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ANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

JOINT RECORD OF REGULAR MEETING HELD ON 17 JUNE 1986

IN STORMONT CASTLE, BELFAST

PARTICIPANTS

	British Side	Irish Side
Joint Chairmen :	Mr Tom King	Mr Peter Barry
Ministerial :	Mr Nicholas Scott	Mr Alan Dukes
Officials :	Sir Robert Andrew Mr Kenneth Bloomfield Mr Anthony Brennan Mr Anthony Stephens Mr Gerald Clark Mr Robert Templeton Mr Jim Daniell	Mr Sean Donlon Mr Andrew Ward Mr Eamonn O'Tuathail Mr Richard O'Brien Mr Declan O'Donovan
Police :	Sir John Hermon	Mr John P.McMahon
Secretariat :	Mr Mark Elliott Mr Stephen Hewitt Ms Valerie Steele	Mr Michael Lillis Mr Padraic Collins Mr Noel Ryan

Cross-border Security Co-operation

1. The Secretariat had circulated a report (copy attached) of the outcome of the quadripartite discussion on the report of

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the first of the joint working parties established by the two Chief Police Officers on intelligence matters.

2. The Chief Constable and the Deputy Commissioner introduced the working party report. The Deputy Commissioner said that the Garda were fully committed to the report and that the Commissioner had accepted it in principle. He also reported on the Commissioner's decision - which the Chief Constable supported - (i) to deploy in border areas additional detectives who had received special training in counter-terrorist operations and (ii) to withdraw on a phased basis a number of Garda officers temporarily deployed in those areas. In further discussion, both sides agreed that it was important that the phased withdrawal of these latter officers be managed carefully so as to avoid public misunderstandings. The Irish side emphasised that the terrorist problem was not confined to border areas. The British side said that in their view it was desirable that a programme for implementing the Joint Report should be agreed by the two police forces. The Conference noted that the Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner had agreed that implementation would be monitored and that senior officers from both forces would meet at regular intervals for this purpose. It was agreed that the Conference would be kept informed of the progress made in implementing agreed proposals. The Deputy Commissioner mentioned that implementation of the recommendations on secure communications would depend on the outcome of consultation between the appropriate experts on each side.

3. The Irish side enquired about the threat both North and South from Loyalist paramilitary organisations, and about prospects for the forthcoming marches, in particular as regards attacks on Catholics in Northern Ireland. The British side said that further information was being given to the Irish side and that the threat of attacks on the homes and businesses of Catholics was one of the major concerns of the RUC.

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Relations between the Security Forces and the Community

4. The Irish side asked for updated figures on the accompaniment of Army patrols by the RUC, and emphasised the importance of this issue, in particular as regards the UDR, for confidence in the security forces among nationalists. They said that they had no intention of publishing the detail of any figures received. The British side said that it had been their policy for ten years to work for the accompaniment of Army patrols, and their commitment to this policy should not be doubted; but current pressures on the RUC distorted the pattern of RUC deployments and rendered impossible the production of any meaningful figures. The earliest time that it might be possible to produce figures based on a proper assessment of the proportion of all Army patrols which were likely to come into contact with the community was for the month of September. It was agreed that the Secretariat would work to establish statistical criteria for the evaluation of progress in this area.

5. The Irish side enquired about the particular case of the static UDR patrol at Castle Street in Belfast. The British side replied that the construction work necessary before the static UDR patrol could be removed was due to be completed in mid-July, and emphasised the need to avoid any public mention of this issue until the operation was completed.

6. The Irish side asked about progress on the Code of Conduct, pointing out that publication of an appropriate Code would increase minority confidence in the RUC and aid recruitment of Catholics. The British side explained the progress of consultation on the draft Code and the importance of producing a worthwhile and acceptable document.

7. In discussion of the British proposals for a new police complaints procedure, the Irish side expressed appreciation of the meetings which had been arranged through the Secretariat, but said that they were still concerned at the lack of a

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sufficiently independent element in the investigation of complaints. They asked that a further meeting be arranged before publication of the draft Order. The British side described the difficulty of departing any further from the procedures which applied in England and Wales and the additional provision which had been made for the Secretary of State or the Police Authority to require the proposed Commission to oversee an investigation if a matter was of public interest even if it were not the subject of a complaint. Publication of the draft Order could not be delayed if it was to be achieved during the current session of Parliament, but this need not prevent subsequent change in the proposals. They agreed to further discussion in the Secretariat in which they would respond to Irish views and proposals.

8. The Irish side referred to the differences in the guidance on the use of plastic baton rounds given to the police in Northern Ireland and in England and Wales, and asked that the guidance which applied there should be extended also to Northern Ireland. The British side explained that while the legal requirement to use only minimal reasonable force was common throughout the UK, what was reasonable depended upon the circumstances, which were clearly very different as between GB and NI. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed further in the Secretariat.

9. The Irish side asked about an apparent increase in strip-searching. The British side explained that it was due to a coincidental increase in the rate of admissions and discharges which involved compulsory strip-searching; the recent figures for discretionary strip-searches showed a steady decline.

Electoral Matters

10. The British side explained their plans to enable "I" voters to have the right to vote in local government and Assembly

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elections in Northern Ireland, as they did for Westminster elections. The Irish side welcomed these plans, and enquired about the question of disqualification from membership of the Assembly for members of the Oireachtas. The British side said that there were substantial difficulties about acceding to the Irish proposal at this time but did not rule it out indefinitely.

Irish Language

11. The British side described the practical steps which they had in mind to recognise the position of the Irish language in Northern Ireland without going so far as to promote a bilingual society. The Irish side welcomed these proposals, and suggested that they be discussed further through the Secretariat together with further Irish suggestions.

