

Joint Statement by Tony Blair, then British Prime Minister, and Bertie Ahern, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) issued on (the afternoon of) Saturday 6 May 2000

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach welcome the statement today by the IRA in response to the two governments' statement of May 5th.

In relation to the IRA's confidence-building measure, involving third-party inspection of IRA weapons dumps, the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach are pleased to announce, after consultation with the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning, that Mr Martti Ahtisaari and Mr Cyril Ramaphosa have agreed to head the inspections.

Mr Ahtisaari is the chairman of the International Crisis Group and the former president of Finland.

Mr Ramaphosa is on the board of the International Crisis Group, and is the former secretary-general of the African National Congress in South Africa.

Detailed aspects of the inspection process will be worked out in the coming days and Mr Ramaphosa and Mr Ahtisaari will be briefed by the International Independent Commission on Decommissioning.