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STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, 25 JANUARY, 1988

The Government are deeply dismayed by the decision of the British authorities, as announced in the House of Commons today by the Attorney General, Sir Patrick Mayhew, not to proceed with prosecutions in respect of those matters which were the subject of the inquiry initiated by Mr. Stalker and completed by Mr. Sampson concerning allegations of a shoot-to-kill policy by the security forces in Northern Ireland in 1982 and allegations of a subsequent perversion of the course of justice. The Government are deeply concerned at the implications of this decision for public confidence in the administration of justice in Northern Ireland and in particular for public confidence by the Nationalist community in the RUC.

The Government will be seeking urgent clarification on today's announcement and on those other matters addressed by this enquiry - specifically questions relating to the management and structures of the RUC, to Constable Robinson's incursion allegation, and as to why the Report should not be published.