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Statement by the Taoiseach, Mr Albert Reynolds, T.D.,
in Dáil Éireann, Thursday, 4 November, 1993 at 10.45 a.m.
on the Special Meeting of the European Council
and on his bilateral meeting with Prime Minister John Major
in Brussels on 29 October 1993.

A Cheann Comhairle,

I attended the meeting of the European Council in Brussels on Friday last, 29th October, accompanied by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dick Spring, T.D. and the Minister of State for European Affairs, Mr Tom Kitt, T.D.

The special meeting of the European Council took place on the eve of the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, and the Council adopted a Declaration to mark the occasion. The Government also issued a statement on the Treaty's entry into force. I have had both laid before each House of the Oireachtas, together with the Conclusions of the European Council.

The Declaration adopted by the European Council on the entry into force of the Treaty on European Union restates in clear language the vision of the Treaty, and draws the lessons from the intense debate which its ratification occasioned.

The Declaration notes that the import of the Treaty consists of four simple ideas:

first, greater economic prosperity - that the progressive implementation of Economic and Monetary Union, in an extension of the Single Market, must provide a stable framework for healthy, durable economic growth that creates jobs;

second, greater external influence - that the implementation of a common foreign and security policy will enable the Union to assume its responsibilities in the service of peace and international co-operation;

third, greater effectiveness - provided by a more structured and unified institutional framework, so that, in particular, greater control can be achieved over those of society's problems that run across frontiers, such as drugs, organised crime and illegal immigration; and

fourth, greater democracy in every form and at every level, whether it involves the internal interplay of the Union's own institutions or relations between the Union, the Member States and citizens.

These are concepts and principles that I suggest all of us in this House can enthusiastically support. The task now facing the Community is to make them a reality, to get ahead with making the Treaty work for all our peoples.

Overall, last Friday's meeting was a very businesslike one, which has given the necessary impetus to the implementation of the Maastricht Treaty. The Summit confirmed the objective of creating Economic and Monetary Union according to the calendar set out in the Maastricht Treaty and that the second stage will commence on 1st January next. We also decided that Frankfurt will be the seat of the European Monetary Institute and that Baron Lamfalussy, the Managing Director of the Bank for International Settlements, will be the President-designate of the Institute. Finally, in the context of EMU we re-emphasised the importance of convergence of economic policies and confirmed that respect for all of the Maastricht criteria is a key element in the process. The clear message of these decisions is that EMU remains on course.

In regard to implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, we decided on a number of areas in which we will implement joint actions. The areas in question are:

- promotion of stability and peace in Europe, as envisaged in the plan put forward by Prime Minister Balladur;
- support for the peace process in the Middle East by mobilising the political, economic and financial means of the European Union;
- support for the process of democratic and multiracial transition in South Africa, through a programme of assistance for the preparation of the elections and through sending observers to them and by putting in place a co-

operation framework to consolidate the economic and social underpinnings of the transition;

- the search for a negotiated and durable solution to the conflict in former Yugoslavia, a substantial contribution to the implementation of a peace plan and support for humanitarian action;
- support for the democratic process begun in Russia including despatch of a mission of observers to the parliamentary elections on 12 December.

This commitment to joint action across a whole range of issues affirms the determination of the member States to the meaningful implementation of a common foreign policy.

Turning to the area of co-operation in justice and home affairs, the Summit asked the Council to prepare and submit to our December meeting, a precise plan of action, including:

- the arrangements needed for the speedy establishment of EUROPOL; the EUROPOL Convention must be concluded and the Drugs Unit must be in Operation by October, 1994;
- effective measures in the fight against drugs, including steps to combat the laundering of profits from illegal activities
- joint action in the area of asylum law; and
- drawing up of the list of third countries, whose citizens will require visas to enter the European Union.

All would agree that this represents a comprehensive agenda under a key heading of the Treaty on European Union.

The special European Council also agreed a package on the seats of a range of Community agencies and services. Ireland achieved a very solid result in securing the Veterinary Inspection and Plant Health Office, and, in addition, agreement on the expansion of the European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions in Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin by assigning additional functions to it. The Veterinary

and Plant Health Office will employ upwards of 100 people, a number that will grow over time. The work of the Agency will be directed at ensuring that both in the Community and in third countries exporting to it, the high standards of animal and plant health set by the Community are uniformly met - in the interests of both producers and consumers. Ireland with its healthy natural environment, and freedom from many of the more serious animal and plant diseases and with its important agricultural industry is an obvious location.