Legal Matters

12. Progress reports from Working Groups I and II had been circulated.

13. In answer to questions from the British side, the Irish side further developed their proposal for three-judge courts, and repeated their view of the importance of substantial progress on this issue if legislation was to be introduced to enable the Irish Government to ratify the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism. They said that it would be wrong to see the making of reservations at the time of ratification as necessarily removing the value of Irish accession to the Convention. The British side said that they still saw major problems about three-judge courts. They asked whether they could be sure that the danger of constitutional challenge to Irish ratification would be removed if progress were made towards three-judge courts. The Irish side said that there could be no certainty of this, but that perceptions in the nationalist community would be materially affected, and

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this would also have an effect on the atmosphere in Irish courts.

Economic and Social Questions

14. The British side described the information which they had about local opposition in the Newry area to construction of a new Newry/Dundalk road on the route proposed by the Irish. The Irish side said that local communities always objected to new road proposals, but undertook to check their own information before engaging in further discussion. The British side agreed to keep an open mind on the issue and to explore further the best way of improving the road link between Newry and Dundalk.

Joint Statement

15. A joint statement was agreed. A copy is attached.

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ANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

Article 9(a) - Cross-border Security Co-operation

Progress Report by the Secretariat

1. At its fourth regular meeting on 9 May 1986, the Conference noted the progress made by the Chief Constable of the RUC and the Commissioner of the Garda Siochana in preparing a programme of work as envisaged in Article 9(a) of the Agreement. Three joint working parties had been established by the two Chief Police Officers at the end of February and the report of the first of these, which was concerned with intelligence matters (including threat assessments) had been completed in early May.
2. Following consideration of the first working party report by the two Chief Police Officers, a 'quadripartite' meeting was held at Stormont House on Wednesday, 4 June. The quadripartite group, comprising the Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner, officials from the Northern Ireland Office and the Department of Justice, as well as representatives of the Secretariat, noted that the report had been agreed in principle and would be presented to the next meeting of the Conference by the two Chief Police Officers. A summary of the main recommendations is at pages 120-125 of the Report.
3. At the quadripartite meeting, the Garda Commissioner outlined his approach to implementating the recommendations in the joint report. He said that he had asked his two Deputy Commissioners to examine current operations in the border divisions and that implementation of the report would be further considered in the light of their findings. The

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Commissioner indicated that, as a first step, he proposed to reassign about 80 members of the Garda to detective duties following completion of special training later this month and that he had decided for operational reasons that members of the force currently assigned to the border on a temporary basis would be gradually withdrawn and redeployed in their own divisions. He said that he would consider redesignating the posts of border superintendent as detective superintendent posts (as part of the Special Branch) and placing these officers in charge of all anti-terrorist operations in the border divisions but that they would continue to report through the divisional chief superintendents.

4. The Chief Constable and the Commissioner agreed that progress in the implementation of the report would be monitored and that senior officers from both police forces would meet at regular intervals for this purpose.
5. The quadripartite group also noted that the report of the second working party, which deals with co-operation in the field of operations, would be completed during the second week of June and that the third report on CID operations, support services and legal matters would be completed by the end of the month. Both reports would then be submitted for approval to the two Chief Police Officers with a view to consideration by the Conference as soon as possible.

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JOINT STATEMENT

1. The Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference met in Belfast on 17 June 1986. The Irish Joint Chairman, Mr. Peter Barry TD (Minister for Foreign Affairs), was accompanied by Mr. Alan Dukes TD (Minister for Justice). The British Joint Chairman, Mr. Tom King MP (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), was accompanied by Mr. Nicholas Scott MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland). The Deputy Commissioner of the Garda Síochána, the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and officials were also present.
2. The Conference heard reports from the Chief Constable and the Deputy Commissioner on the first of a series of studies being made by joint working parties established by the two police forces to examine various aspects of cross-border security co-operation. They welcomed the agreement reached by the Garda Síochána and the Royal Ulster Constabulary on measures both to improve their arrangements for the exchange of information and to develop liaison structures. They also welcomed the continuing studies in other related areas, and looked forward to further reports to subsequent meetings of the Conference.
3. In reviewing the security situation, the Conference condemned the brutal and unscrupulous attacks by terrorists of recent weeks and reaffirmed their determination to work together against those who use or support violence.
4. The Conference discussed relations between the security forces in Northern Ireland and the community, and the Irish side put forward further views on ways in which the confidence of the minority community in the security forces could be enhanced.

5. During a discussion of the position of "I" voters in Northern Ireland, the British side confirmed its view that the provisions which govern the franchise for Parliamentary elections throughout the United Kingdom should also be applied to local government and Assembly elections in Northern Ireland, and stated its intention of taking appropriate legislative action.

6. The Conference discussed the position of the Irish language in Northern Ireland. The British side described current administrative practice in this field and indicated a number of specific areas for possible future development e.g. dual language street names where the local community so desires, ascertaining more precisely the number of Irish speakers in Northern Ireland and financial support for Irish language related cultural activities.

7. The Conference noted that discussions were continuing in the groups of officials considering policy aspects of extradition and measures to enhance public confidence in the administration of justice, and that fuller reports would be made to the next meeting of the Conference.

8. In the context of cross-border economic and social co-operation, the Conference discussed the importance of the main road between Belfast and Dublin and noted the improvements already carried out or planned; it was agreed to explore further the best way of improving the road link between Newry and Dundalk.

9. The Conference agreed that at its next meeting it would hear further reports on legal matters and cross-border security co-operation, and discuss relations between the security forces in Northern Ireland and the community, electoral matters, and further economic and social issues including international support for the promotion of economic and social development in both parts of Ireland.