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Northern Ireland Office  
Stormont Castle  
Belfast BT4 3ST

Dr John Alderdice  
55 Knock Road  
BELFAST  
BT5 6LB

17 February 1992

*Dear John,*

Following the joint statement issued after our meeting on 27 January, Brian Mawhinney wrote to you to invite representatives from your party to a series of intensive factual briefings on present financial and other arrangements affecting the people of Northern Ireland. He also indicated that I would be in touch with you separately to take forward the agreement that I meet with the four party leaders to consider matters of common concern.

I would now like to put in place the first of these meetings, and propose that we try to get together within the next ten days or so to begin the process. I would suggest that our initial discussion deals with employment creation (which might embrace matters such as the drive to attract inward investment to Northern Ireland, local economic development initiatives, and the provision of workforce skills). I detect that this is an issue on which there is indeed a common concern among all the parties, and I hope you will agree that it is a suitable topic for our discussion.

I have asked Richard Needham to join us to outline the general approach which he is currently taking in this area as a precursor to more general discussion. At the end of our meeting, we might seek to agree the agenda item for our next meeting. I have some ideas about this myself, but will of course want to hear yours.

I hope also that our meeting will provide the opportunity for me to hear the outcome of the discussions which you and the other party

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leaders agreed to have, at the Prime Minister's request, to discuss obstacles to further political dialogue.

If it suited you I could be available for a meeting in Belfast on Friday 28 February or Monday 2 March. I should be grateful if you would arrange for your office to make contact with David Ferguson in my Belfast Office (0232 763011 Ext 3214) to discuss the arrangements for the meeting.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Pem Brookes*

PB

*18.2.92 - replied yes, suggesting 2.3.92.*

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