



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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JOINT STATEMENTANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCELONDON 8 JULY 1993

1. A meeting of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference was held in London on 8 July 1993. The Irish Government was represented by the Joint Chairman, Mr Dick Spring TD, Tanaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs Maire Geoghegan-Quinn TD, Minister for Justice and Mr Ruairi Quinn TD, Minister for Enterprise and Employment. The British Government was represented by the Joint Chairman, Sir Patrick Mayhew MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, accompanied by Sir John Wheeler MP, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office, Mr Robert Atkins MP, Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office and Michael Ancram MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office. The Commissioner of the Garda Síochána and the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary were present for discussion of security matters.

Political Matters

2. The two Governments remain committed to the political Talks process aimed at achieving a comprehensive political settlement which would address all the main relationships. Both Governments continue to believe that the objectives of the process remain valid and achievable, and will continue to make every effort to achieve them through direct discussions and negotiations between all the parties concerned. The two Governments will continue to work together actively and in contact with the other participants to achieve agreement by all concerned on the new beginning for relationships envisaged in the statement of 26 March 1991.

Security Situation

3. The Conference condemned recent bombing outrages and other violent incidents. They expressed their sympathy with all who have suffered as a result of such incidents, and reaffirmed their total opposition to any attempt to promote political objectives through violence. Ministers reviewed the existing high level of co-operation on security matters with the aim of continuing and enhancing it in every possible way. They congratulated the security forces on the substantial progress they are making to prevent acts of terrorism and to bring those responsible to justice.

Confidence Issues

4. Both Governments attach great importance to improving relations between the security forces and the community and to ensuring public confidence in the administration of justice. The Conference discussed a number of issues including cross border roads, allegations of harassment, recent incidents on Carlingford Lough and parades. In relation to parades in Northern Ireland, the Conference recognised that the right to demonstrate should be exercised with respect for the rights and sensitivities of others and with regard for the maintenance of public order.

Fugitive Offenders

5. The Irish side explained the present position in regard to the amending legislation on extradition which will be introduced early in the next session of the Dail. The British side indicated the present position on the passage of legislation in their jurisdiction.

Economic and Social Matters

6. The Minister for Enterprise and Employment, Mr Quinn and the Minister for Economic Development, Mr Atkins joined the Conference for a discussion on co-operation in enterprise and employment and in science and technology. Joint papers on these issues were before the Conference.

Enterprise and Employment

7. The Conference noted existing Government strategies on industrial development and current co-operation involving Government Departments, their Agencies and private interests. Ministers noted the similarities between the two economies. They examined the problems limiting the expansion of indigenous industry in both parts of Ireland and reviewed how the Agencies North and South are tackling these issues. They endorsed proposals for further co-operation.

Science and Technology

8. The Conference welcomed the special focus on Science and Technology, which is a key area for industrial development. Ministers reviewed current activities and concluded that further co-operation in a number of areas would be mutually beneficial. They agreed to seek means of jointly promoting an increased awareness of the importance of research, technology and innovation in industry. They agreed to examine the scope for developing, on an all-Ireland basis, schemes which are only available at present in one or other of the two jurisdictions. They also agreed to establish a comprehensive listing of research and technology facilities and their capabilities in both parts of the island, so as to maximise their usage by industry. It was decided that collaboration between companies and institutes, North and South, should be encouraged in order to increase the level of participation in international research programmes.

Disadvantaged Areas

9. Ministers expressed their concern for disadvantaged areas in Northern Ireland, to whichever section of the community they belong, and welcomed steps that are being taken to give special assistance. The British side drew attention to Targeting-Social-Need and to recent announcements on funding for the Making-Belfast-Work

programme. They indicated their intention to continue to address the special needs of disadvantaged areas, on both sides of the community.

Other Matters

10. There was a discussion on public appointments with particular reference to co-operation between the Arts Councils.

11. The Conference took note of the first annual report of the Steering Group on Rural Development, established at the Conference of 13 September, 1991.

12. There was also some discussion on issues related to broadcasting and hospital facilities in Northern Ireland.

13. The Conference decided to have its next regular meeting in September.