

US Military and CIA Use of Shannon Airport. Ireland's Complicity in War Crimes

Petitions Committee Report Fails to Reflect Seriousness of Shannonwatch Submission

By [Shannonwatch](#)

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Over 3 years ago Shannonwatch submitted a Petition to the The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Public Service Oversight and Petitions on the issue of US Military and CIA use of Shannon airport. The wheels of government work slowly, and the Committee issued its final report today. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

The Committee, and in particular to Chairperson, Pádraig MacLochlainn TD, did quite a comprehensive investigation into the petition, including meeting with a delegation from Shannonwatch that included Edward Horhgan, John Lannon and Margaretta D'Arcy at Leinster House, and a further series of meetings at Shannon Airport with representatives of An Garda Siochana, Shannon airport authority and Edward Horgan on behalf of Shannonwatch.

However, the final report does not in our view fully reflect the seriousness of our Petition, and the very detailed nature of our submission to them. In particular it does not reflect the seriousness of the human rights abuses in the Middle East and Guantanamo that were facilitated by US military use of Shannon. Furthermore it doesn't address the need for accountability for complicity in human rights abuse and possibly even war crimes at Shannon. This is perhaps not surprising given that the Committee had members from both Government parties, FG and Labour, and from Fianna Fail, the main perpetrators of the problems arising from US military and CIA use of Shannon.

The most significant part of the Committee's findings is the following recommendation:

"the Joint Committee recommends that the Dáil and Seanad debate the matter with a view to the holding of a Referendum so that the will of the people can be determined."

Clearly all this will be for the next Dáil, and it will need a lot of lobbying to overcome the reluctance of all the main parties to enshrine neutrality into the Irish Constitution.

This is the press release issued by the Committee.

MEDIA RELEASE Petitions Committee publish final report on Irish Neutrality

1st February 2016

The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Public Service Oversight and Petitions today published its "Report on Petition P00072/12 'Investigation into US Military and CIA use of Shannon Airport and Irish Airspace' - Dr. Edward Horgan and Shannonwatch". This report was conducted on foot of a public petition and allowed the Committee to address the broader issues of Irish neutrality.

Committee Chair, Pádraig MacLochlainn TD said:

"This is an important report that raises a fundamental issue about Irish society - our neutrality. In compiling this report the Committee travelled to Shannon airport to discuss its operation with senior management, we engaged with the petitioner and held discussions with Minister Charlie Flanagan TD, Minister Paschal Donoghue and the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade".

"This report concludes that Ireland operates a policy of Military Neutrality, which is characterised by "non-participation in military alliances" and that neutrality is not reflected in Bunreacht na hÉireann, or elsewhere in domestic legislation. The Committee recommends that Dáil and Seanad Éireann debate the matter with a view to the holding of a Referendum so that the will of the people can be determined."

"This report is also an excellent example of how the public petitions process facilitates direct democracy and brings Parliament closer to the people. In fact, we recently published a report on the learnings from our first term and how they can be carried forward by the next Government."

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