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Implementation
of Agreement

S230/15/0019A

21 December, 1998.

Roinn an Taoisigh

Aide Memoire

The Taoiseach wishes to bring to the attention of his colleagues a statement from the Office of the First Minister (Designate) and the Office of the Deputy First Minister (Designate) detailing arrangements for:

- 10 Northern Ireland Departments;
- 6 Implementation Bodies;
- 6 Areas for Co-operation.

**OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER (DESIGNATE) AND
DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER (DESIGNATE)**

STATEMENT - 18 DECEMBER 1998

1. On 1 July 1998, the New Northern Ireland Assembly asked us to report on progress towards implementing the Belfast Agreement reached on Good Friday this year.
2. Since our election, most of the parties in the Assembly have been working with us on detailed questions. Papers on Strands One, Two and Three have been considered in a series of round tables and other meetings.
3. Following intensive negotiations and consultations involving other Assembly parties, and as appropriate the Irish and British Governments, we have reached agreement tonight on matters for North/South co-operation and implementation, and on Departments.
4. We wish to express our satisfaction with the outcome, which represents a major step in the implementation of the Agreement.
5. As regards Departments (Annex 1), the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will have an Economic Policy Unit and special responsibility for equality. There will be ten Departments:
 - Agriculture and Rural Development
 - Environment
 - Regional Development
 - Social Development
 - Education
 - Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment
 - Enterprise, Trade and Investment
 - Culture, Arts and Leisure
 - Health, Social Services and Public Safety
 - Finance and Personnel

6. The Agreement required a 'work programme' on at least 12 matters, six being new implementation bodies, and six being matters for co-operation. The six implementation bodies (Annex 2) are:
- Inland Waterways
 - Food Safety
 - Trade and Business Development
 - Special EU Programmes
 - Language (Irish and Ulster Scots)
 - Aquaculture and Marine Matters
7. The six areas for co-operation (Annex 3) include some aspects of:
- Transport
 - Agriculture
 - Education
 - Health
 - Environment
 - Tourism
8. We will be making a detailed report to the Assembly early in January, and will bring forward proposals on the British-Irish Council and the Civic Forum.

ANNEX 1

DEPARTMENTS0. **Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister**

Economic Policy Unit
Equality

Other Central Functions (within The Secretariat of the Executive Committee)

Liaison with NSMC
Liaison with BIC
Liaison with Civic Forum
Liaison with SOS on reserved and excepted matters
European affairs and international matters
Policy Innovation Unit
Liaison with IFI
Information Services
Community Relations

1. **Agriculture and Rural Development**

Food, Farming and Environmental Policy
Agri-Food Development
Science
Veterinary
Rural Development
Forestry
Sea Fisheries

2. **Environment**

Planning Control
Environment and Heritage
Protection of the Countryside
Waste Management
Pollution Control
Wildlife Protection
Local Government
Sustainable Development
Mineral Resources
Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency

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Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency**3. Regional Development**

Transport Planning
Roads Service
Rail
Ports and Airports
Energy
Water
Strategic Planning

4. Social Development

Housing Policy
NI Housing Executive
Urban Renewal
Community Sector
Laganside Corporation
NI Construction Industry Advisory Council
Rent Assessment Panel
NI Building Regulations Advisory Committee
Housing Benefit Review Boards
Social Security Agency

5. Education

Schools Funding and Administration
Teachers and Special Education
School Effectiveness
School Planning and Provision
Schools Inspectorate
Nursery Education
Youth Service

6. Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment

Higher Education
Further Education
Vocational Training
Employment Services
Employment Law and Labour Relations

7. **Enterprise, Trade and Investment**

Economic Development Policy
Industry (IDB, LEDU)
Research and Development (IRTU)
Tourism
Health and Safety Executive
Company Regulation
Consumer Affairs

8. **Culture, Arts and Leisure**

Arts and Culture
Sport and Leisure
Libraries
Museums
Visitor Amenities and Services
Ulster Historical Foundation
Inland Waterways
Inland Fisheries
Ordnance Survey
Public Record Office
Language Policy

9. **Health, Social Services and Public Safety**

Health
Social Services
Public Health and Safety
Health Promotion
Fire Authority

10. **Finance and Personnel**

Finance
Personnel
IT and Common Services
Accommodation
Legal Services
NI Statistics and Research Agency
Land Registry of NI
Rates Collection Agency

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ANNEX 2

(final text 18 December, 02.10)

IMPLEMENTATION BODIES**Inland Waterways****A body with the following functions:**

- **Management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes:**

immediately in respect of the Shannon-Erne Waterway and of the possible restoration and development of the Ulster Canal;

progressively thereafter, in respect of the wider Shannon-Erne system and the island's other waterways (principally the Royal Canal, Grand Canal, Barrow and Lagan).

The Body would take on the functions, together with the appropriate support functions, exercised in that regard by the Waterways Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and the Rivers Agency of the Department of Agriculture in Northern Ireland, and would also take over the functions of Shannon-Erne Waterway Promotions Ltd.

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Food Safety**A body with the following functions:**

- **promotion of food safety**
- **research into food safety**
- **communication of food alerts**
- **surveillance of food-borne diseases**
- **promotion of scientific co-operation and linkages between laboratories**
- **development of cost-effective facilities for specialised laboratory testing**

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Trade and Business Development

A body to exchange information and co-ordinate work on trade, business development and related matters, in areas where the two administrations specifically agree it would be in their mutual interest.

