

## Press release

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# British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference June 2023 Joint Communiqué

From [Department of Foreign Affairs \(/en/organisation/department-of-foreign-affairs/\)](/en/organisation/department-of-foreign-affairs/)

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A meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIGC) took place at Mansion House, London, on 19 June 2023.

The Government of Ireland was represented by the Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence Micheál Martin and the Minister for Justice Helen McEntee.

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was represented by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP and the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Steve Baker MP.

THE CONFERENCE WAS ESTABLISHED UNDER STRAND THREE OF THE BELFAST / GOOD FRIDAY Agreement “to promote bilateral cooperation at all levels on all matters of mutual interest within the competence of the UK and Irish Governments”.

The Conference discussed the following.

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## Political stability

The UK and Irish Governments agreed on the critical importance of restoring the Northern Ireland Assembly, Executive and North South Ministerial Council to full operation. The conference discussed the impact of the Windsor Framework on Executive formation, and agreed it presented a sound foundation for progress in Northern Ireland. The UK and Irish Governments agreed that the Windsor Framework provides certainty and stability for the people of Northern Ireland. The Conference discussed the serious and deepening consequences for people in Northern Ireland arising from the ongoing absence of fully functioning institutions.

The Conference agreed to continue close co-operation in accordance with the three stranded approach established in the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement.

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## Security co-operation

The Conference examined the current security situation in both jurisdictions looking ahead to the summer. They welcomed the excellent ongoing cooperation between the PSNI and An Garda Síochána in tackling terrorism, paramilitarism and associated criminality.

The Conference gave further consideration to the Independent Reporting Commission’s recommendations on potential mechanisms to support the transition of paramilitary groups to disbandment and agreed to continue close co-operation to make further progress on the issue.

## Legacy

The UK and Irish Governments discussed the UK Government's legislation on dealing with the legacy of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and the Irish Government's concerns in relation to it. The UK Government raised the amendments to the Bill it has tabled ahead of Report Stage in the House of Lords.

The UK and Irish Governments also discussed issues of concern in respect to a number of individual legacy cases.

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## Rights and citizenship matters

The Irish and UK Governments reaffirmed their commitment to the identity, citizenship and rights provisions of the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement.

The Conference noted that 2023 marks the centenary of the Common Travel Area, and reiterated their shared commitment to protecting and upholding the reciprocal rights of UK and Irish citizens to live, work and travel in either jurisdiction.

The Conference noted the recent visit of the Minister for Justice to London and his meeting with the Home Secretary, which saw a productive discussion across a range of areas of cooperation. The Conference also discussed the potential implications of the UK Government's forthcoming Electronic Travel Authorisation requirement for visitors to the UK. It noted the announcement of the scheme's roll out published in March 2023 that confirmed those legally resident in Ireland will not need an ETA when travelling to the UK from within the Common Travel Area.

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## British-Irish cooperation

The Irish and UK Governments discussed bilateral cooperation in a range of areas with a particular focus on education cooperation. The Conference discussed the joint support the UK and Irish Governments already extend to Integrated Education in Northern Ireland reflecting the commitments made in the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement. The Conference underlined the importance of integrated education and tackling educational disadvantage as being essential aspects of the reconciliation process in Northern Ireland and committed to exploring further opportunities to work together in support of progress in these areas. The Conference also noted the importance of ongoing student mobility and supporting research cooperation between Ireland and the UK.

Ministers also received an update from the Secretariat with regard to progress to deliver the actions on cyber security and energy that were agreed in January.

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## Future meetings

It was agreed that the Conference would meet again in Autumn 2023.

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