

Ards Intercultural Forum Marks Community Relations Week 2013

23 May 2012

Newtownards, NORTHERN IRELAND: To commemorate Community Relations Week 2013 the Ards Intercultural Forum (AIF) organised an event at the Web Theatre for a showing of the documentary film: Tapestry of Colours by Iranian born Zhenia Mahdi-Nau followed by a discussion.

The event was well attended by elected representatives (Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), Councillors (Cllrs), statutory and government bodies, community leaders and distinguished guests.



L-R: Dr Christopher Stange - AIF Chair; Ian Foster – Web Theatre; Mike Nesbitt MLA; Zhenia Mahdi-Nau; Jonathan Bell MLA – OFMdFM Jnr. Minister; Candice Foster – Web Theatre; Cllr. Stephen McIlveen – Deputy Mayor of Ards; Sandra Henderson – AIF Secretary; Milan Mladek

Dr Christopher Stange - AIF Chair & Hon. Consul for St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Northern Ireland provided opened the event with the welcome address delivered by Cllr. Stephen McIlveen – Deputy Mayor of Ards. Des McAuley - AIF Vice-Chair facilitated the question and answer discussion following the documentary film.

The Ards Intercultural Forum is an umbrella body of 17 statutory bodies and groups, including the community and voluntary sector focused on Good Relations and ensuring representation and access to services for ethnic minority communities in Ards Borough.

The Forum's objectives are to create an environment of joined up working to ensure that people from ethnic minority backgrounds access all of the services that they are entitled to, have a voice in policy/decision making, and are involved in working towards a shared inclusive society for all.

The keynote speaker was Jonathan Bell MLA, Jnr. Minister at the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdfM). Minister Bell said: "Ards Intercultural Forum is to be applauded for its ongoing work in championing the needs of the community and combating the causes and manifestations of racial mistrust. The shared future strategy document - Together Building A United Community, is to be released later today, seeking the Executive's approval."

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