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BBC Charter Review  
Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
2 - 4 Cockspur Street  
London  
SW1Y 5DH

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of Cumann Gaelach Chnoc na Ros Doire. We are a Cultural Organisation based in Derry. We promote the Irish language and culture and many of our activities bilingually to attract people from both sides of the community. This we find works very well for us, as the trust has been built up through many years of talks and meetings.

As the Gaelic officer for this cultural organisation I would like to comment regarding the Irish Language viewing on BBC, or in fact the lack of Irish Language viewing on BBC. It is on record that the BBC spends less per head on serving its Irish-speaking audience that on the Gaelic and Welsh speaking population. Within our Irish language classes we promote the Irish language programmes that have been on BBC in the past but we are constantly reminded how it is not catering for their needs.

It is with total shock and dismay that the Irish language has been left behind in the Green Paper on the Review of the BBC Charter. How can this be justified. The Irish Language is a very old and different language. Its historic history stems away back from the years of conflict within our communities. In fact, both traditions within Ireland and Scotland spoke Irish fluently in the 17th and in the 18th century. In fact the Gaeilge (Irish) and the Gaelic (Scottish) language were the same. We have no identity with the Irish language. It is within our surnames and within our places names. How can people truly understand their origins without knowledge of their language?

The promotion of the Irish Language has increased in such a rapid spread over the last 20 years, with the establishment of the Gaelscoileanna (Medium Irish language schools). The parents of their children are license-free payers and it is only right that the BBC should cater for their needs and have more of the Irish Language programmes aired on the television. We ask nothing more than what our sister language Welsh and Gaelic are receiving.

I do hope that you will consider the information above and that in the future; we the people of Ulster will hear our native language on the BBC.

Go raibh maith agat.

Regards,

Gae Mí Chnaimhsi

Clar Ni Chnaimhsi  
(Gaelic Officer)