

CROSS-BORDER SECURITY CO-OPERATION

BULL POINTS

- Terrorism, republican or loyalist, an undiminished threat to both Governments. Value Republic's investment in security co-operation. But we have to keep up the joint momentum for further progress.
- Congratulations to Garda for continuing successes eg recent finds in Louth and Donegal; arrest and conviction of Brixton escapees Quinlivan and McAuley.
- Welcome the Chilcot/Dalton report. This shows a general picture of effective co-operation. It also indicates areas where further development is possible.
- Believe that we can and must continue to make progress. Intelligence is the key. I attach particular importance to the consideration of possible developments in police structures and liaison arrangements. This could lead to greater effectiveness.
- Hope that the further discussion will enable something to be done on border flight safety zones. Difficult for us to accept the continuing risks to our servicemen caused by the present restrictions.
- Propose that John Chilcot and Tim Dalton should report again on the current issues at our next summit.

COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach condemned recent terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland and reaffirmed their determination to

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maintain and further develop security co-operation. They welcomed the latest arms and explosives finds in Britain, the Republic and Northern Ireland. They also reviewed specific security issues and identified a number of areas where further work should be undertaken to examine the potential for enhanced co-operation.

The Chilcot/Dalton Group, co-chaired by the Permanent Secretaries of the NIO and the Republic's Department of Justice, was set up following a summit in December 1991 to review North/South security co-operation and pursue work on specific issues. The Group (which has developed into a very valuable forum) was tasked at the 15 June Summit to provide a report on the current position. This is attached at Appendix 1.

2. The report has been agreed with the Irish. It therefore incorporates some shadings of view on both sides. Operational co-operation between the RUC and Garda is as good as can be expected, given the Garda's structure in the border areas (para 4(i) of report). But we believe that developments in that structure - specifically, the creation of a regional focus for counter-terrorist operations, combining strategic direction with local knowledge - could yield significant improvements in intelligence and operational liaison. Progress here will not be rapid, but the Irish do seem to be addressing the issues seriously in the Chilcot/Dalton sub-group.

3. There is no agreement so far on border flight safety zones (para 4(ii)). This is the very limited overflight flexibility we have requested for security force helicopters in the immediate vicinity of police/Army bases near the Border, to reduce risks to flight safety and protect life against the terrorist threat. The Irish initially rejected the proposal out of hand. They said it would increase the terrorist threat (we disagree - PIRA can mount attacks on either side of the Border, but the zones would make approach paths much less predictable and therefore safer) and compromise their sovereignty (but we give Irish aircraft a block

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## BACKGROUND NOTE

Chilcot/Dalton Group report (Appendix 1)

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clearance to overfly the UK with no prior diplomatic clearance). But the Irish have now agreed to address the proposal seriously in the PUS/Dalton Group. If progress cannot be made, the topic may need to be raised at a future summit.

4. As the report indicates, the two sides are not entirely at one on radio communications (para 4(iii)). We also look to the Irish for a satisfactory outcome on Automatic Fingerprint Recognition (para 4(iv)). To monitor progress, the Prime Minister may wish to ask that a further progress report on current issues be presented to the next summit.

Terrorist use of the border

5. The Irish have in the past sought to downplay the importance of the border to terrorists. Recent incidents with a clear cross-border link are listed at Appendix 2. Garda successes, demonstrating PIRA exploitation of the Republic, are shown at Appendix 3.

6. The Garda Commissioner recently said that terrorist activity was "not so much concentrated on the border". This has been misread. In reality, the Garda would accept that, although current activity may be low, the border remains a crucial asset to PIRA, and there is no diminution of the threat in border areas. For example, most of the sixteen Mk 15 mortar attacks in the last year were against border security bases (and half of these involved vehicles stolen in the Republic). The reality is that training, planning and logistical support for PIRA still continue to emanate from the Republic.

Current security situation in NI

7. There has been a reduction in terrorist violence since the Shankill and Greysteel atrocities (23 and 30 October respectively),

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with no deaths between that of Constable Woods on 2 November and the murder of John Hagan on 30 November. However, the Cleveland arms seizure has underlined apprehension of the loyalist response to any perceived signs of sell-out. They continue to make murder attempts. PIRA have concentrated on security force targets. Security force successes have continued. Charges have been brought for the Shankill murders (the injured bomber), and the loyalist reprisals (5 charged for Greysteel, 2 for the Kennedy Way murders).

### Introduction

1. Following a summit in December 1991, a top-level working group co-chaired by the Permanent Under Secretary of the Northern Ireland Office and the Secretary of the Department of Justice was set up to review cross-border security co-operation and to take forward work on some specific issues. The Group has met on a number of occasions to pursue this remit.

2. At the meeting between the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach on 16 June 1993, the Group was tasked to prepare for the December summit a review of security co-operation and the principal subjects currently under discussion. This paper provides that review.

### Security Co-operation

3. The main channels for discussion of security co-operation issues are shown in the Annex. The current level of operational co-operation is very satisfactory. There is now daily exchange of security information between the Garda Síochána and the RUC, and the security forces on both sides of the border co-operate frequently in co-ordinated operations. Both sides are committed to maintaining and, where possible, enhancing co-operation.

4. The main security co-operation issues currently under discussion (in the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), the PUS/Dalton Group, and elsewhere) are as follows:

- (1) Police structures to counter terrorism. Papers have been exchanged between both sides and a sub-group, comprising the two Permanent Secretaries and senior officers from the two police forces, is considering whether any further adjustment of existing structures (North or South) could increase effectiveness.