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INTERNATIONAL FUND

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, THE RT HON TOM KING, MP, TODAY WELCOMED THE SIGNING BY THE UK AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS OF AN AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH THE "INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND".

MR KING SAID: "THE AGREEMENT WHICH IS BEING SIGNED TODAY BY THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS IS A WELCOME STEP FOR NORTHERN IRELAND. THE INTERNATIONAL FUND, WHICH CAN BE SET UP UNDER ITS TERMS, WILL PROVIDE HELP OF REAL PRACTICAL VALUE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE BOARD WHICH WILL SOON BE APPOINTED WILL USE THE FUND'S RESOURCES WITH WISDOM AND IMAGINATION. EVERYONE WHO WISHES NORTHERN IRELAND WELL WILL VALUE THESE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR A REGION THAT HAS SUFFERED HEAVILY AS A RESULT OF THE INSTABILITY OF RECENT YEARS. THE AGREEMENT WILL BE LAID IN THE NORMAL WAY BEFORE PARLIAMENT WHEN IT RETURNS. THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO SEEK PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL FOR THE NECESSARY POWERS TO ENABLE THE FUND TO OPERATE.

"THE FUND IS ALSO VALUABLE AS A TANGIBLE SIGN OF SUPPORT FROM BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA FOR THE EFFORTS WE ARE MAKING TO HELP IN THE CREATION OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THE COMMON HERITAGE THAT MEMBERS OF BOTH SIDES OF THE COMMUNITY SHARE WITH THE UNITED STATES HAS NO DOUBT CONTRIBUTED TO THAT COUNTRY'S GENEROSITY. IT IS AN INFINITELY MORE CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF AMERICAN MONEY THAN NORAID HAS MADE. I WELCOME TOO THE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION FROM CANADA, A COUNTRY WITH WHICH NORTHERN IRELAND SHARE EQUALLY STRONG LINKS".

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18 SEPTEMBER 1986

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