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cc: Counsellors A1
1st Secretaries.

Roinn an Taoisigh
Department of the Taoiseach

17 February, 1999

Mr. Padraic MacKernan,
Secretary General,
Department of Foreign Affairs.

Re: President's Speeches: Guidelines

Dear Secretary General

We have been reviewing, in consultation with the President's Office, the existing procedures in relation to the preparation of speeches by Government Departments for use by the President.

The co-operation of Departments in supplying timely and quality drafts is very much appreciated and we thought that it would be helpful to provide more detailed guidance on what is required.

I would appreciate it if you would arrange to have the enclosed guidelines brought to the attention of officials in your Department who may be involved in producing speeches. For our part we will continue our efforts to ensure that requests for speeches are communicated to Departments at the earliest possible date, ideally as soon as acceptance by the President of pending engagements is confirmed and notified to us.

With renewed thanks for your Departments assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Murray,
Secretary General to the Government

pls cc MAC members, for attention, pls & circulation to relevant officers

Tithe an Rialtais, Baile Átha Cliath 2.
Government Buildings, Dublin 2.

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Speeches for President

Guidelines:

1. ***Content and Style:***

A completed speech, rather than speaking notes or bullet points, should always be provided.

If it has been decided that the speech should focus on a particular theme, this will be indicated in the covering letter.

The tone and content of the speech should reflect the audience at which it is being directed and the nature of the occasion.

In general, the speech should have a reasonably **informal and conversational style**, with appropriate quotations included, where possible.

The speech should **not** include detailed statistical information or policy comments of a controversial nature.

The speech should appropriately recognise key organisers and others who have contributed to the event.

Where appropriate, Irish should be included.

2. ***Length:***

Speeches should be between **800 - 1000 words** in length (about two A4 pages of single spaced-typing). Where a more substantive speech of longer length is required, this will be indicated in the covering letter to Departments.

3. ***General:***

Speeches should be forwarded to Mr. Brian Collinge, Head of the Protocol Section, Department of the Taoiseach, a minimum of **three weeks** before they are to be delivered by the President.

The Head of Protocol , Department of the Taoiseach, should be contacted **immediately** in the event that the deadline set

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will not be met or in the event that clarification is required by the drafter in relation to the theme of the speech, its content or any other aspect.

Background information on which the speech has been based, particularly any information obtained from the organisation which is hosting the event at which the President is speaking, should always be forwarded to the Department of the Taoiseach along with the draft speech.

Protocol Section
Department of the Taoiseach
17 February, 1999.

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Sample letter from Department of the Taoiseach requesting draft speeches

01 , 1999

The President has accepted an invitation from to address the on . Enclosed is a copy of the relevant invitation.

I would appreciate if you could arrange for a draft speech to be provided for this occasion, in accordance with the agreed guidelines. **Background information should also be included.**

It is suggested that the speech might focus on .

We would like to have a hard copy of the draft speech and background information three weeks prior to the engagement. It would be appreciated if an electronic version of the speech could also be forwarded to the following email address given

_____@DOT

A speech length of 800 - 1000 words (about two A4 pages of single-spaced typing) would be appropriate.

OR

Given the importance of this event, we would suggest that the speech might be 1,500 words approximately in length (about three A4 pages of single-spaced typing).

Any enquiries should be directed to the undersigned.

Yours sincerley,

_____

Protocol and General Section

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