

JOINT REPORT OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE AIIC TO THE ANGLO-IRISH
SUMMIT ON ANGLO-IRISH CONTACTS AND CO-OPERATION

1. The co-chairmen of the Steering Committee of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council (AIIC) have examined the range of co-operation and contacts between the two countries since the establishment of the AIIC following the Summit meeting between the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP and the Taoiseach, Dr Garret FitzGerald TD, on 6 November 1981, having in mind that it is a purpose of the AIIC to encourage contacts between the two Governments within the Council framework at Ministerial and official level, and more widely outside the Council framework. A detailed review by the Co-ordinating Committee of the AIIC is annexed.

2. The first meeting of the AIIC took place in early 1982, at official level on 20 January and at Ministerial level on 29 January. To date there have been twenty bilateral meetings at Ministerial level within the framework of the Council (a full list is attached) and a wide range of political, economic and cultural matters have been discussed. At official level, both the Steering Committee and the Co-ordinating Committee have met three times. Outside the immediate framework of the AIIC, there have been a very large number of contacts between officials of both state and semi-state bodies.

3. Major progress has been made in the energy field, where agreement has been reached on the supply of natural gas to Northern Ireland from the Kinsale field in the Republic. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Belfast on 10 October 1983, providing for the supply of up to 1720 million therms of gas over a twenty-two year period. The United Kingdom is investing £150 million in the project over the period including £5 million towards the cost of the Dublin/Border section of the pipeline. The project safeguards the gas industry of Northern Ireland which would otherwise have closed. It is a welcome example of North/South economic co-operation of advantage to both sides and illustrates the practical benefits which can derive from close economic relationships. Several other examples of economic co-operation are given in the attached report.

4. Among measures to encourage greater mutual understanding, the two Governments agreed in July 1983 to support the establishment of a new Anglo-Irish organisation, Encounter, first recommended in the Joint Studies commissioned by the two Governments in December 1980. The co-chairmen, Sir David Orr and Dr T K Whitaker, have co-opted an Executive Board which met for the first time on 2 November. Encounter aims to organise meetings and seminars on matters of interest to the people of the two countries in the economic, social and cultural fields. It is independent of either government though it will receive some financial support from both. The co-chairmen plan to hold their first seminar in the spring of 1984.

5. Dail Eireann has recently given a second reading to a Bill which proposes to confer voting rights on British citizens resident in the Republic on the same basis as Irish citizens.

6. Extensive contacts continue in the fields of education, sport and youth exchanges. Co-operation in the cultural field, involving museums, libraries and Arts Councils, is also close. As the review indicates, there may be scope for intensifying co-operation in the educational and cultural fields. This is an area where further work could usefully be done. There is moreover considerable scope for joint efforts to promote greater understanding among the people of both countries and of the two major traditions that exist in the two parts of Ireland.

7. It would be inappropriate to deal here with co-operation in the security field.

8. The co-chairmen conclude that the recent intensification of bilateral contacts has been positive and useful and has led to a genuine increase in co-operation. They invite the two Heads of Government to take note of the annexed review of activity and authorise the Co-ordinating Committee to continue its work.

3 November 1983

3 November 1983

Institutional Structures

1.1. Intergovernmental body

In December 1980 the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister commissioned Joint Studies to examine possible new institutional structures, citizenship rights, economic cooperation, measures to encourage mutual understanding and security matters. At their meeting on 6 November 1981 the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister received a joint report on these studies which had been prepared by officials. Recognising the unique character of the relationship between the two countries, they decided to establish an Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council through which more comprehensive institutional expression could be given to the relationship between the two Governments. It was envisaged that regular meetings between the two Governments could take place within the Council framework at Ministerial and official level to discuss matters of common concern. At official level the Council consists of a Steering Committee and a Coordinating Committee.

The first meetings of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council took place in January 1982. at official level on the 20th of that month and at Ministerial level on the 29th.

