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FROM: S J R HILL
CPL DIVISION
27 SEPTEMBER 1996

REF: IMMEDIATE

TO: Mr Sir John W. ...
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30 September 1996

STATEMENT ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO DECOMMISSIONING

The Government wants to see the total decommissioning of all illegally held weapons at the earliest opportunity. The issue of decommissioning remains high on the agenda of the multi party negotiations.

The Government remains committed to all aspects of the report of the International Body, including their support for the compromise approach to decommissioning set out in paragraphs 34 and 35 of that report. It believes that this constitutes a realistic way forward which could actually achieve decommissioning.

It has been the Government's position since 28 February that the International Body's proposals on decommissioning should be addressed by the opening plenary session of the negotiations. That is where the UUP proposals published this afternoon need to be considered.

The Government will play a full part in that debate and will make every effort to promote convergence on an agreed approach to the decommissioning issue. Its own position will continue to be based squarely on the International Body's report.

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