

# HARRI HOLKERI LECTURE 2019

## BERTIE AHERN

PEACE PROCESS – IN LIGHT OF BREXIT ISSUES

Tuesday 21 May 2019

Canada Room and Council Chamber, QUB



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

THE SENATOR  
GEORGE J. MITCHELL  
INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL PEACE,  
SECURITY AND JUSTICE

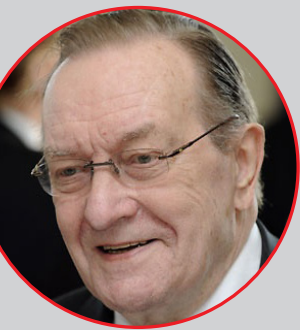


Embassy of Finland  
London

## HARRI HOLKERI LECTURE SERIES

*The Harri Holkeri Lecture Series celebrates the contribution of the late Finnish Prime Minister Harri Holkeri to the Northern Ireland peace process. His aim of transforming conflict and promoting social justice in Northern Ireland and across the world is shared by the Mitchell Institute.*

*We are honoured to partner with the Embassy of Finland, London, to host the Harri Holkeri Lecture Series.*



### HARRI HOLKERI

Harri Holkeri (1937-2011) played a prominent role in the Northern Ireland peace process, helping to forge the Good Friday Agreement. As a member of the Mitchell Committee, working with Senator George J. Mitchell and General John de Chastelain, Harri Holkeri facilitated the decommissioning of illegal weapons in Northern Ireland. His skills as negotiator and consensus-builder were crucial in the multi-party peace negotiations.

He was awarded the title of Honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1999 for his achievement and impact in the Northern Ireland peace process.

Harri Holkeri was Prime Minister of Finland from 1987 to 1991. He was a well-respected political figure, serving as Party Leader of Finland's National Coalition Party from 1971 to 1979. He was a Member of Parliament from 1970 to 1978. During his time as Prime Minister, he headed a coalition formed by his party and the Social Democrats.

Holkeri held a number of positions at the international level and made a significant contribution to addressing global issues. He was Vice-President of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Parliamentarians from 1974 to 1975 and President in 1976. He was also a member of the Nordic Council from 1975 to 1978 and he was President of the United Nations General Assembly from 2000 to 2001.

Harri Holkeri held the Finnish Honorary Title of Valtioneuvos for his national and international achievements. This honorary title of the highest class was awarded in 1998 by the then President of the Republic of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari.



## **BERTIE AHERN**

***7<sup>th</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture***

21 May 2019

‘Peace Process - In Light of Brexit Issues’

Bertie Ahern retired as Taoiseach in May 2008 having enjoyed the unique distinction in modern Irish politics of being the first person in over sixty years to have been elected to that office on three successive occasions.

He served as a member of Dáil Éireann for almost 35 years. He was first elected to the Dáil in 1977 for the constituency of Dublin-Finglas and he represented Dublin Central from 1981 until 2011.

He was Minister for Labour from March 1987 to November 1991 and was appointed Minister for Finance on three separate occasions from November 1991 to December 1994. Bertie Ahern was first elected Taoiseach in June 1997, he was re-elected in June 2002 and again in May 2007. In 1997 his party was elected to government in coalition with the Progressive Democrats. This minority administration was supported by a small number of Independent members of Parliament. Bertie Ahern received widespread praise for his political skills in ensuring that this administration served its full five year term and delivered on real political and economic progress for the Irish people.

The defining moment of this period and a defining moment in Irish history was the successful negotiation by Bertie Ahern and Tony Blair of the Good Friday Agreement between the British and Irish Governments and the political parties in Northern Ireland in April 1998.

## PREVIOUS HARRI HOLKERI LECTURES



### **MARTTI AHTISAARI** **FORMER PRESIDENT OF FINLAND**

#### ***1<sup>st</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture***

21 May 2013

‘Egalitarianism in Conflict Resolution’

Martti Ahtisaari is a former President of Finland, Nobel Peace Prize winner and a UN mediator. He made a significant contribution to the peace process in Northern Ireland and was on the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning.

Throughout his career, Martti Ahtisaari has been involved in international peace mediation and conflict resolution. He founded the organisation Crisis Management Initiative, to enable and facilitate the international community in preventative diplomacy, peace making and post-conflict state building. He continues his role as facilitator in conflict resolution across the world, including Indonesia, Iraq, the Horn of Africa and Central Asia. Between 2005 and 2008 he was the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the future status process for Kosovo.



### **AMBASSADOR AKBAR S. AHMED**

#### ***2<sup>nd</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture***

29 May 2014

‘Islam, Peace-building and Conflict Transformation’

Akbar Ahmed is Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University Washington DC. He was formerly Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK and Ireland.

