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Reference Code: 2021/98/8

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Government Statement

The Irish Government remains fully committed to an inclusive negotiating process, on exclusively democratic terms and in conditions of peace, so as to reach an honourable and generally acceptable accommodation of the Northern Ireland conflict.

In pursuit of that objective we are continuing to work for the earliest possible restoration of the IRA ceasefire, and for the establishment of a truly inclusive process of negotiations. In this regard we have repeatedly made clear our view that the conditions so carefully set out by both Governments in the February Communiqué and the Ground Rules paper for Sinn Féin's admission to talks should be maintained.

The Irish Government will not accept any exclusion of Sinn Féin once these conditions are fulfilled, and hopes that, when the talks resume in January, Sinn Féin will be in a position to participate in the talks, as a result, in the meantime, of an IRA ceasefire and of Sinn Féin having complied fully with the ground rules and the Mitchell principles. There is an onus on the Republican movement to allow this to happen.

28th November, 1996.