



# COMHALTAS

## THE LIVING TRADITION

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### **COMHALTAS CONGRESS ADOPTS UNANIMOUS POSITION RE: CLONTARF ISSUE**

**On the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2008, the Annual Congress of Comhaltas Ceiltóirí Éireann meeting at Cultúrlann na hÉireann unanimously endorsed the Ardchomhairle position regarding the dissolved branch of Comhaltas in Clontarf. Delegates from all over Ireland, Britain and North America adopted the following statement:**

The Ardchomhairle of Comhaltas, which is elected by the general membership through the Provincial and Annual Congress structures, is charged with the proper governance of the organisation including financial matters and the rights of individual members. It is particularly vigilant where public money is involved.

The organisation is governed by a Bunreacht which is decided by the general membership through Annual Congress.

The former Clontarf branch of Comhaltas, following a lengthy investigation, was deemed to be in serious contravention of the Bunreacht. Every opportunity was afforded to the branch to remedy the situation. This it refused to do and brought the organisation into disrepute. In order to protect the credibility and good name of the organisation, the Ardchomhairle took the only appropriate and obligatory action open to it and dissolved the branch.

In no circumstances could the Ardchomhairle morally or legitimately preside over the serious issues which led to the dissolution of the branch and this was the unanimous decision of the Ardchomhairle. Financial probity and the rights of members must be paramount in Comhaltas.

The branch was given the same consideration and rights - and the same compliance with the Bunreacht was expected from it - as the 400 branches in 15 countries on 4 continents which involves almost 40,000 members and performers.

As the members of the branch were not afforded their constitutional rights by the branch to have an input into the issues under investigation, the Ardchomhairle decided that their membership should continue to be acknowledged and this is the case with the Dublin Fleadh Cheoil 2008.

Those members were also given the opportunity to play a full role in the functioning new Craobh Chluain Tarbh which serves the Clontarf area.

The new Regional Resource Centre of Comhaltas (one of seven in the country and funded as such through the Ardchomhairle) which will serve Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow and Carlow, is now almost complete and will open this year. It will also serve as a home for Comhaltas locally.

It is to be deplored that young people have been exploited in order to distract from the serious issues involved while a few people who have been central to the problem have remained anonymously in the background.

The matter under review was an internal issue for Comhaltas and processed within the terms and requirements of the Bunreacht. It was people in the dissolved branch who brought it into the public domain.