To date there have been twenty bilateral meetings at Ministerial level within the framework of the Council (a full list is attached) and a wide range of political, economic and cultural matters have been discussed. Successive Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland have met in the framework of the Council on five occasions. The provision of gas from the Kinsale field to Northern Ireland has been discussed at Ministerial level in the Council on six occasions. The first summit level meeting of the AIIC between the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister is taking place in November 1983 and several other Ministerial level meetings are expected in the coming months.

At official level, the Steering Committee has met on three occasions. The Coordinating Committee convened in September 1983 and has met three times in order to prepare the present report.

AIIC Ministerial Meetings 1982-1983

No.	Date	Participants	Subject
✓ 1.	29.1.82	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Minister for Foreign Affairs Lord Privy Seal and Minister for Foreign Affairs	Anglo-Irish relations
2.	30.3.82	Minister for the Gaeltacht and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Welsh Office	Language questions and regional development
3.	31.3.82	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Minister for Foreign Affairs	Anglo-Irish relations
✓ 4.	17.5.82	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Minister for the Environment	Cross Border infrastructure
✓ 5.	18.5.82	Minister of Industry and Energy and Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office	Kinsale Gas
✓ 6.	28.5.82	Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office and Minister for Industry and Energy	Kinsale Gas
7	16.8.82	Minister for Fisheries and Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office	Fisheries
8.	3.11.82	Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office	EEC issues
✓ 9.	1.2.83	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Minister for Foreign Affairs	Anglo-Irish relations
10.	3.2.83	Minister for Industry and Energy and Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office	Kinsale Gas

No.	Date	Participants	Subject
11.	10.2.83	Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office and Minister for Industry and Energy	Kinsale Gas
12.	12-14.4.83	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Welsh Office and Minister for the Gaeltacht	Language questions and regional development
13.	18.7.83	Minister for Industry and Energy and Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office	Kinsale Gas
14.	27.7.83	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Minister for Foreign Affairs Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Minister for Foreign Affairs	Anglo-Irish relations
15.	27-29.7.83	Minister for the Gaeltacht and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Welsh Office	Language questions and regional development
16.	5.10.83	Secretary of State for Energy and Minister for Industry and Energy	Oil production policy
17.	6.10.83	Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department of the Environment and Minister of State for the Environment	Local Government
18.	10.10.83	Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office and Minister for Industry and Energy	Kinsale Gas
19.	19.10.83	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Minister for Foreign Affairs	Anglo-Irish relations
20.	28.10.83	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Minister of State, Department of Labour	Youth matters

1.2 Parliamentary Links

In the Joint Report* on the Anglo-Irish Studies, received by the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister at their meeting on 6 November 1981, it was stated that the officials had examined inter alia "how the parliamentary links between the two countries might most appropriately be developed as the natural and desirable complement to the establishment of a new intergovernmental body". (The Joint Study which dealt specifically with institutional structures had reached the conclusion that "it would be a natural and desirable development for the establishment of a new intergovernmental body to be complemented at an appropriate moment by the development of an inter-parliamentary body").

At their meeting on 6 November 1981, the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister agreed that it would be for the Irish and British Parliaments to consider at an appropriate time whether there should be an Anglo-Irish body at parliamentary level. Irish Ministers have subsequently reverted to this matter at meetings of the AIIC.

* Note: this report, subsequently referred to as "The Joint Report", is the initial document in the "Anglo-Irish Joint Studies," published in Dublin as Pl 299 and in London as Cmd 8414.

1.3 Advisory Committee of the AIIC and the Encounter Organisation

Following meetings between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Secretaries of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and Northern Ireland on 27 July 1983, it was announced that the two Governments had decided to support the establishment of an Anglo-Irish Encounter Organisation as recommended in the Joint Report which foresaw the setting up of the Encounter Organisation as an interim measure, pending the eventual creation of an Advisory Committee on economic, social and cultural co-operation, associated with the AIIC. The main activity of Encounter will be to hold periodic conferences and seminars, with a wide range of representation, on economic, social, cultural and other matters of common interest with a view to promoting mutual understanding, useful co-operation and good relations.

