

**From: Dermot Nesbitt**

**To: Ms Emma Sheerin  
Chairperson  
Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights**

**26 October 2020**

Emma,

**Minutes of Evidence - 15 October 2020**

I have reviewed my oral presentation to the Ad Hoc Committee that I received on 22 October. Following this review, I wish to provide clarification regarding the concluding comments of my introductory presentation prior to questioning by members.

As I stated, I believe that the Framework Convention sets out the principles to be respected and provides an appropriate template to reflect paragraph 4 of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, regarding a Bill of Rights.

While the Convention is a legally binding instrument under international law, usage of the title word 'Framework' illustrates its outworking in that Countries translate its provisions, reflecting their particular circumstances, into legislation and appropriate governmental policies.

Also, I stated this should be followed by consideration and judgement regarding implementation of the principles/provisions contained in any Bill of Rights. Regarding clarification, I inadvertently overlooked mentioning an obvious point: aspects of identity rights, such as language and dual signage, have already been operable. However, these aspects have not operated without some occasional controversy.

Consequently, I believe the template contained in a Bill of Rights provides the basis by which a judgement can be made on not only new policies but also the outworking of existing policies. This latter point was overlooked in my presentation. There is thus a clear necessity for an appropriate Bill of Rights.

My apology for this oversight and I request that this clarification note be integrated into the minutes of the Committee.

Many thanks.

Regards,

Dermot