

NORTHERN IRELAND STATEMENT

1. Condemn murders.
2. As I said on the day, not just evil in themselves, but also as deliberate attempts to frustrate peace process. Right to break off official contacts. Made clear at the time could only continue if no violence.
3. Can today reveal to the House just how evil. On the Friday before the killings the Government gave an aide memoire to SF setting out its position. This piece of paper set out and stated that if an IRA ceasefire, Sinn Fein could participate in talks six weeks later if prove genuine through word and deed. Put that aide memoire in library today.
4. Public can now see that Government was prepared to make every effort to give SF a last chance to join in peace process before the train leaves. The killings were a deliberate effort to ensure SF could not participate. Because SF afraid of taking part. Well now time has come to call their bluff. I will not let violence blow our plans off course. Will insist on going ahead.
5. I can confirm to House that talks will start in September. Will conclude by May. Expect outcome to include a devolved assembly plus North South links. Result will be put to a referendum. Any party which wants to participate needs to be committed to peaceful means. Will proceed with those parties and only those parties.
6. Aide memoire remains on the table. That means that Sinn Fein can only participate if a ceasefire in place. Even then will be extremely difficult to trust them after this outrage. Have to prove by word and deed that this is an unequivocal ceasefire and that they are permanently committed to peaceful means. Will be [extra conditions, CBMs required from them]