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11 June 1996

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Rt Hon Jean Chretien PC QC MP

Prime Minister of Canada

I know you will be following with close interest this week's proceedings in Belfast. If the path to negotiations has been difficult, our task now is even more challenging.

Before events overtake us, I wanted to let you know how much I value your continuing support for both the peace process and General John de Chastelain's valuable contribution to it. We remain committed to the success of these negotiations and are very glad that General de Chastelain has again agreed to assist in resolving the difficult issues which lie ahead.

The first two days of talks have been difficult, but the process has survived, and the ability to produce compromises has been demonstrated by most of the parties. This is moderately encouraging. We will do all we can to enable the talks to move forward.

John Major

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I was forced to seeing
you in Lyon.
Meanwhile, best wishes
as never

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His Excellency Mr Martti Ahtisaari
President of the Republic of Finland

I know you will be watching closely developments in the negotiations, ^{and I} in Belfast which I and John Bruton ^{inaugurated them} ^{early} this week. ^{all the} Despite ~~our~~ current difficulties, I am determined to work for the success of these negotiations in providing a broadly-acceptable political settlement for the people of Northern Ireland. ^{The first two days of the talks have been predictably far from easy, but the} ^{I am very} ^{delighted} ^{Hann} glad that Mr Holkeri has agreed to renew his valuable involvement in Northern Ireland through acting as alternate Chairman ^{in the negotiations} to Senator Mitchell and General de Chastelain. I am very grateful for your and the Finnish Government's support, not least in providing practical support to Mr Holkeri.

~~I think~~ The independent Chairman have now been successfully appointed.

John Major

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shall go on doing all we can to enable the talks to move forward.

with a view to seeing you in Florence next week and meanwhile send you my very best wishes.

Proven has surprised and most of the parties leave them a willingness to make

commitments. ~~with~~ This is moderate encouraging, and we