Dr T K Whitaker and Sir David Orr are Joint Chairmen of Encounter. They have recently completed the process of co-opting an Executive Board and have indicated that the first conference will take place early in 1984. The Organisation is independent of government control. The Irish and British Governments are providing a measure of financial support.

Citizenship Rights

2. Extension of Irish franchise to resident UK citizens and possible removal of differences in treatment of Irish citizens as between Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The Electoral (Amendment) Bill 1983, which proposes to confer voting rights at Dail and Presidential elections and referenda on British citizens resident in the Republic on the same basis as Irish citizens, was presented to Dail Eireann on 11 May. The Bill has recently received its second reading in the Dail.

There has been no change in the long standing voting rights exercised by Irish citizens in the United Kingdom.

At meetings subsequent to the publication of the Joint Studies, the Irish side have drawn attention to the other differences in this area, on which the position remains unchanged from that described in the Joint Studies.

Economic Co-operation

3.1 Monitoring of Economic Co-operation

The Joint Study group on Economic Co-operation noted the satisfactory working relationship which already existed in many areas either bilaterally or in the context of existing international agencies, and saw a continuing need for a senior official body to pursue matters of economic co-operation.

It was subsequently agreed that the Co-ordinating Committee of the AIIC would take over the role of the Anglo-Irish Economic Steering Group (AIESG) and co-ordinate and encourage economic co-operation.

Bilateral contacts between officials and public bodies in the economic field have continued and are being centrally monitored, and specific instances are dealt with in subsequent paragraphs. At Ministerial level various exchanges of views on economic issues have taken place, as set out in section 1.1 above.

3.2 Bilateral exchanges on energy matters

Since November 1981 there has been contact in the following areas:

i. Kinsale Gas

At the meeting in London on 6 November 1981, the Taoiseach and Prime Minister gave special consideration to the question of co-operation on energy matters and approved in particular negotiation on the possibility of supplying natural gas from the Kinsale field to Northern Ireland. Negotiations at ministerial level on the supply of natural gas to Northern Ireland began on 9th December 1981 and culminated in a memorandum of understanding signed on 10th October 1983, by the Irish Minister for Industry and Energy and the Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office. The memorandum of understanding provides for the supply of up to 1720 million therms of gas over a twenty-two year period. The gas should come on stream in Belfast in late 1985.

This arrangement will provide substantial economic benefits to the Republic and to Northern Ireland where it will ensure the continuance of the Northern Ireland gas industry which employs over 1,000 people.

ii. Electricity

At their meeting on 6 November 1981, the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister agreed on the desirability of restoring the interconnector between the Northern Ireland Electricity Service and the Electricity Supply Board in the South. Although the restoration of the link remains desirable, the interconnector has been out of use for several years because of repeated terrorist attacks within Northern Ireland.

The proposal for an electricity interconnector between South Wales and Wexford has been the subject of several meetings at official level. The latest took place in Dublin on 6 April 1983. A review of the economic feasibility of establishing such an interconnector is now in train.

3.3 Bilateral exchanges on marine pollution and counter measures

A meeting at Ministerial level took place in Belfast in May 1982 between the then Minister for the Environment and his Northern Ireland counterpart. Matters discussed included the disposal of toxic waste, the monitoring of water pollution in Lough Erne and Lough Foyle and the development of North/South liaison on oil pollution of coastline and estuaries. These discussions are continuing at official level.

Government Departments have had contacts in the following areas:

a. Radioactive waste

The discharge of radioactive waste into the sea and questions concerning possible accidental radioactive emissions into the air have been raised in exchanges between the two Governments. Further cooperation is under discussion.

b. Oil Pollution

There is communication and information exchange on marine pollution and there is cooperation between the British and Irish authorities on the coordination of response to marine pollution emergencies.

c. Foyle River System

The management of the fisheries in Lough Foyle is carried out by the Foyle Fisheries Commission on which the relevant authorities, North and South, are represented.

The relevant Departments, North and South, have agreed to set up a joint group to consult on water quality management of the Foyle River System. Consultations will involve exchange of monitoring information, hydrometric statistics, action on problem areas and arrangements for dealing with oil pollution in Lough Foyle, should the need arise.

d. Erne River System

Departments, North and South, are currently establishing a joint group to develop a coordinated approach to the Erne River System.

