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STATEMENT BY SENATOR GEORGE J. MITCHELL
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Based upon the discussions of the past few days, I have decided to continue the review for a brief period.

There should be no false optimism: significant differences remain. But I am persuaded that the parties are making a sincere and serious effort to bridge those differences. To assist them in that effort, over the next few days I will be working on suggestions for their consideration. The parties have agreed to continue the review with meetings among themselves on Monday and Tuesday and I will return to meet with them on Wednesday.

In view of the gravity of what is at stake, I believe it justified to provide this brief additional time for further discussion. It also will enable the parties, and the people, to reflect on the consequences should they prove unable to proceed with implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

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