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“ P R E S S R E L E A S E ”

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Alderdice reacts to “confusing” Mowlam comments

Alliance Leader, Lord Alderdice, has described as “confused and inaccurate” statements in today’s Belfast Telegraph by the Secretary of State, the Rt Hon Dr Marjorie Mowlam MP, concerning the Principle of Consent.

Lord Alderdice said:

“I have read the interview as reported in the Belfast Telegraph and do find some aspects of it quite remarkable, in particular the Secretary of State’s description of the Principle of Consent.

“Of course, all people of goodwill want to work towards an accommodation and coming from different perspectives may see it in different ways, but the Principle of Consent is not an opinion, it is clearly set out in law and in international agreements between the British and Irish Governments. To suggest that it is not a matter of numbers or of geographical area is both confused and completely wrong.

“Whether this statement is a revision of British Government policy, or simply a matter of confused thinking or language, I will wish to clarify with the Prime Minister Mr Blair when I meet with him in London on Monday night. This is a central issue and a fundamentally clear one and I find it difficult to understand the confusing nature of the Secretary of State’s reported comments.”

Lord Alderdice can be contacted on: 01232 793097