

Joint Statement issued by the British and Irish Governments on (the evening of) Friday 5 May 2000

1. In recent weeks, the two governments have taken stock of progress in implementing the Good Friday agreement
2. Much progress has already been made but there has been disagreement over how and when remaining aspects of the agreement should be achieved.
3. The governments now believe that the remaining steps necessary to secure full implementation of the agreement can be achieved by June 2001, and commit themselves to that goal. They have drawn up, and are communicating to the parties, an account of these steps.
4. Subject to a positive response to this statement, the British government will bring forward the necessary order to enable the Assembly and Executive to be restored by May 22nd, 2000.
5. With confidence that there are clear proposals for implementing all other aspects of the agreement, the governments believe that paramilitary organisations must now, for their part, urgently state that they will put their arms completely and verifiably beyond use. Such statements would constitute a clear reduction in the threat. In response, the British government would, subject to its assessment of the level of threat at the time, on which it will continue to consult regularly with the Irish Government, take further substantial normalisation measures by June 2001.
6. The IICD will continue its task under the agreement. The governments will now ask the IICD to consider urgently, in consultation with representatives of the paramilitary organisations, whether there are any further proposals for decommissioning schemes which offer the commission greater scope to proceed in more effective and satisfactory ways with the discharge of its basic mandate, and to report. The governments will give early consideration to any such proposals. The commission will make further reports as necessary. Those reports will be published promptly.
7. Progress to full implementation of all aspects of the agreement will be periodically assessed by the two governments, in consultation with the Northern Ireland parties.

If difficulties arise in the implementation of the agreement [for example, the IICD reports that it does not believe that arms will be put beyond use, or the institutions are not operating in good faith as envisaged in the agreement], the two governments will, in consultation with the Assembly and the Executive, carry out an immediate formal review under the terms of the agreement.