Ambassador Ahmed is committed to understanding and explaining the complex relationship between the West and the Muslim world. Over the last decade he has sought to promote inter-faith dialogue and reconciliation through his publications, film documentaries and television appearances.

Ambassador Ahmed has taught at Princeton, Harvard and Cambridge, and is the author of over 20 books.

## SENATOR GEORGE J. MITCHELL

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture**

22 April 2015

'Reflections on Brokering Peace in Divided Societies'

After serving with distinction in the United States Senate, Senator Mitchell presided over the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland that culminated in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Liberty Medal in recognition of his efforts.

Since 1995, Senator George J. Mitchell has been active in the Northern Ireland peace process, having served as the United States Special Envoy for Northern Ireland under President Bill Clinton. As Chairman of the Peace Negotiations, he established the principles on non-violence to which all parties in Northern Ireland had to adhere. His personal intervention with the parties was crucial to the success of the talks.

On 24 June 2016, he formally launched the Global Research Institute that bears his name at Queen's University Belfast. And on the twentieth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement he was awarded the Freedom of Belfast city.

## **ARLENE FOSTER FORMER FIRST MINISTER OF NORTHERN IRELAND**

### **4<sup>th</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture**

23 May 2016

'Women, Leadership and Peace-building'

As the first woman to lead the Democratic Unionist Party and become First Minister of Northern Ireland, Arlene Foster was uniquely placed to reflect on the theme of women, leadership and peace-building.

A law graduate of Queen's University Belfast, Arlene Foster set up practice as a solicitor in Enniskillen. It was at Queen's that she first became involved in politics. She joined the Democratic Unionist Party in 2004 and became the representative for the people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone. She was Minister for the Environment following the 2007 Assembly elections and subsequently served as Minister for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. More recently she was Minister for Finance and Personnel.





**TARJA HALONEN**  
**FORMER PRESIDENT OF FINLAND**

**5<sup>th</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture**

9 May 2017

‘Reflections on Women and Peace-building’

Tarja Halonen was the eleventh President of the Republic of Finland and Finland’s first female head of state. She acceded office in March 2000, and was re-elected in 2006.

She has served in three cabinets and her appointments have been: Minister at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health from 1987 to 1990, Minister of Justice from 1990 to 1991, and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1995 to 2000. She was also the Minister responsible for Nordic co-operation from 1989 to 1991. During her time as Foreign Minister she held for the first time the EU Presidency from July to December 1999.



**PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS**

**6<sup>th</sup> Harri Holkeri Lecture**

29 May 2018

‘Remembering, Forgiving, Forgetting and Imagining’

Michael D. Higgins was inaugurated as the ninth President of Ireland in November 2011 and was re-elected for a second term in November 2018.

As a lecturer in political science and sociology in National University of Ireland, Galway, and in the United States, Michael D. Higgins was an active proponent of the extension of access to third level education beyond the walls of established Universities, and throughout his time in public life - serving as a public representative at many levels from Councillor and Mayor to nine years in the Seanad and twenty-five in Dáil Éireann - Michael D. Higgins remained a strong advocate for inclusive citizenship and human rights.

Michael D. Higgins is also a writer and poet, contributing to books covering diverse aspects of Irish politics, sociology, history and culture.



# THE SENATOR GEORGE J. MITCHELL INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE

## OUR MISSION

### Global Challenge: Building a Peaceful, Inclusive and Secure World

With global ambitions and international expertise, the Institute seeks to make a practical difference to the lives of ordinary people struggling with the aftermath of conflict.

## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AND EXPERTISE

The Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice is a flagship for interdisciplinary research in areas of major societal challenge. The Institute brings together a critical mass of excellent researchers from a wide range of disciplines to tackle some of the greatest global issues of our age.

Questions about peace, security and justice dominate the discourse of governments, international agencies and civil society throughout the world today. How can societies emerging from conflict resolve lingering grievances? How can they establish peace on a daily basis? How can the competing demands of justice, peace and security be resolved? The Institute at Queen's University Belfast responds to the unprecedented global challenge of building a peaceful, secure and inclusive world, bringing together the unparalleled expertise at Queen's on these issues.

The Institute's distinctive approach connects peace-making to social transformation, emphasising institutional and structural reform alongside social and cultural processes for healing in society.

*“I believe there’s no such thing as a conflict that can’t be ended. They’re created and sustained by human beings. They can be ended by human beings. No matter how ancient the conflict, no matter how hateful, no matter how hurtful, peace can prevail.”*

– Senator George J. Mitchell

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