

Assistant Commissioner Anne Marie Cagney  
Garda Headquarters  
Phoenix Park  
Dublin 8

8 June 2021

CC: Kate Mulkerrins, Executive Director Legal and Compliance  
CC: Helen Hall, CEO Policing Authority  
CC: John O'Callaghan, Deputy Secretary General, Department of Justice

Dear Assistant Commissioner,

I wish to raise some concerns on behalf of the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) in relation to the policing operations conducted in Dublin city centre on the past bank holiday weekend of 4-7 June 2021.

ICCL acknowledges Garda statements referring to violent incidents where objects including glass bottles were thrown at members of An Garda, and also reports of injuries to members. ICCL regards these incidents as serious matters and wishes to express our best wishes to any affected gardaí and we hope any injured officers make a quick recovery.

At the same time, we are concerned at video footage and bystander reports in relation to the use of force by gardaí in operations around Dublin City centre on Friday 4<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June, including the actions of the Garda Public Order Unit. Issues of concern include:

- i. The use of batons by gardaí including striking of members of the public with batons
- ii. Baton-charging by groups of gardaí against crowds of people
- iii. Closing streets and prohibiting movement of members of the public through the city centre

ICCL believes that the gravity of the incidents that occurred over the weekend, and the seriousness of the concerns arising in relation to the use of force and restrictions on movement by the Garda, constitute matters of

serious public interest and require a full report to be produced and made public.

ICCL believes that such a report should set out details of all use of force by gardaí during the period of 4-7 June 2021. The report should also address the planning of the policing operations in Dublin city centre over the period, addressing whether there was sufficient preparation for anticipated crowds and potential disorder and whether there was sufficient coordination with Dublin City Council and local businesses in advance of the operation.

Furthermore, there seems to be some confusion about Government policy and the approach taken by the Garda to the sale and consumption of alcohol during the period (ahead of the opening of outdoor dining on 7 June). ICCL has heard reports that the sale of take-away drinks from licensed premises was tolerated in the city centre at certain points over this weekend, including where it would appear the drinks being sold were being consumed close to the premises. Subsequently, there have been reports of drinks being taken from members of the public and emptied by gardaí. ICCL would be grateful for any information on the Garda approach to the sale and consumption of alcohol in the city centre over the period, and what steps were taken to ensure a consistent application of such a policy.

ICCL believes that the serious nature of the public order incidents over the weekend, and the apparent use of force by the Garda give rise to serious questions not only for the Garda but also for wider justice policy. We are therefore also communicating our concerns to the Policing Authority and to the Department of Justice.

Yours sincerely,



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Liam Herrick  
Executive Director  
Irish Council for Civil Liberties