



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	European Unit Progress Report
Date:	9 April 2008
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### Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that any new activity led by the EU Unit is presented at Development Committee for prior approval. Members are requested to consider the following items:

1. NI European Conference on Peace
2. Inward Visit from Nitra, Slovakia

### Key Issues

#### 1. NI European Conference on Peace

The EU Unit has received a request for financial support towards an EU Conference on Peace to be held on 28 April 2008 at the University of Ulster. The conference is being organised by the two NI Members of the European organisation Ecosoc, Jane Morris and Mike Smith. Confirmed speakers include the First and Deputy First Minister for NI and the original protagonists of the Peace Programme in NI including Jacques Delors and Monika Wolfe Mathis and other high level EU stakeholders.

The aim of the conference is to provide and challenge the success of the EU funded Peace and Reconciliation programme for NI and the border counties. Belfast City Council through the EU Unit is asked to sponsor a conference lunch for 250 delegates, in partnership with the EU Commission Office in NI and provide a cultural tour of Belfast for delegates. It is estimated that the maximum cost of the lunch and tour will not exceed £2500.

Members are asked to approve the attendance of the Chair and Deputy Chair, or their nominees, at the conference. The EU Unit will also attend and promote the Council's EU work at the conference.

## 2. Nitra Inward Visit

Members will be aware that the EU Unit regularly receives requests from other EU regions to explore best practice in Belfast and the wider metropolitan area with regard to economic development, urban regeneration and use of EU structural funds. The EU Unit has been asked, via the Honorary Consul in NI for Slovakia, Mr Tom Sullivan, to participate in an inward visit from 22-24 April 2008 from the region of Nitra in Slovakia. The region of Nitra would like to look at projects throughout the Comet region and, to this end, each of the 6 councils that make up the Comet metropolitan region will showcase best practice projects.

Members are asked to approve the attendance of the Chair, or nominee, at a welcome dinner for the delegation, to be hosted by Comet in the Long Gallery, Stormont. The Chair, or nominee, will be asked to greet the delegation and to deliver a welcome presentation.

### **Resource Implications**

#### Financial

- £2500 financial support towards the EU Conference for NI on Peace

#### Human

- Direct input by EU Unit to the EU Conference on Peace and the Nitra inward visit

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to approve -

1. A maximum contribution of £2500 toward the EU Conference on Peace to be held on 28 April 2008 and the attendance of the Chair and Deputy Chair, or their nominees.
2. The participation of the Chair or his nominee at the Nitra inward visit to be held from 22-24 April 2008 and the attendance of the Chair, or nominee, at the delegation dinner at Stormont and the delivery of a welcome presentation.