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Mr Whelan
This is more fulsome than the Taoiseach's statement, which is no harm, as she deserves it.
11.10.99.

Department of Foreign Affairs **Press Release**
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Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs on Reshuffle in British Government (Departure of Dr Mo Mowlam as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, to be replaced by Mr Peter Mandelson)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr David Andrews, TD, today paid tribute to the outstanding manner in which Mo Mowlam had carried out her duties as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, while extending all good wishes to her successor, Peter Mandelson, in his challenging new appointment.

The Minister said: **"Mo Mowlam has been a most wonderful colleague and friend and she takes with her our deepest gratitude for the extraordinary dedication with which she filled the post of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Her tenure covered a period that saw developments and progress of a truly historic character in Northern Ireland, developments for which Mo herself can rightly take real pride and a large measure of credit. In particular, the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and its endorsement by the people last year will stand as an enduring monument to her term of office.**

Mo Mowlam brought to the role of Secretary of State a distinctive mix of skills that were extremely suited to the needs of the time - a deep humanity, an extraordinary empathy with people at all levels, personal courage and determination of the highest order, and an unquenchable belief in the power of politics to change people's lives for the better.

It was a great honour to have had her as a colleague and personal friend during this momentous time, a time when the level of co-operation between the British and Irish Governments was ~~to~~ brought to unprecedented levels, for the benefit of all our people. We worked together closely on all issues, but most particularly on the negotiations which led to the Good Friday Agreement. Mo Mowlam can leave Northern Ireland in the knowledge that she has made a profound contribution to the building of a new future, a future based on the qualities at the heart of the Agreement itself, namely partnership, equality and mutual respect.

We send Mo our warmest good wishes in her new position, to which we know she will bring the same dedication, skill and commitment".

The Minister, who is attending the EU General Affairs Council meeting in Luxembourg today, said that he would be contacting Mo Mowlam on his return to

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convey his good wishes and gratitude to her personally.

Commenting on the appointment of Peter Mandelson as Mo Mowlam's successor, the Minister said: **"We extend to Peter Mandelson our warmest best wishes for his tenure as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. He brings many skills and qualities to his challenging new position. He also assumes his duties at an especially critical time. In particular, the Review of the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, being facilitated by Senator George Mitchell, is reaching its defining phase.**

I look forward to working with him, and with the parties, in helping to ensure that Senator Mitchell's Review reaches a successful outcome, so that the work of implementing the Agreement, as the will of the people, can proceed with full speed".

Press Section
October 11, 1999
END ++++

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