3.4 Direct broadcasting by satellite

There have been informal consultations between the relevant Irish and British authorities on the potential for co-operation on direct broadcasting by satellite.

3.5 Consultations between agricultural authorities

There is regular and useful contact between Irish and British officials on agricultural matters. There is also frequent contact at working level between the Departments of Agriculture, North and South. Topics recently dealt with in this way include drainage questions such as the Blackwater scheme, and the operation of the West of Ireland and Northern Ireland Agricultural Development Programmes for Less Favoured Areas.

Since the beginning of 1982 Dublin officials have had nine meetings with Northern Ireland officials and three with Whitehall officials on the subject of animal health. On plant health there have been two meetings with Northern Ireland officials.

The arrangements for the protection and improvement of animal and plant health have worked to the mutual advantage of both agricultural industries. The meetings have led to complementary and practical action on each side of the border. The existing flexible arrangements should be continued and developed to meet changing needs.

3.6 Lough Foyle

At the request of the Foyle Fisheries Commission, biologists from the Department of Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland carried out a joint survey of the mussel resources in Lough Foyle and consideration is being given to ways of encouraging the development of shellfish culture.

3.7 Transport and road safety

Co-operation on transport matters has been handled for several years in the Anglo-Irish Joint Communications Group, under alternating British and Irish chairmanship. The Group has met once since the publication of the Joint Studies, in June 1982.

There have been consultations between the Irish and British authorities on the weights and dimensions of commercial vehicles in the context of European Community regulations.

There has also been co-operation on the administration of the Joint Agreement on Road Haulage. Since the early 1970's the authorities concerned have been in continuous contact about improving the Newry-Dundalk road link. The Newry-Dundalk road forms part of the Larne-Rosslare section of the European Route E01. The European Community assists in funding

improvements on this route. Proposals for the improvement of the Newry-Dundalk road have been the subject of a technical evaluation by an Foras Forbartha (the National Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research) and the British Transport and Roads Research Laboratory. The result of this evaluation will be available later this year.

In addition, there have been North/South exchanges on such matters as traffic management including road safety, and these will be continued.

3.8 Efforts to stimulate co-operation in scientific and technological fields

A good deal of informal contact has taken place between the Irish and British authorities within the context of the European Community, the United Nations, the OECD and the European Space Agency. There is considerable interaction between the relevant academic and other institutions. Both Governments favour such contacts and will encourage their development.

3.9 Anglo-Irish Co-operation in the European Community and Political Co-operation

The two countries are partners in the European Community and an increasing amount of co-operation between the two governments takes place in a Community framework. There are at the same time extensive bilateral contacts between the two Governments in this field and in the field of Political Co-operation. The Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs recently reviewed current Community issues with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and will be meeting the British Minister of State responsible for European affairs. Senior Irish and UK officials hold bilateral discussions on Community issues, issues current in European Political Co-operation and on other international issues.

3.10 North/South cooperation in the border areas

There have been close consultations on the implementation of three economic studies of cross-border areas. As noted above, a drainage scheme for the River Blackwater is also being undertaken. A meeting of the East Border Region Committee in Downpatrick, Co. Down, on 19 October 1983 was attended by the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Northern Ireland Minister for Economic Development. A proposal for a further cross-border study in relation to Lough Melvin, which straddles the border at Counties Leitrim and Fermanagh, is under consideration. There has been close contact also in relation to the non-quota section of the Regional Fund and specifically its application to border areas. The total allocations by the European Community for its Special Border Areas Programme for Ireland, mainly in respect of tourism and small firms, are £4.5 million (sterling) for Northern Ireland and £9 million (sterling) for the Republic.

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Community has established a study group to examine the development needs and potential of the border areas. The study group visited Ireland on a number of occasions. Meetings have taken place with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Ministers at the Northern Ireland Office. The study group hopes to complete its work this year.

