

Statement by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), issued (at midday) Saturday 6 May 2000

"The leadership of the IRA is committed to a just and lasting peace. We have sustained that commitment despite the abuse of the peace process by those who persist with the aim of defeating the IRA and Irish republicans.

Republicans believe that the British government claim to a part of Ireland, its denial of national self-determination to the people of the island of Ireland, the partition of our country and the maintenance of social and economic inequality in the Six Counties are the root causes of conflict.

The maintenance of our cessation is our contribution to the peace process and to the creation of a future in which the causes of conflict are resolved by peaceful means. For our part, the IRA leadership is committed to resolving the issue of arms.

The political responsibility for advancing the current situation rests with the two governments, especially the British government, and the leadership of the political parties.

The full implementation, on a progressive and irreversible basis by the two governments, especially the British government, of what they have agreed will provide a political context, in an enduring political process, with the potential to remove the causes of conflict, and in which Irish republicans and unionists can, as equals, pursue our respective political objectives peacefully.

In that context the IRA leadership will initiate a process that will completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use. We will do it in such a way as to avoid risk to the public and misappropriation by others and ensure maximum public confidence.

We will resume contact with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning and enter into further discussions with the commission on the basis of the IRA leadership's commitment to resolving the issue of arms.

We look to the two governments and especially the British government to fulfil their commitments under the Good Friday agreement and the joint statement. To facilitate the speedy and full implementation of the Good Friday agreement and the government's measures, our arms are silent and secure. There is no threat to the peace process from the IRA.

In this context, the IRA leadership has agreed to put in place within weeks a confidence-building measure to confirm that our weapons remain secure. The contents of a number of our arms dumps will be inspected by agreed third parties who will report that they have done so to the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. The dumps will be re-inspected regularly to ensure that the weapons have remained silent."

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