



Joint Statement by David Trimble and Seamus Mallon, 18 December 1998

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Joint statement issued by the First Minister, Mr David Trimble, and the Deputy First Minister, Mr Seamus Mallon on the accommodation reached regarding future Northern Ireland Government Departments, and cross-border bodies, 18 December 1998.

- "1. On 1 July 1998, the New Northern Ireland Assembly asked us to report on progress towards implementing the Belfast Agreement reached on Good Friday this year.
2. Since our election, most of the parties in the Assembly have been working with us on detailed questions. Papers on Strands One, Two and Three have been considered in a series of round tables and other meetings.
3. Following intensive negotiations and consultations involving other Assembly parties, and as appropriate the Irish and British governments, we have reached agreement tonight on matters for North/South co-operation and implementation, and on departments.
4. We wish to express our satisfaction with the outcome, which represents a major step in the implementation of the agreement.
5. As regards departments (Annex 1), the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will have an Economic Policy Unit and special responsibility for equality. There will be 10 departments:
- * Agriculture and Rural Development;
 - * Environment;
 - * Regional Development;
 - * Social Development;
 - * Education;
 - * Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment;
 - * Enterprise, Trade and Investment;
 - * Culture, Arts and Leisure;
 - * Health, Social Services and Public Safety;
 - * Finance and Personnel.
6. The agreement required a "work programme" on at least 12 matters, six being new implementation bodies, and six being matters for cooperation. The six implementation bodies (Annex 2) are:

- * Inland Waterways;
- * Food Safety;
- * Trade and Business Development;
- * Special EU Programmes; * Language (Irish and Ulster Scots);
- * Aquaculture and Marine Matters.

7. The six areas for co-operation (Annex 3) include some aspects of:

- * Transport;
- * Agriculture;
- * Education;
- * Health;
- * Environment
- * Tourism

8. We will be making a detailed report to the Assembly early in January and will bring forward proposals on the British-Irish Council and the Civic Forum.

ANNEX 1 DEPARTMENTS

Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Economic Policy Unit; Equality.

Other Central Functions (within the Secretariat of the Executive Committee):

Liaison with NSMC; Liaison with BIC; Liaison with Civic Forum; Liaison with SOS on reserved and excepted matters; European affairs and international matters; Policy Innovation Unit; Liaison with IFI; Information Services; Community Relations;

Agriculture and Rural Development, Food, Farming and Environmental Policy; Agri-food Development; Science; Veterinary; Rural Development; Forestry; Sea Fisheries.

Environment Planning Control; Environment and Heritage; Protection of the Countryside; Waste Management; Pollution Control; Wildlife Protection; Local Government; Sustainable Development; Mineral Resources; Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency; Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency.

Regional Development Transport Planning; Roads Service; Rail; Ports and Airports; Energy; Water; Strategic Planning.

Social Development Housing Policy; NI Housing Executive; Urban Renewal; Community Sector; Laganside Corporation; NI Construction Industry Advisory Council; Rent Assessment Panel; NI Building Regulations Advisory Committee; Housing Benefit Review Boards; Social Security Agency;

Education Schools Funding and Administration; Teachers and Special Education; School Effectiveness; School Planning and Provision; Schools Inspectorate; Nursery Education; Youth Service.

Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment Higher Education; Further Education; Vocational Training; Employment Services; Employment Law and Labour Relations.

Enterprise, Trade and Investment Economic Development Policy; Industry (IDB, LEDU); Research and Development (IRTU); Tourism; Health and Safety Executive; Company Regulation; Consumer Affairs.

Culture, Arts and Leisure Arts and Culture; Sport and Leisure; Libraries; Museums; Visitor Amenities and Services; Ulster Historical Foundation; Inland Waterways; Inland Fisheries; Ordnance Survey; Public Record Office; Language Policy.

Health, Social Services and Public Safety Health; Social Services; Public Health and Safety; Health Promotion; Fire Authority.

Finance and Personnel Finance; Personnel; IT and Common Services; Accommodation; Legal Services; NI Statistics and Research Agency; Land Registry of NI; Rates Collection Agency.

ANNEX 2 IMPLEMENTATION BODIES

Inland Waterways - A body with the following functions:

- Management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway system throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes;
- immediately in respect of the Shannon-Erne waterway and of the possible restoration and development of the Ulster Canal;
- progressively thereafter, in respect of the wider Shannon-Erne system and the island's other waterways (principally the Royal Canal, Grand Canal, Barrow and Lagan).

The body would take on the functions, together with the appropriate support functions, exercised in that regard by the Waterways Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and the Rivers Agency of the Department of Agriculture in Northern Ireland, and would also take over the functions of Shannon-Erne Waterway Promotions Ltd.

Food Safety - A body with the following functions:

- promotion of food safety;
- research into food safety;
- communication of food alerts;
- surveillance of food-borne diseases;
- promotion of scientific cooperation and linkages between laboratories;
- development of cost effective facilities for specialised laboratory testing.

Trade and Business Development - A body to exchange information and co-ordinate work on trade, business development and related matters, in areas where the two administrations specifically agree it would be in their mutual interest.

