

Country/entity	Ireland United Kingdom Northern Ireland
Region	Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Letter from British and Irish governments to the political parties in Northern Ireland (Saturday morning)
Date	6 May 2000
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/conflict level	Interstate/intrastate conflict(s)

Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998)

Commonly referred to as ‘the Troubles’, the most recent conflict over the territory of Northern Ireland can be framed as beginning in 1968 and ending with the Belfast Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement) in 1998. While the genesis of the conflict was closely related to pressures for the state to reform with relation to discrimination against the (minority) Catholic population, the core issue of the conflict as it proceeded was the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, which was contested between the unionist/loyalist (mostly Protestant) majority, who wanted the territory to remain as part of the United Kingdom, and the nationalist/republican (mostly Catholic) minority, whose goal was to unite the six provincial counties with the Republic of Ireland. The thirty years prior to the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement were marked by inter-communal violence, active paramilitary groups, and the deployment of the British army in the province. Mediation by international actors, and dialogue between the British and Irish governments, and between the IRA and its representatives and the British Government eventually resulted in a ceasefire respected by the majority of combatants. Talks led to the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement which established a power-sharing system of governance between nationalist and unionist communities.

Close
Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998)

Stage	Implementation/renegotiation
Conflict nature	Government/territory
Peace process	Northern Ireland peace process
Parties	British and Irish governments

Third parties

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Description

This was one of a number of agreements signed between the 5th and 6th of May 2000 which were part of an agreed 'choreography' between the British and Irish governments and the Northern Irish parties in the talks process and the IRA, relating to a log-jam in the talks process relating to decommissioning. This Letter from British and Irish governments to the political parties in Northern Ireland sets out the governments' proposals necessary to secure full implementation of the Good Friday agreement by June 2001.

Agreement document

[UK_IE_000506_Letter from British and Irish governments to the political parties in NI.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Groups**Children/youth**

No specific mention.

Disabled persons

No specific mention.

Elderly/age

No specific mention.

Migrant workers

No specific mention.

**Racial/ethnic/
national group**

No specific mention.

Religious groups

No specific mention.

Indigenous people

No specific mention.

Other groups

No specific mention.

**Refugees/displaced
persons**

No specific mention.

Social class

No specific mention.

Gender

Women, girls and gender No specific mention.

Men and boys No specific mention.

LGBTI No specific mention.

Family No specific mention.

State definition

Nature of state (general) No specific mention.

State configuration No specific mention.

Self determination No specific mention.

Referendum No specific mention.

State symbols No specific mention.

Independence/secession No specific mention.

Accession/unification No specific mention.

Border delimitation No specific mention.

Cross-border provision No specific mention.

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed) No specific mention.

Elections No specific mention.

Electoral commission	No specific mention.
Political parties reform	No specific mention.
Civil society	No specific mention.
Traditional/religious leaders	No specific mention.
Public administration	No specific mention.
Constitution	No specific mention.

Power sharing

Political power sharing	No specific mention.
Territorial power sharing	No specific mention.
Economic power sharing	No specific mention.
Military power sharing	No specific mention.

Human rights and equality

Human rights/RoL general	No specific mention.
Bill of rights/similar	No specific mention.

Treaty incorporation	<p>Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity, As has already been announced, incorporation of the EHCR into British and Irish domestic law will take effect from October 2000. The British government has already invited the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to advise on the scope for defining rights supplementary to the convention...</p> <p>Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity, ...The British government will ratify the Council of Europe Charter on Regional or Minority Languages by September 2000, and publish within six months an action plan for implementing the charter. Technical discussions on the steps required further to extend TG4 reception in Northern Ireland will continue. Other measures will also be taken, including a two-year Irish-language TV and film production pilot scheme, which will start by April 2001.</p>
Civil and political rights	No specific mention.
Socio-economic rights	No specific mention.
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Rights related issues	
Citizenship	No specific mention.
Democracy	No specific mention.
Detention procedures	No specific mention.
Media and communication	<p>Rights related issues→Media and communication→Media roles Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity ...The British government will ratify the Council of Europe Charter on Regional or Minority Languages by September 2000, and publish within six months an action plan for implementing the charter. Technical discussions on the steps required further to extend TG4 reception in Northern Ireland will continue. Other measures will also be taken, including a two-year Irish-language TV and film production pilot scheme, which will start by April 2001.</p>
Mobility/access	No specific mention.
Protection measures	No specific mention.
Other	No specific mention.

