

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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Elements for Draft Communique to be issued
unofficially and personally from Irish Side

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach had a useful and constructive exchange of views both on the efforts under way to achieve acceptable political progress in Northern Ireland and on efforts to stamp out terrorism.

While re-affirming previous guarantees that any ultimate constitutional settlement for Northern Ireland must have the consent of the majority ^{of a} ~~the~~ _{majority} ^{if there} both Governments could agree that a process of reconciliation in Ireland by agreement and with consent would be the most desirable and most lasting solution to the problem.

Agreement could be recorded on the importance of the special relationship between the peoples of Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic and on the need to secure political progress in the interests of peace and reconciliation on the basis of this special relationship.

The present process in which the British Government is engaged will be pursued within that framework.

The Prime Ministers ^{could express satisfaction at the degree of} ~~noted the results of their~~

^{operation on security} ^{in recent} ^{preceding months} ^{and on other}
^{economic prospects}
The communique might end with an expression of intention to remain in contact.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach had a useful and constructive exchange of views on the efforts under way to achieve acceptable political progress in Northern Ireland.

They noted the satisfactory result achieved by the respective security forces in combatting terrorism in the preceding months.

While reaffirming previous guarantees that any ultimate constitutional settlement for Northern Ireland would ^{require} ~~secure~~ the consent of a majority both Governments could agree that the most desirable and lasting solution to the problem could be achieved through a process of discussion and agreement from which could be evolved some new arrangements in which the interests and traditions of all the people of Ireland could be safeguarded. Agreement could be recorded on the importance of the special relationship between the peoples of Great Britain and Ireland

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on the need to secure political progress on the basis of this special relationship in the interests of peace and reconciliation.

The present process in which the British Government is engaged would be pursued within that framework.

The communique might end with an expression of intention to hold further meetings.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach reviewed the present situation in Northern Ireland. They were concerned at the persistent difficulties which stand in the way of political progress.

They agreed to initiate a programme of discussions between the two Governments at Ministerial level to explore the possibilities of closer political co-operation between Britain and Ireland in the context of which a permanent and lasting solution to the problem of Northern Ireland might be found.

Calls by the Leader of the Opposition and others for me to indicate in detail the sort of united Ireland I would wish to see are unrealistic at this stage.

Everyone knows the sort of Ireland to which I am attached but I suggest that that is not what is important today. What is important is the extent to which the Ireland I favour would be changed and altered to accommodate those whose traditions and attitudes are different from mine. This would require long and earnest discussion with these people. There is no point in my setting out what I think they should want or my ideas of what I think they want. It is sufficient for me to say that I am prepared at any time to enter into discussion with people from every tradition in these islands and that I am prepared in those circumstances to go to very great lengths to accommodate views and traditions other than my own.