. I am very protective of the rights of politicians, because we have a mandate; we go out to the people, get a mandate, go in and do our job. Whether people agree with us or not, the best way to deal with that is either to elect — or not elect — us again.

In the nations where a bill of rights has been in place, has it undermined the authority of the elected chamber?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: This comes back to the question of the separation of powers. The justiciability of economic and social rights has always been seen as controversial because of the question of, "Will the judiciary get involved in making decisions that should not be made by the judiciary but by the legislature?". It is about striking a balance. I do not think that a bill of rights absolves politicians of their responsibility to carry out their mandate at all. It is important in having not just of *[Inaudible]* but values that are transparent. It is the responsibility not just of politicians but of everybody to realise rights. It is also a question of having a bill of rights, because justiciable rights can deal with rights on an individual level. It works in two ways. You have politicians responsible for setting policy while the courts are there to deal with any individual cases that might arise, and they can then feed back to politicians if policy needs to be amended or if something is not working. I do not necessarily see it as being detrimental at all to politicians' mandates.

Mr O'Dowd: I am just looking at the notes here; excuse me while I turn away. I just want to check something. In 2016, the Assembly passed the Rural Needs Act, and it was pointed out to me earlier today that the Department of Agriculture's interpretation of rural needs is the social and economic needs of persons in rural areas. In one way, in that piece of legislation, the Assembly has already recognised the need for social and economic rights. We have pieces of legislation that have been in place for a while. Some may argue that the Act is not strong enough and that it has not been used enough. Some Departments, in my opinion, pay only lip service to it. However, we have accepted the principle of social and economic rights elsewhere. It is workable and does not constrain the role of government, in my opinion.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): Thanks a million. Amanda, before I let you go, can I ask you one more question? We are working on a public consultation on what a bill of rights would mean, and we will ask people for feedback. Given that you have done a bit of work on this, can you give us any input on how to best frame that? I think that someone referred to the fact that rights are seen as quite abstract and that, unless you are fighting for a right, you are not aware that you do not hold it. Is there a way that we can make it accessible to people? How would you frame it if you were doing a public consultation?

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Will the public consultation be in the form of a questionnaire or will it be done through in-depth focus groups?

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): It will be an online questionnaire, in the first instance.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: I think that it is about ensuring that you include both closed and open-ended questions to allow opportunities for people; it is about the language that you use. Perhaps you should include questions not just on a bill of rights but questions such as, "What do you understand by human rights?" and "What rights would you identify?". You could ask whether people think they have experienced those rights being threatened or violated. Maybe starting at a level that is not straightaway about a bill of rights would be interesting in covering people's views of human rights generally and what they actually understand by human rights before moving on to questions about a

specific bill of rights. I am happy to send the Committee some of the questions that I used in my own research, if that is helpful.

The Chairperson (Ms Sheerin): I imagine that that would be really helpful. Thank you very much for everything today. It was a really good presentation.

Dr Cahill-Ripley: Thanks very much. Good luck.