

Text of Minister Andrews' intervention

The Irish Government, having considered the assessment made by the Garda Síochána, following the Garda's discussions with the RUC, believe that the IRA has a case to answer in relation to the recent murders of Mr Brendan Campbell and Mr Robert Dougan.

The Government is equally conscious that, under the Rules of Procedure, when a formal representation is made to the Independent Chairman that a participant is no longer entitled to participate in the negotiations on the grounds that they have demonstrably dishonoured the principles of democracy and non-violence - in other words, when they have demonstrably dishonoured the Mitchell Principles, - it is for the Governments to consider what action may be appropriate.

In these circumstances, the Governments are faced with the situation where the party which is the subject of the British Government representation, i.e. Sinn Féin, strongly rejects the suggestion that they have demonstrably dishonoured the Mitchell Principles. In these circumstances the Irish Government considers it to be of fundamental importance that the views of all participants, and especially those of Sinn Féin, should be fully heard, that both Governments reflect very carefully on those views and, having done so, consider what action may be appropriate.

17 February 1998