3.11 Cooperation on industrial development

There have been informal contacts between the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and the Invest in Britain Bureau, and between the IDA and the Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland. It is intended that these contacts will be maintained.

3.12 Joint trade promotion activities

In the course of 1983 visits have been exchanged between senior members of the Executives of the Industrial Development Board for Northern Ireland and of Coras Trachtála (Irish Export Board) and the Irish Goods Council. Dialogue was opened up on the possibilities for trade co-operation and joint promotional activities, and this exchange of ideas is continuing. Some Northern Ireland firms have participated in Irish stands organised by the Irish Export Board at various trade fairs and this continues.

One joint promotional activity is already at detailed planning stage. The Industrial Development Board and the Irish Goods Council are jointly sponsoring an exhibition in Craigavon, Northern Ireland on 15 and 16 November at which products and components used by industry throughout Ireland but presently sourced outside the island will be displayed. Manufacturers from north and south of the border will be invited to the exhibition to identify potential opportunities and to obtain further information about components and their present users from the staff of both the Industrial Development Board and the Irish Goods Council who will be in attendance.

Further joint exhibitions of this kind including one in Dublin next year, are being considered.

3.13 Scope for co-operation on the facilitation of trade

There is continuing scope for co-operation in trade facilitation and with this in view contacts will continue between the Simplification of International Trade Procedures Board (SITPRO) and Coras Trachtála (Irish Export Board).

3.14 Industrial Training

ANCO (the Irish Industrial Training Authority) maintains close contact with the Manpower Services Commission in Great Britain on matters such as training in small businesses, employment training schemes for young people, corporate planning in manpower training and the design of Skillcentres. Existing co-operation between ANCO and the Manpower Service Commission in Great Britain and the Northern Ireland Department of Economic Development has been valuable and it would be useful to continue to develop it where relevant opportunities and needs are identified.

ANCO maintains contact with the Northern Ireland Training Executive and Industrial Training Boards. This co-operation has led to a number of North-South exchange visits and participation in training programmes.

There are close contacts between the Irish Department of Labour's industrial inspectorate and the British Health and Safety Executive. Talks between the Northern and Southern factory inspectorates on the subject of dangerous substances are being arranged.

The Council for Education, Recruitment and Training (CERT), has a close working relationship with the Catering Industry Training Board (Northern Ireland). Since 1982, two tripartite meetings have been held involving CERT, the Northern Ireland Board and the UK Training Board. Such meetings are held at six-monthly intervals. Since early 1982, CERT has made three visits to the Northern Ireland Board to hold exchange meetings on training.

3.15 Cooperation between the tourist authorities

Since November 1981, the tripartite committee comprising the British Tourist Authority (BTA), the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and Bord Failte (BFE) has continued to function and there has been co-operation on market research and development.

There is also close contact between officials of the Department of Trade, Commerce and Tourism and their counterparts in the NI Department of Economic Development, as well as co-operation at local authority level on tourist promotion and on the undertaking of specific studies, eg Newry/Dundalk tourism study, and proposed cross-border study of Lough Melvin. The NITB and several Northern Ireland district councils participated in the Dublin Holiday and Leisure Fair while BFE attends tourist exhibitions in Belfast.

Since the beginning of 1982, Ministers at the Department of Trade, Commerce and Tourism have travelled to Belfast twice, in May 1982 and in August 1983, to attend BFE tourism promotion functions.

Plans are well advanced for the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in association with the British Tourist Authority to open a tourist information centre in Dublin. This should be operational in 1984.

Officials of NITB and BFE meet regularly and co-operate in several ways, for example compiling statistics, exchanging promotional literature for public use at various offices and they have shared exhibition stands at promotional ventures abroad.

The two Boards have in recent years provided advice to their respective Government Departments on the tourism schemes included in the European Community Special Programme for the Border Areas. There has been co-operation in the preparation of maps for tourists.

3.16 Co-operation in public purchasing

Officials will discuss, where appropriate, the scope for co-operation in public purchasing which would be mutually beneficial to both Governments and consonant with Community and other international obligations.

