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ANNEX AGeneral points to make

- ◆ Determined to do all in my power to secure lasting peace and political stability in Northern Ireland. Full confidence in Mo Mowlam; but I will maintain personal interest. Always ready to engage directly where that would be helpful.
- ◆ Want to emphasise that our approach is based on firm principles and will therefore be consistent; I outlined some in my speech last week:
 - ◆ completely committed to principle of consent; Northern Ireland's constitutional status will not change unless majority of Northern Ireland wish it to do so. Welcome the fact that this has almost universal acceptance.
 - ◆ Equally committed to making Northern Ireland a place in which nationalists can feel comfortable to live in. Parity of esteem.. Equality of opportunity. Appropriate expression of their Irish national identity (without prejudice to the constitutional guarantee).
 - ◆ Believe talks process offers best prospect of achieving a comprehensive political settlement, addressing and resolving the fundamental political concerns of all the participants. No risk to anyone's fundamental interests. Any outcome must be agreed and widely supported before it can be implemented.
 - ◆ Determined to promote real progress in the Talks. Looking for ways to resolve the decommissioning issue on satisfactory terms and set an early date for substantive negotiations.
 - ◆ No question of Sinn Fein coming in unless they meet the criteria: an unequivocal restoration of the IRA ceasefire - borne out by words and deeds.
 - ◆ Believe it is right we leave the door open for them. If they meet the criteria, they come in. If they refuse the opportunity, we are quite ready to press on without them.

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