

**DRAFT LETTER**

**FILE NUMBER**

**ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE**

TO: Roderic Lyne Private Secretary to the Prime Minister 10 Downing Street LONDON	ENCLOSURES:	COPIES TO BE SENT TO
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FOR SIGNATURE BY: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE

**LETTER FROM MR JOHN HUME MP TO THE PRIME MINISTER**

Your letter of 2 December requested a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to John Hume's letter of 29 November (delivered to the Prime Minister of 2 December).

As you pointed out the reasons for the letter are transparent, and the draft reply simply acknowledges the Prime Minister's continuing high regard for Mr Hume's personal integrity, and his own commitment to work with the Irish Government and with the main constitutional parties in Northern Ireland to secure peace and an enduring political settlement.

SC/SIL/22403

I know that your own dialogue with Mr Adams has convinced you that there is a real opportunity in Northern Ireland. I can assure you that I will continue to work intensively to see if a Joint Statement can be made which fully reflects the interest and concerns of both sides of the community in Northern Ireland.

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TO: John Hume MP MEP	ENCLOSURES:	COPIES TO BE SENT TO
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FOR SIGNATURE BY: PRIME MINISTER

Thank you for your letter of 29 November which I received on 2 December while preparing for my working meeting with the Taoiseach the following day.

As you know in Brussels on 29 October the Taoiseach and I agreed that we would work together in our own terms on a framework for peace, stability and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. Since then both Governments have been considering making a Joint Statement, consistent with our principles, which will address our understandings of constitutional issues and political realities. We agreed in Dublin on Friday that there remained scope for further discussions, and that these would be taken forward in the first instance by officials. I shall be meeting the Taoiseach again in Brussels at the European Council later this week when we can take stock of the progress and decide how to take it forward.

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I know that your own dialogue with Mr Adams has convinced you that there is a real opportunity now for peace in Northern Ireland. I can assure you that I will continue to work intensively to see if a Joint Statement can be made which fully reflects the interest and concerns of both sides of the community in Northern Ireland. But the key to peace is in the hands of the terrorists. There is no excuse or justification for continuing their violence. They should stop it now, and stop it for good.