Measures for the Encouragement of Mutual Understanding

Youth Affairs and Sport

4.1 The Irish Government makes financial assistance available to youth groups from the Republic to visit Britain and for hosting visits to the Republic by British youth groups. Financial support is given by the British Council for youth exchanges to the Republic and in Northern Ireland arrangements for the support of group visits by youth clubs have been continued. In February of this year an Irish-British Youth exchange training workshop was held in Dublin under the auspices of the National Youth Council and the British Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges. The Irish Department of Labour also makes financial assistance available to youth groups for visits to Northern Ireland or for hosting visits of youth groups from Northern Ireland. In 1983 1500 people have already availed themselves of this scheme. The Irish Minister of State responsible for Youth Affairs has initiated contacts with his counterpart in Northern Ireland to discuss developments in youth policy generally, including youth exchanges.

The Irish Industrial Training Authority, ANCO, and the Department of Economic Development in Northern Ireland have financially supported a reciprocal training programme for unemployed young people. This has been done with co-operation of the voluntary organisation, Hope, in Dublin (in respect of young people from deprived backgrounds in Dublin) and a voluntary body operating a Work Preparation Unit (as part of the Youth Training Programme) in respect of young people in the Omagh area. In addition ANCO has co-operated with the Northern Ireland Department of Economic Development on youth exchange arrangements in Italy and Holland.

There is close co-operation between Cospoir, the Irish Sports Council, which is funded by the Department of Education in Dublin, and the Sports Council in Northern Ireland, which is funded by the Northern Ireland Department of Education and also between Cospoir and the British Sports Council. Specific discussion is in train about joint themes and joint publications for the International Year of Youth 1985.

Cross-border co-operation between sporting bodies has continued to develop. A Commission has been formed for cycling consisting of the governing bodies North and South, and the Mountain Rescue Committees in the North and South are establishing cross-membership.

4.2 Work of Voluntary Organisations in Community Relations

The contacts referred to in the Joint Studies Report have continued. In addition Cooperation North has launched its Working Together Award Scheme. Cooperation North has received financial assistance from both the Irish and British Governments in recognition of its contribution towards better relations between North and South in various fields. This Governmental support has been continued in 1983. The Glencree Reconciliation Centre has received grants from the Irish Government in both 1982 and 1983 to help with its work in promoting reconciliation and the British Government is continuing its support to a number of organisations, such as Corrymeela, Churches Central Committee for Community Work, Harmony Community Trust and Protestant and Catholic Encounter, which are seeking to promote improved community relations.

4.3 Co-operation in Education

Student teachers have participated in North/South exchanges. Schools contacts have also continued. The Northern Ireland UNESCO Committee intends to invite a number of pupils from the Republic to participate in a model United Nations Assembly to be held in Ballymena in March 1984.

There are regular North-South contacts at schools inspector level and members of each inspectorate have frequently attended their counterparts' meetings.. North/South inter-departmental discussions have taken place on teacher qualifications. The twenty-one teacher in-service training centres in the Republic have all been encouraged by the Department of Education in Dublin to develop closer cooperation with their Northern counterparts. The Church of Ireland Teacher Training College in Dublin sends a number of its students to Northern Ireland for teaching experience. Adult education organisers in the Republic are encouraged to attend courses at Magee College in Northern Ireland and twenty-eight of the fifty organisers in the South have attended such courses.

Discussions have taken place at official level about the scope for greater and mutually beneficial use of higher education places in Northern Ireland by students from the Republic, and vice versa. Since 1981 steps have been taken by the South to encourage students to go to Northern Ireland higher education institutions by changes in their student support grants. The Department of Education in Dublin have, in the case of students eligible for higher education grants and Vocational Education Committee scholarships who would wish to study in Northern Ireland, decided to award the same number of pounds sterling as Irish pounds normally allowed. At present twenty students have availed themselves of this provision. It is estimated that about 700 students from Northern Ireland are at present studying at third level in the South. There are about 150 students from the South attending higher education courses in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Economic Council and the National Economic and Social Council in Dublin have commissioned a joint study on the scope for co-operation in higher education.

