

10 March 1998,

Rt Hon Dr Marjorie Mowlam MP,  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,  
Northern Ireland Office,  
11 Millbank,  
LONDON SW1P 4QE

Thank you for writing to me recently about the question of alternative uses for the facilities at the Interpoint Centre.

I know that you have been looking at alternative uses for a number of Government owned or managed buildings in recent times. In respect of some of the uses for Parliament Buildings, mooted recently in the press, I must say that while certain public uses and access are appropriate, outdoor concerts, especially of rock music, are really out of the question, and I trust that this particular suggestion is not being pursued at all.

With regard to the Interpoint Centre, I have no objection to it being used at times when it is not being used by the Forum participants. I cannot quite see however what such alternative use has to do with the Talks Process. Frankly at this late juncture attempts to introduce other elements to the Talks Process would be extremely ill-advised. We are desperately trying to get an outcome and moving us around to other venues, or introducing other community components will not assist us reaching a positive conclusion at all.

I may say however, that I am increasingly optimistic that a positive result is now possible.