The decisions on the locations had to be unanimous, and this gave a powerful lever to the U.K. which made securing the Medicines Agency the price of its agreement to drop its objections to Frankfurt. As the House knows, the Government had mounted a vigorous campaign to secure the Medicines Agency for Dublin as our No. 1 choice, and I wrote the week before last to all Community Heads of State or Government pressing our case. However, given the importance of monetary stability and of EMU for Ireland and the risks to Community integration and, ultimately, to common policies, of a failure to agree, we and other partners ultimately acquiesced in the Medicines Agency going to London.

The Presidency Conclusions as regards the adjustments necessary to institutional arrangements consequent on the current EFTA enlargement were fully satisfactory from Ireland's viewpoint. The European Council requested the Presidency and Council Secretariat to prepare a proposal for these on the basis of the Lisbon and Copenhagen conclusions. That is the basis that has been upheld by Ireland and the other smaller member States. The Government have taken the lead in resisting ideas floated in various quarters that would have involved unacceptable changes in the balance, within the institutional arrangements of the Community, between smaller and larger Member States.

I welcome the fact that the European Council agreed on the need to accelerate the EFTA accession negotiations in order to complete them by 1st March, 1994 and that we confirmed the objective of accession by 1 January 1995.

The meeting last Friday needs to be viewed in conjunction with our next meeting in December, which will be devoted to the encouragement of economic growth, the enhancement of competitiveness and the promotion of employment in the European Union on the basis of the White Paper on these subjects to be presented by the Commission. In my intervention in Brussels, I said that the work of the European Council will be judged on what is done on these issues. Commission

President Delors gave us a progress report on the preparation of the White Paper, and we had a useful discussion, which led to a number of specific decisions to further reinforce the Edinburgh Growth Initiative and thus to support the signs of recovery that have begun to show.

Looking to our December meeting we were at one that a situation in which there are 17 million people unemployed in the Community and where a significant section of the population are cut off from employment for a lengthy period is intolerable and that, as a priority, every effort must be made to remedy this situation. We accordingly requested the Commission and the Council to put us in a position to take concrete decisions on this front at our December meeting.

There have been a number of encouraging developments recently affecting the overall Community economy, such as the recent half per-cent cut in interest rates by the Bundesbank. But it is clear that what is needed is a major injection of confidence. A successful conclusion to the GATT Uruguay Round has major positive potential here. I made this point in Brussels, while also stressing that an agreement must be equitable and must not place an unfair burden on any one sector or country. It is therefore gratifying that the European Council, in declaring that it is more essential than ever to reach a successful outcome within the envisaged deadline, agreed that this must be comprehensive, durable and balanced, and in line with the conclusions and guidelines defined by the Council meetings on 20 September and 4 October.

This was not a Summit where grand new initiatives were launched. It was nevertheless a most encouraging meeting, which took a wide range of necessary and useful decisions, strongly consolidating the successful efforts of the Belgian Presidency to date in rebuilding confidence in the European Union, as an entity working purposefully towards realisation of a clear vision of its role in the next millennium.

Finally, the House will wish to note that on the margins of the meeting, I briefly discussed with President Jacques Delors the recent developments in regard to the allocations of Structural Funds. The President confirmed his continuing goodwill to Ireland and the Commission's initial assessment of the high quality of the Development Plan submitted by the Government which should enable us to draw down additional funds. We now go forward to settle, with the Commission, the Community Support Framework for Ireland. This is in line with our standard

approach, to get the best possible decision for Ireland in any particular area and then to move on to the next business.

I also held a very productive and successful meeting in the margins of the European Council with the British Prime Minister, Mr. John Major. I was joined for the latter part of the meeting by the Tánaiste.

The meeting, which lasted nearly one hour and a quarter, and followed on several shorter discussions in the course of the day, was the most substantial ever conducted at a European Council, and reflected the gravity with which the two Governments regard the current situation in Northern Ireland. The communiqué reflected the importance of the discussions.

They took place against the horrific background of the Shankill bombing and sectarian murders such as the Greysteel Massacre and others, which occurred in the days that followed, and which have created great tension. We condemned these outrages, and expressed deep sympathy for the innocent victims, and those who had been injured and bereaved. We called for restraint from all sides of the community, and expressed support for the security forces in their fight against terrorism, noting the recent successes of cross-border cooperation.

We reiterated our determination to ensure that those who adopted or supported the use of violence for political ends should never succeed.

I gave the Prime Minister an account of the outcome of the Hume-Adams dialogue, in the light of the Government's own assessment of these and other related matters. We both paid tribute to John Hume's courageous and imaginative efforts. Indeed, only last week in this House I acknowledged the crucial part he has played in advancing the acceptance of principles, which carried to their logical conclusion should help bring about peace.

