

## BLOODY SUNDAY

## Line to Take

- the Government's position remains precisely as, for instance, set out by the Secretary of State during his meeting with the Tanaiste at Lancaster House on 6 February, and in the message conveyed by HM Ambassador to the Office of the Taoiseach;
- namely, we have undertaken to examine and evidence pertaining to "Bloody Sunday" extremely carefully, and have now received a dossier of material from John Hume MP and some of the relatives of those killed. No options have been ruled out, and we have not pre-judged the material.
- We have also made it clear that, if there is new evidence, appropriate action will be taken;
- however, as a request has now been made for leave to apply for judicial review of the findings of the Widgery Tribunal, we will not be able to comment further on the material received until the outcome of the Court hearing is known.

## Background Note

Officials have now received very firm legal advice that we should say very little about the material that John Hume MP has handed over for fear of being in contempt of court on the grounds that there is a current application for judicial review of Widgery's findings. We therefore need to make clear that we are constrained from commenting on the substance of the material before the outcome of the judicial review is known. Otherwise, as time passes and we are seen not to have responded to the material, we may be seen at worst as having something to hide and at best as not treating it with the priority it deserves.