An Open University (OU) Working Group has had discussions with the Irish National Institute for Higher Education (NIHE) covering several aspects of distance learning. Proposals are under discussion for the OU to provide, on a commercial basis, specialist advice and technical assistance to the NIHE's Distance Study Unit. Agreement has been reached on credit transfers for students between the OU and Trinity College Dublin.

There have been close contacts between the Council for Continuing Education in Northern Ireland and AONTAS, its counterpart in the South. The voluntary providers - eg. Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and the Education Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA) are also in regular contact with the sponsors of specific projects and individuals in this field.

4.4 Co-operation between Churches' in education

The Irish Council of Churches and the Justice and Peace Commission have almost completed a project to provide community relations teaching material for primary and secondary schools. This material is available for use by schools of all denominations and types of management both North and South.

It deals with issues such as relationships within society, the development of a positive approach to diversity, and the use of words and symbols in dividing communities or promoting reconciliation between them. Follow-up action to ensure maximum use of this material is being supported by both governments.

4.5 Secondment of Officials and other Public Services matters

Since the establishment of the AIIIC there have been discussions between officials of the Department of the Public Service in Dublin and the Cabinet Office (Management and Personnel Office) in London on a possible format for reciprocal secondment of officials on the lines of similar arrangements between other member states of the European Community. Following further recent contacts it is now hoped that such a scheme can be operational in the near future.

There have been several meetings already this year on other technical and managerial questions related to the public service between the Department of the Public Service in Dublin and officials in London and Belfast. Further meetings are scheduled.

4.6 Co-operation in the Cultural Field

The cultural relationship between the peoples of the two countries at all levels is uniquely close. Some current examples of institutional cooperation in this field are the following:

There have been close and active contacts between museums in the two countries. The British Museum and the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) have been in close touch on conservation matters and the check listing of the NMI's ethnographical collection. The British National Maritime Museum (NMM) is working with the NMI on the excavation of a Viking Age ship and a currach is being built for the NMM in County Kerry. There have been loans of objects and pictures for exhibition in each direction. Discussions continue in order to resolve a legal difficulty which has arisen in connection with the exhibition of paintings under the terms of the Lane Bequest. There has also been

extensive co-operation between the museums of Northern Ireland and of the Republic. This has included joint exhibitions, visits from schoolchildren, and curatorial and professional co-operation. Notable examples are the transfer of the finds from the Armada wreck "Trinidad Valencera" to the Ulster Museum by the Irish Government and the location of an Irish Museums Trust Scholarship at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

Trinity College Dublin continues to be a copyright library in common with the five UK libraries and British material is deposited there. Similarly, Irish material is deposited in the British Library. Loans and copies are provided to all Irish organisations by the British Library on the same basis as to British organisations.

The British Film Institute involve themselves in the Dublin Film Festival and subsidise some of the exhibitors. They have a good working relationship with the Irish Film Archive and there is frequent interchange of material. Five Irish films supported by An Bord Scannan (The Irish Film Board) are being shown at the London Film Festival in November 1983.

Two young Irish musicians are being trained in the United Kingdom on Irish Arts Council scholarships supplemented by scholarships from a trust administered by the Arts Council of Great Britain. Touring drama companies subsidised by the Arts Council of Great Britain have visited Ireland and in 1982 the British Council made a financial contribution to the Dublin Theatre Festival where a number of British companies appeared and also to the Wexford Festival Opera.

The Arts Councils of Northern Ireland and the Republic have exchanged annual visits. Views have been exchanged on general policy issues and areas for practical cooperation have been examined including touring arrangements for theatre and ballet companies. Other areas of cooperation have included exhibitions, joint funding of independent film projects, magazines, books and music; the interchange of educational material relevant to the arts; mutual

representation on bursaries and award panels; the joint administration and funding of the Tyrone Guthrie Centre as a residential facility for creative artists. There have been annual meetings between the Directors of the Arts Councils of the Republic, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Consideration is being given to co-operative activities in connection with European Music Year 1985.