We also affirmed on behalf of both Governments points which I had previously made at Bodenstown and in my Dáil Statement last week.

Recognising the need for a peace process to be more widely based, we said in Brussels that such a process has to involve the two Governments, conscious of both their international obligations and their wider responsibilities to both communities. We also stated that the two Governments must work together to

reach a common understanding in their own terms towards a framework for peace. Any initiative can only be taken by the two Governments. This simply reflects the reality of the situation, and it of course places an onerous responsibility on both Governments, who have to take a broad view of vital concerns on all sides.

As I stated last week in the Dáil, the Irish Government have been working for some time past on the elaboration of a formula for peace, and our view is that both Governments must work together to provide a framework. It is ultimately for the Governments to decide what in their best judgement is likely to produce lasting peace on all sides.

We set out certain parameters or ground rules, many of them previously stated elsewhere, for instance that:

- the situation on Northern Ireland should never be changed by violence or the threat of violence;
- any political settlement must depend on consent freely given.

I would like to make it very clear that what we are talking about here is the consent of a majority to constitutional change, as precisely defined in Article 1 of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The Government have in no way departed from that position.

Other ground rules were:

- negotiations on a political settlement can only take place between democratic governments and constitutional parties;
- there could be no secret agreements or understanding with paramilitary organisations;
- Those claiming an interest in peace should renounce violence for good.

The most important point however was the statement that if and when such a renunciation of violence had been made and sufficiently demonstrated, new doors could open, and both Governments would wish to respond imaginatively.

We also expressed our support for the talks process, and urged the Northern Ireland parties to intensify their efforts to find a basis for new talks. Both

Governments are continuing their discussions to provide a framework to carry the process forward. It is our intention to hold a further meeting, one of our scheduled biannual Summits, in the next four to five weeks prior to the next European Council. By then, it should be clear, whether a breakthrough is likely to be possible. Nobody should underestimate the difficulties and the obstacles that have yet to be overcome.

In conclusion, I welcome the support expressed the following day by the President of the United States, Bill Clinton in a statement issued on 30 October, in which he welcomed the efforts of the Irish and British Prime Ministers to reinvigorate the negotiations for peace, and 'our common resolve to work for peace, justice and reconciliation in Northern Ireland'. He added that 'the United States stand ready to support this process in any appropriate way'.

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE TAOISEACH AND THE PRIME MINISTER
BRUSSELS: 29 OCTOBER 1993

1. The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach discussed a range of matters of common interest, with particular focus on Northern Ireland.
2. They condemned the recent terrorist outrages as murderous and premeditated acts which could serve no end other than to deepen the bloodshed in Northern Ireland. They expressed their deep sympathy to the innocent victims, children, women and men who had been injured or bereaved.
3. The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach called for restraint from all members of the community in Northern Ireland; expressed support for the security forces in their fight against all forms of terrorism; and noted the recent successes of cross-border security co-operation.
4. They utterly repudiated the use of violence for political ends. Their two Governments were resolute in their determination to ensure that those who adopted or supported such methods should never succeed.
5. The Taoiseach gave the Prime Minister an account of the outcome of the Hume/Adams dialogue, in the light of the Irish Government's own assessment of these and other related matters. They acknowledged John Hume's courageous and imaginative efforts. The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed that any initiative can be taken only by the two Governments, and that there could be no question of their adopting or endorsing the report of the dialogue that was recently given to the Taoiseach and which he had not passed on to the British Government. They agreed that the two Governments must continue to work together in their own terms on a framework for peace, stability and reconciliation consistent with their international obligations and their wider responsibilities to both communities.

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6. Against this background, the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach reaffirmed that:

- The situation in Northern Ireland should never be changed by violence or the threat of violence;
- Any political settlement must depend on consent freely given in the absence of force or intimidation;
- Negotiations on a political settlement can only take place between democratic governments and parties committed exclusively to constitutional methods, and consequently there can be no talks or negotiations between their Governments and those who use, threaten or support violence for political ends;
- There could be no secret agreements or understandings between Governments, and organisations supporting violence as a price for its cessation;
- All those claiming a serious interest in advancing the cause of peace in Ireland should renounce for good the use of, or support for, violence;
- If and when such a renunciation of violence had been made and sufficiently demonstrated, new doors could open, and both Governments would wish to respond imaginatively to the new situation which would arise.

7. The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach renewed their support for the objectives of the talks process involving political dialogue between the two Governments and the main constitutional parties in Northern Ireland. They regard that process as vital and its objectives as valid and achievable. They urged the Northern Ireland parties to intensify their efforts to find a basis for new talks. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister agreed that the two Governments will continue their discussions to provide a framework to carry the process forward.