Rights institutions

NHRI

Rights institutions→NHRI→Mentions of NHRI

Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity

As has already been announced, incorporation of the EHCR into British and Irish domestic law will take effect from October 2000. The British government has already invited the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to advise on the scope for defining rights supplementary to the convention. Under the legislation which came into effect in January, all designated public authorities in Northern Ireland will begin to have equality schemes in place from July 1st, 2000.

Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity

...The Irish Commission on Human Rights will be established by the Irish Government in July 2000 so that the joint committee of both human rights commissions required under the agreement will therefore be established by the end of July 2000.

Regional or international human rights institutions

No specific mention.

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law

Justice sector reform→Criminal justice and emergency law→Criminal Justice System reform

Page 2, Policing and justice

...The British government has already announced a six-month consultation process on the Criminal Justice Review to end in September, so the government will announce its decisions on implementation in October 2000. Legislation, and a detailed timetable for implementation, will be published by April 2001.

State of emergency provisions

No specific mention.

Judiciary and courts

No specific mention.

Prisons and detention

No specific mention.

Traditional Laws

No specific mention.

Socio-economic reconstruction

Development or socio-economic reconstruction No specific mention.

National economic plan No specific mention.

Natural resources No specific mention.

International funds No specific mention.

Business No specific mention.

Taxation No specific mention.

Banks No specific mention.

Land, property and environment

Land reform/rights No specific mention.

Pastoralist/nomadism rights No specific mention.

Cultural heritage Land, property and environment→Cultural heritage→Intangible
Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity
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Environment No specific mention.

Water or riparian rights or access No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees No specific mention.

Ceasefire No specific mention.

Police Page 2, Policing and justice
Legislation to implement the Patten report will, subject to Parliament, be enacted by November 2000. The new Policing Board will be appointed in January 2001 and will assume its responsibilities in April 2001. A new independent police recruitment agency will be established, and the first process for recruits to join the Police Service of Northern Ireland will start in April 2001...

Armed forces No specific mention.

DDR No specific mention.

Intelligence services No specific mention.

Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces Page 1, Security
The British government will progressively take all the necessary steps to secure as early a return as possible to normal security arrangements in Northern Ireland, consistent with the level of threat. It will report regularly on the steps taken and will consult with the Irish Government, and the political parties as appropriate, on measures necessary to respond to any continuing paramilitary activity. In particular, both governments will continue to oppose with resolute and determined action any group that uses or threatens violence to disrupt the peace process, taking whatever measures within the law are justified by the threat.

Withdrawal of foreign forces No specific mention.

Corruption No specific mention.

Crime/organised crime No specific mention.

Drugs No specific mention.

Terrorism No specific mention.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general No specific mention.

Amnesty/pardon No specific mention.

Courts No specific mention.

Mechanism No specific mention.

Prisoner release Page 2, Prisoners
It is intended that, in accordance with the Good Friday agreement, all remaining prisoners qualifying for early release will be released by July 28th, 2000. Measures will continue to be taken to facilitate the reintegration of prisoners into the community, and to address related issues.

Vetting No specific mention.

Victims Page 1, Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity
...Both governments will continue to take measures and develop programmes to support the victims of violence and their families...

Missing persons No specific mention.

Reparations No specific mention.

Reconciliation No specific mention.

Implementation

UN signatory No specific mention.

Other international signatory No specific mention.

Referendum for agreement No specific mention.

International mission/force/similar No specific mention.

Enforcement mechanism No specific mention.

Related cases No specific mention.

Source CAIN Web Service
<https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/bi060500.htm>
