



Press Release EMBARGO 16.00

Date: 06/12/2023

Subject: **Appointment of Séamas Ó Concheanainn as Choimisinéir Teanga**



President Michael D. Higgins today appointed Séamas Ó Concheanainn as Coimisinéir Teanga. His nomination by the Government having been accepted by both Houses of the Oireachtas, President Higgins presented Mr Ó Concheanainn with his Seal of Office at a ceremony at Áras an Uachtaráin today.

Séamas Ó Concheanainn succeeds Rónán Ó Domhnaill, who spent 9 years as Coimisinéir Teanga before being appointed among the Commissioners at Coimisiún na Meán in the Spring of this year.

On his appointment, Mr Ó Concheanainn said:

“I look forward to the opportunity to make a significant contribution as Coimisinéir Teanga to improving the public services provided by public bodies through Irish to the Irish speaking community. It is a welcome development that the amended language legislation (Official Languages (Amendment) Act, 2021) is currently coming into effect to strengthen the language rights of the Irish-speaking community. The new language legislation includes significant commitments such as a National Plan setting out the public sector’s (comprising more than 500 public bodies) approach, to ensuring that the language rights of the Irish-speaking community are met. It will be critical to have sufficient human resources with proficiency in Irish to deliver the new public services. A national effort will be required, including a central role for the Irish-medium higher-education sector in providing the qualified staff that public bodies will require for the realisation of the language rights prescribed in the amended legislation.”

Speaking to the provisions that have already been commenced, the newly appointed Coimisinéir said:

“I greatly welcome the evident increase in Irish language advertising across all media platforms. Section 10A (Advertising by Public Bodies) places statutory responsibilities on Public Bodies to place

a significant portion of their advertising through Irish. It is important that the Irish language is central as a discursive medium in the public sphere.”

A native of An Spidéal in County Galway Séamas Ó Concheanainn has spent three years working as Director of Oifig an Choimisinéara Teanga. Prior to that, he held the position of Director of Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge's Gaeltacht Centre in Carna, Co. Galway, where he had both academic and management responsibilities. Séamas has also been involved in various Irish language-based research topics, including Fios Físe, a national research project that aimed to measure the popularity of TG4 among the Irish-speaking community. He has a particular interest in language planning and community development and has volunteered with a wide range of organisations and community committees over the years.

This is the first time the position of An Coimisinéir Teanga has been filled following a public recruitment campaign.

The appointment of An Coimisinéir Teanga is for a term of 6 years.

Further information available from:

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