

Arlene Foster, First Minister
Michelle O'Neill, Deputy First Minister
NI Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Stormont Estate
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08 March 2021

Dear First Minister and Deputy First Minister

I hope you are keeping well. I have realised that I have not had the opportunity to meet with you both since the Assembly reconvened in January last year or during the pandemic. I, of course, appreciate that we are in unprecedented times with multiple pressures on your diaries. Time has progressed since I wrote to you about the pandemic last Spring. As we begin to consider what the "new normal" may be for children and young people, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the continuing impact of Covid on young people's lives across a range of areas but also how they can be involved in the crucial decision making regarding a post-Covid society. I therefore re-iterate my previous request that you jointly have a press conference with young people to enable them to highlight their issues and thoughts on how we can build back fairer, and of course repeat that NICCY would be very happy to assist.

I welcome continued inclusion of an outcome concerning children in the Programme for Government consultation and we are optimistic that there is a renewed determination that government will work collaboratively to achieve this outcome. However, I am also mindful that the policy and legislative timeframe to achieve some of the commitments outlined in The New Decade New Approach is decreasing. There are a number of areas in NDNA (such as an Age, Goods, and Facilities and Services Bill) that are of relevance to the work of my office and I would be keen to discuss how you hope to progress these.

I hope that you are agreeable to a meeting in the coming weeks and I will ask my PA **NR** **NR** to contact your office to arrange a suitable time.

Yours sincerely

PD

Koulla Yiasouma
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