

Consultation on petition P-03-262 Wales Peace Institute  
Response from Conwy County Council Peace Group

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Conwy County Peace Group



**Views on the Petition for the Setting up of a Wales Peace Institute**

We, as Committee members of the Conwy County Peace Group, call upon the National Assembly for Wales to investigate the potential for and practicality of Wales having a Peace Institute concerned with Peace and Human Rights, comparable with those supported by state governments in Flanders, Catalonia and elsewhere in Europe.

We feel that the action called for is reasonable and feasible and we hereby submit the following views to be used as evidence by the Petitions Committee in its consideration of the above petition:

- **Importance of a Peace Institute in Wales.** As a constituent country/state of the United Kingdom, which has its own law making powers, we feel that Wales as an entity is analagous to Flanders in Belgium and to Catalonia in Spain, both of whom have their own Peace Institutes supported by their state governments. Furthermore Wales in its ancient culture, language and tradition is a peace loving nation and has always promoted the ideas of Peace. We also feel that it is important in these troubled times that awareness of Peace issues in Wales should be increased.
- **Constitution of a Wales Peace Institute.** The Institute should be independent from but hosted by the National Assembly for Wales, which should be constitutionally obliged to consider any advice given to it by the Peace Institute in respect of upholding peace and promoting human rights both nationally and internationally. In this respect the constitution would be similar to that of the Flemish Peace Institute vis-a-vis the state government of Flanders.
- **The Terms of Reference of a Wales Peace Institute.** These should be :
  - 1) To independently evaluate and report on the potential effects of the National Assembly's activities and decisions in respect of upholding peace and human rights.

- 2) To examine and to give advice on the political and social impact on Wales and the Welsh populace of UK defence and foreign policy decisions.
  - 3) To research into and to act as a repository of information and knowledge in relation to peace issues, disarmament, conflict resolution and global human rights.
  - 4) To promote an awareness of the issues and to disseminate the information and knowledge referred to in 3) above through educational provision and through other means.
  - 5) To help build and consolidate international relations by sharing accumulated information and knowledge with Peace Institutes in other parts of Europe through cultural contacts etc.
  - 6) To act as an advisory body but to function independently of the National Assembly as a non-partisan authority on peace issues.
  - 7) To have the freedom to seek independent financing through commissioned research and to utilise the funds at its disposal in the areas of peace keeping.
- **Barriers to establishing a Peace Institute in Wales.** There are none that we know of with the possible exception of the necessary financial outlay at the outset. However the importance of the project should overcome the financial burden even in these cash strapped times. We consider that the benefits, including enhancing the reputation of Wales as a peace loving nation, will far outweigh the costs.

We would be most grateful if you could consider the above views. We would be prepared to send a representative of the Conwy County Peace Group to give supplementary oral evidence to the Petitions Committee

Yours Sincerely,



Chris Jones, Chair Conwy County Peace Group

- ff Don Saunders, Vice-Chair
- ff Carol Darbyshire, Secretary
- ff Bargas Hatem, Treasurer
- ff Joan Gallina, Publicity Officer
- ff Omar Legrini, Events Co-ordinator