The specific areas of implementation would include:

- co-operation on business development opportunities, North and South;
- devising new approaches to business development in a cross-Border context, in such areas as research, training, marketing and quality improvement;

- supporting business by making recommendations to increase enterprise competitiveness in a north-south context in areas such as skills availability, telecoms, IT and electronic commerce;
- promotion of north-south trade and supply chains, including through business linkages and partnerships;
- promoting cross-Border trade events and marketing initiatives;
- identifying new areas of trade between North and South;
- promoting market awareness and trade development in a north-south context;
- undertaking specific projects and events in relation to trade promotion, when tasked jointly on a project by project basis;
- providing advice on specific aspects of trade promotion when tasked jointly to do so.

Existing economic agencies North and South would continue to be funded by and operate under the direction of their respective administrations.

Special EU Programmes - A body with the following functions:

Until the conclusion of the current Community Initiatives

- the central secretariat, monitoring, research, evaluation, technical assistance and development roles currently exercised jointly in respect of INTERREG and PEACE by the Department of Finance and the Department of Finance and Personnel;
- administration of certain sectoral sub-programmes under INTERREG and PEACE (interest rate subsidy and cross-border co-operation between public bodies).

In relation to post-1999 Structural Funds:

- advising North/South Ministerial Council and two Departments of Finance on negotiation with the EU Commission of post-1999 Community Initiatives and of Common Chapter;
- preparing for the approval of the two administrations in the Council and in close consultation with the two Departments of Finance and other relevant Departments, detailed programme proposals under the new Community Initiatives (likely to be INTERREG 111, LEADER 111 and EQUAL, and possibly a successor to PEACE);
- central secretariat, monitoring, research, evaluation, technical assistance and development roles in respect of these initiatives;
- grant-making and other managerial functions in respect of INTERREG 111 and of north-south elements of programmes under other initiatives, within the framework of the relevant overall policies of North and South respectively, and subject to the expenditure allocations and specific programme parameters agreed between the two administrations and with the EU Commission;
- monitoring and promoting implementation of the Common Chapter, which would have a specific budgetary allocation.

Language - One body with two separate parts, with the following functions:

Irish Language

- promotion of the Irish language;
- facilitating and encouraging its use in speech and writing in public and private life in the South and, in the context of Part 111 of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Language, in Northern Ireland, where there is appropriate demand;
- advising both administrations, public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors;
- undertaking supportive projects, and grant-aiding bodies and groups as considered necessary;
- undertaking research, promotional campaigns, and public and media relations;
- developing terminology and dictionaries;
- supporting Irish-medium education and the teaching of Irish.

Ulster Scots-

- promotion of greater awareness and use of Ullans and of Ulster Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island.

Aquaculture and Marine Matters - A body with the following functions:

Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough -

- Promotion of development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough, for commercial and recreational purposes;
- Existing functions of Foyle Fisheries Commission in regard to inland fisheries conservation, protection, management and development and equivalent functions in respect of Carlingford Lough;
- Development and licensing of aquaculture;
- Development of marine tourism;

Lighthouses-

Existing functions of the Commissioners of Irish Lights in respect of providing and maintaining aids to navigation along the coast of the whole island of Ireland and its adjacent seas and islands.

Given that the CIL functions in the East-West context, arrangements to maintain linkage with the relevant British authorities.

ANNEX 3 MATTERS FOR CO-OPERATION

In accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 (l) of Strand Two of the agreement, at least six matters are to be identified and agreed for cooperation through the mechanism of existing bodies in each separate jurisdiction.

The matters below have been identified as suitable for initial consideration by the NSMC in this regard. It would be open to the NSMC, by agreement between the two sides, to consider

other matters.

(i) Transport Strategic planning and development of cross-Border cooperation in transport: while co-operation would primarily arise in respect of road and rail planning, it would take account of issues arising in the port and airport sectors; road and rail safety.

(ii) Agriculture Discussion of CAP issues; Animal and Plant Health Policy and Research; Rural Development.

(iii) Education Education for Children with Special Needs (e.g. autism, hearing impairment); Educational Underachievement; Teacher Qualifications; School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges.

(iv) Health Accident and emergency planning; co-operation on high technology equipment; cancer research; health promotion.

(v) Environment Research into environmental protection; water quality management and waste management in cross-Border context.

(vi) Tourism Establishment of publicly owned limited company as set out below.

TOURISM A publicly owned limited company will be established by Bord Fáilte and the Northern Ireland Tourism Board to provide the following services:

- planning and delivering international tourism marketing programme, including programmes in partnership with the industry North and South;
- publication and dissemination in overseas markets of information of a balanced and comprehensive nature on the island of Ireland as a tourist destination, which must reflect the diverse traditions, forms of cultural expression, and identities within the island;
- market research, provision of information and other appropriate assistance to help this industry develop international marketing expertise;
- co-operation with, consulting, and assisting other bodies or associations in carrying out such activities;
- carrying out surveys and collecting relevant statistics and information.

The new company would subsume the existing Overseas Tourism Marketing Initiative. It would carry out overseas marketing and promotion activity for Bord Fáilte and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, and would establish overseas offices for the purpose.

The company's Articles of Association and Memorandum, which would establish its overall strategic objectives, would be agreed by the two administrations.

The board of the new company would be appointed by the two administrations after consultation with the existing tourist boards and relevant industry interests and with their involvement.

The operations of the new company would be monitored by the existing tourist boards, and by the relevant Northern Ireland and Irish Government Ministers meeting as appropriate under the auspices of the NSMC.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board would continue to have access to the services of the British Tourist Authority. There would be clear guidance to the company that its promotional efforts should take account of the need to develop tourism in Northern Ireland against the background of the particular problems faced by the industry there over the past 30 years."