



Northern Ireland Office
Caste Buildings
Belfast BT4 3SG

Professor Monica McWilliams MLA
Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
52 Elmwood Avenue
BELFAST
BT9 3SW

10 August 2001

Dear Monica,

This is to confirm that I have today made an order under the Northern Ireland Act 2000 to suspend devolution in Northern Ireland. From midnight tonight the Assembly and Executive will be suspended and Northern Ireland will be returned to direct rule. My hope is that the period of suspension will be very short.

Ministers, Junior Ministers and Committee Chairmen will cease to hold office for the duration of suspension. The Assembly will not be able to meet or carry out any business but Members will remain in place and will continue to have access to their offices at Parliament Buildings.

Under the Northern Ireland Act 2000 I am required to hold a review before being able to restore devolution. I shall be taking this forward with Brian Cowen tomorrow. We shall discuss the current situation, taking into consideration the views of the parties, after which I hope it will be possible to announce an end to suspension over the weekend.

Kind regards


DR JOHN REID



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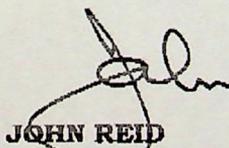
Dear Monica,

This is to confirm that I have today signed a restoration order under section 3 of the Northern Ireland Act 2000. The order comes into force at midnight tonight, at which point devolved government will be restored.

Having reviewed with the Irish Foreign Minister the difficulties which have arisen in recent times over the full implementation of the Agreement, and having consulted others, I believe that there is an opportunity now to resolve all the outstanding issues. But this will require sustained effort and a determination to use the available time profitably.

By virtue of section 3 of the 2000 Act the Assembly will now have a further six week period – that is until midnight on Saturday 22 September – to elect a First and Deputy First Minister.

Kind regards


JOHN REID