



To: Taoiseach Simon Harris by email to [taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie](mailto:taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie)  
June 19, 2024 (World Refugee Day)

**Re: Ireland Says Welcome - a Member Group of Comhlámh, appeal to Taoiseach Harris to resist the politicisation of international protection and to honour our legal responsibilities to those seeking international protection**

Dear Taoiseach,

We, the Ireland Says Welcome, Comhlámh member group are writing to you as the leader of our government to mark World Refugee Day 2024.

Our World Refugee Day appeal letters 2023 were:

- an appeal to Minister O’Gorman to **resist the politicisation of migration**, and address disparities in access to **housing and social supports** for marginalised groups, that are leading to a **degradation in social cohesion**.<sup>1</sup>
- an appeal to Minister McEntee to raise our concerns at the highest level of the EU regarding the **treatment of migrants entering the EU** and those trying to enter the EU.<sup>2</sup>

Our 2022 letter, raised in the Dáil by Catherine Connolly (TD) was:

- an appeal to Minister O’Gorman to act to prevent a **multi-tiered International Protection system** and address **housing challenges** fairly and humanely<sup>3</sup>

We recognise recent attempts at a common, EU-wide approach to migration, and the efforts being made by government to co-ordinate across departments (with the notable exception of the Department of Housing). However, successive policies and communications in relation to international protection have had a negative effect on social cohesion. We are concerned that **the housing crisis is now being framed as an international protection crisis**. This is distracting from the core issue of a lack of affordable housing which is the root cause of so much human suffering in our country.

We call on you to resist the politicisation of migration and honour our legal responsibilities to those seeking international protection.. We must move away from **the urge for quick fix solutions**, to create space for acknowledgement of the **scale, complexity and depth of the problems** we face, to examine **our complicity in systems of harm** and encourage ways of relating that are based in **care and reciprocity**.

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Honorary Patron: Mrs. Mary Robinson



In closing, we would like to recognise the strength of our brothers and sisters in the International Protection system in Ireland. Those who arrived here, fleeing for their lives, who were made homeless on arrival, with no access to homeless accommodation services. Our friends, who were directed to a homeless charity to collect tents and then endured long winter months in the tents. Some were burnt out by racists and some had their tents and personal belongings demolished by government agencies. No alternative accommodation has been offered to them, not even a place in a military tent.

In solidarity,



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Niamh Phelan, Eimear Gavin, Miranda Arkwright, Sally Roddy

On behalf of Ireland Says Welcome, a Member Group of Comhlámh.

1. <https://comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Comhlamh-Ireland-Says-Welcome-Letter-20230619.pdf>
2. <https://comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Comhlamh-Ireland-Says-Welcome-Letter-20230619.pdf>
3. <https://comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Comhlamh-Ireland-Says-Welcome-Letter-20230619.pdf>