



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/97/1

**Creator(s):** Department of the Taoiseach

**Accession Conditions:** Open

**Copyright:** National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

24

# Sinn Féin

Nuacht ráiteas/News release

The following is the text of a statement issued to our office.  
17/8/95

## SINN FÉIN TO STEP UP INFORMAL DIALOGUE WITH UNIONISTS

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams has appealed to unionists to "enter into a new partnership with Irish nationalists which seeks to uplift and consolidate the peace process, plans the management of the processes of negotiation and seeks the transformation of Irish society".

Mr Adams committed Sinn Féin to stepping up the "informal dialogue between republicans and unionists which has already made a significant contribution to increasing understanding and goodwill".

Mr Adams said:

"Dialogue is the key to the development of new ideas, new language and the breaking of old taboos, antagonisms and fears.

"The desire and demand for peace requires that we move beyond this phase of the peace process. But peace can only come when the causes of conflict are addressed and we agree a political settlement. To achieve that requires substantive and inclusive all-party talks, led by the Irish and British governments.

"Clearly, the goal of a political settlement cannot wait until every single nationalist recognises and trusts every single unionist and vice versa before we make peace. What is now needed is a new mindset and a new commitment on all sides.

"We need the political will to take the necessary and painful decisions and to make the inevitable and critical compromises in the time ahead.

"I am convinced that Irish nationalists and republicans have that political will. Yet so far there is no indication from the Unionist leaderships, despite positive indications within unionist grass roots, that they are prepared to enter into dialogue on that basis.

Press Centre, 51/55 Falls Road, Belfast

Tel: 230261 Fax: 231723

Preas Oifig, 51/55 Bóthar na bhFál, Béal Feirste

Tell: 230261 Facs: 231723

"This is the challenge facing Mr Molyneaux and Mr Paisley.

"Clearly, in the time ahead tolerance of differences, new relationships and a respect for others is essential. Not a grudging tolerance based on a resentful accommodation undemocratically imposed but one which genuinely seeks to set aside prejudice and hatred. This will not be easy. There are some who, out of fear for the future, or too blind an attachment to the past or who have risen to positions of power and wealth through the exploitation of fear, will try to stop the fundamental changes which are just and inevitable.

In conclusion Mr Adams said:

"The peace process does not belong to the British government, or the Irish government or any political leadership, whether nationalist, republican or unionist — it belongs to all of the people of this island.

"The choice facing all of us now is stark. Do we take the road of peace or do we again turn back into the cul-de-sac of conflict from which we have been trying to emerge.

"The peace process and a political settlement requires the proactive involvement and agreement of everyone if it is to succeed.

"We need a fresh start, one which encompasses all of the people of this island and which holds out the prospect of a qualitative improvement in our way of life. How will we accomplish this? By offering the hand of friendship; by taking risks for peace and by forging a new agreement which accommodates diversity and provides for a healing process.

"The British government will dump the unionists when it suits it to do so. Mr Molyneaux and Mr Paisley know this. They should take the democratic initiative and enter into a new partnership with Irish nationalists."

ENDS