The specific areas of implementation would include:

- **co-operation on business development opportunities, North and South;**
- **devising new approaches to business development in a cross-border context, in such areas as research, training, marketing and quality improvement;**
- **supporting business by making recommendations to increase enterprise competitiveness in a north-south context in areas such as skills availability, telecoms, IT and electronic commerce;**
- **promotion of north-south trade and supply chains, including through business linkages and partnerships;**
- **promoting cross-border trade events and marketing initiatives;**
- **identifying new areas of trade between North and South;**
- **promoting market awareness and trade development in a north-south context;**
- **undertaking specific projects and events in relation to trade promotion, when tasked jointly on a project by project basis;**
- **providing advice on specific aspects of trade promotion, when tasked jointly to do so.**

Existing economic agencies North and South would continue to be funded by and operate under the direction of their respective administrations.

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Special EU Programmes

A body with the following functions:

Until the conclusion of the current Community Initiatives

- the central secretariat, monitoring, research, evaluation, technical assistance and development roles currently exercised jointly in respect of INTERREG and PEACE by the Department of Finance and the Department of Finance and Personnel;
- administration of certain sectoral sub-programmes under INTERREG and PEACE (interest rate subsidy and cross border co-operation between public bodies).

In relation to post-1999 Structural Funds

- advising North/South Ministerial Council and two Departments of Finance on negotiation with the EU Commission of post-1999 Community Initiatives and of Common Chapter;
- preparing, for the approval of the two administrations in the Council and in close consultation with the two Departments of Finance and other relevant Departments, detailed programme proposals under the new Community Initiatives (likely to be INTERREG III, LEADER III and EQUAL, and possibly a successor to PEACE);
- central secretariat, monitoring, research, evaluation, technical assistance and development roles in respect of these Initiatives;
- grant-making and other managerial functions in respect of INTERREG III and of north-south elements of programmes under other Initiatives, within the framework of the relevant overall policies of North and South respectively, and subject to the expenditure allocations and specific programme parameters agreed between the two administrations and with the EU Commission;
- monitoring and promoting implementation of the Common Chapter, which would have a specific budgetary allocation.

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Language

One body, with two separate parts, with the following functions:

Irish Language

- promotion of the Irish language;
- facilitating and encouraging its use in speech and writing in public and private life in the South and, in the context of Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, in Northern Ireland where there is appropriate demand;
- advising both administrations, public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors;
- undertaking supportive projects, and grant-aiding bodies and groups as considered necessary;
- undertaking research, promotional campaigns, and public and media relations;
- developing terminology and dictionaries;
- supporting Irish-medium education and the teaching of Irish.

Ulster Scots

- promotion of greater awareness and use of Ullans and of Ulster Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island.

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Aquaculture and Marine Matters

A body with the following functions:

Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough

- Promotion of development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough, for commercial and recreational purposes;
- Existing functions of Foyle Fisheries Commission in regard to inland fisheries conservation, protection, management and development, and equivalent functions in respect of Carlingford Lough;
- Development and licensing of aquaculture;
- Development of marine tourism.

Lighthouses

- Existing functions of the Commissioners of Irish Lights in respect of providing and maintaining aids to navigation along the coast of the whole island of Ireland and its adjacent seas and islands.

Given that the CIL functions in an East-West context, arrangements to maintain linkage with the relevant British authorities.

ANNEX 3

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MATTERS FOR COOPERATION

In accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 (i) of Strand Two of the Agreement, at least six matters are to be identified and agreed for co-operation through the mechanism of existing bodies in each separate jurisdiction.

The matters below have been identified as suitable for initial consideration by the NSMC in this regard. It would be open to the NSMC, by agreement between the two sides, to consider other matters.

(i) Transport

Strategic planning and development of cross-border co-operation in transport: while co-operation would primarily arise in respect of road and rail planning, it would take account of issues arising in the port and airport sectors; road and rail safety.

(ii) Agriculture

Discussion of CAP issues; Animal and Plant Health Policy and Research; Rural Development.

(iii) Education

Education for Children with Special Needs (eg autism, hearing impairment); Educational Underachievement; Teacher Qualifications; School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges.

(iv) Health

Accident and emergency planning; co-operation on high technology equipment; cancer research; health promotion.

(v) Environment

Research into environmental protection; water quality management and waste management in cross-border context.

(vi) Tourism

Establishment of publicly-owned limited company as set out below.

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TOURISM

A publicly owned limited company will be established by Bord Failte and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to provide the following services:

- planning and delivering international tourism marketing programmes, including programmes in partnership with the industry North and South;
- publication and dissemination in overseas markets of information of a balanced and comprehensive nature on the island of Ireland as a tourist destination, which must reflect the diverse traditions, forms of cultural expression, and identities within the island;
- market research, provision of information and other appropriate assistance to help the industry develop international marketing expertise;
- co-operation with, consulting, and assisting other bodies or associations in carrying out such activities;
- carrying out surveys and collecting relevant statistics and information.

The new company would subsume the existing Overseas Tourism Marketing Initiative. It would carry out overseas marketing and promotion activity for Bord Failte and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, and would establish overseas offices for that purpose.

The company's Articles of Association and Memorandum, which would establish its overall strategic objectives, would be agreed by the two administrations.