

18 July 1998,

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You kindly sent me a delightful card some weeks ago with good wishes on the achievement of the Good Friday Agreement. I must apologise for being so slow to reply but the days following have been very crowded, with the campaign for the Referendum, the elections to the new Assembly, and now the implementation of the Agreement in legislation and in practice.

Despite the many difficulties, and recent days have sometimes been very worrying, I have continued to be encouraged and buoyed up by friends like yourself, who have taken the trouble to be in touch, and give support.

I remain optimistic for our beloved land, and determined to continue to do all I can in my new role to build a peaceful future for our long-suffering people.

Again my thanks for your encouragement. I really do appreciate it.