

Country/entity	Ireland United Kingdom Northern Ireland
Region	Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Text of Document on Decommissioning
Date	25 Jun 1997
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/conflict level	Intrastate/intrastate conflict

Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998)

Commonly referred to as 'the Troubles', the most recent conflict over the territory of Northern Ireland can be framed as beginning in 1968 and ending with the Belfast Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement) in 1998. While the genesis of the conflict was closely related to pressures for the state to reform with relation to discrimination against the (minority) Catholic population, the core issue of the conflict as it proceeded was the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, which was contested between the unionist/loyalist (mostly Protestant) majority, who wanted the territory to remain as part of the United Kingdom, and the nationalist/republican (mostly Catholic) minority, whose goal was to unite the six provincial counties with the Republic of Ireland. The thirty years prior to the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement were marked by inter-communal violence, active paramilitary groups, and the deployment of the British army in the province. Mediation by international actors, and dialogue between the British and Irish governments, and between the IRA and its representatives and the British Government eventually resulted in a ceasefire respected by the majority of combatants. Talks led to the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement which established a power-sharing system of governance between nationalist and unionist communities.

Close
Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998)

Stage	Pre-negotiation/process
Conflict nature	Government/territory
Peace process	Northern Ireland peace process
Parties	Not signed, parties not listed.

Third parties	British Government Irish Government
Description	In this short text the parties agree to list commitments and mechanisms of decommissioning. The Annex describes the responsibilities of the Independent Commission and establishes a 'Committee of Plenary'.

Agreement document	UK_IE_970625_Text of Document on Decommissioning.pdf (opens in new tab) Download PDF
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Groups

Children/youth	No specific mention.
Disabled persons	No specific mention.
Elderly/age	No specific mention.
Migrant workers	No specific mention.
Racial/ethnic/ national group	No specific mention.
Religious groups	No specific mention.
Indigenous people	No specific mention.
Other groups	No specific mention.
Refugees/displaced persons	No specific mention.
Social class	No specific mention.

Gender

Women, girls and gender No specific mention.

Men and boys No specific mention.

LGBTI No specific mention.

Family No specific mention.

State definition

Nature of state (general) No specific mention.

State configuration No specific mention.

Self determination No specific mention.

Referendum No specific mention.

State symbols No specific mention.

Independence/secession No specific mention.

Accession/unification No specific mention.

Border delimitation No specific mention.

Cross-border provision Page 3, Annex, Independent Commission
An independent Commission with appropriate immunity as provided for under the legislation on decommissioning enacted by the British and Irish parliaments. It shall be furnished with independent legal and technical advisers and, where appropriate, shall be given access to the technical expertise of the British and Irish security forces.

Page 3-4, Annex, Responsibilities

- to consult with the Liaison sub Committee on Decommissioning, both governments, and others whom it deems relevant on the type of scheme or schemes for decommissioning, including the role of the Independent Commission in respect of each scheme;
- to present to both governments proposals for schemes having due regard to the views expressed by those it has consulted;
- to undertake, in accordance with any regulations, schemes or arrangements made under the relevant legislation, such tasks that may be required of it to facilitate, observe, monitor and verify decommissioning and to receive and audit arms; and
- to report periodically to the Liaison sub-Committee on Decommissioning and to both governments.

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed) No specific mention.

Elections No specific mention.

Electoral commission No specific mention.

Political parties reform No specific mention.

Civil society No specific mention.

Traditional/religious leaders No specific mention.

Public administration No specific mention.

Constitution No specific mention.

Power sharing

Political power sharing No specific mention.

Territorial power sharing No specific mention.

Economic power sharing No specific mention.

Military power sharing No specific mention.

Human rights and equality

Human rights/RoL general No specific mention.

Bill of rights/similar No specific mention.

Treaty incorporation No specific mention.

Civil and political rights No specific mention.

Socio-economic rights No specific mention.

Rights related issues

Citizenship No specific mention.

Democracy Page 1, Commitments, 1.
The participants, recalling their total and absolute commitment to the following principles set out in paragraph 20 of the Report of the International Body: (a) to democratic and exclusively peaceful means of resolving political issues;

Detention procedures No specific mention.

Media and communication No specific mention.

Mobility/access No specific mention.

Protection measures No specific mention.

Other No specific mention.

Rights institutions

NHRI No specific mention.

Regional or international human rights institutions No specific mention.

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law No specific mention.

State of emergency provisions No specific mention.

Judiciary and courts No specific mention.

Prisons and detention No specific mention.

Traditional Laws No specific mention.

Socio-economic reconstruction

Development or socio-economic reconstruction No specific mention.

National economic plan No specific mention.

Natural resources No specific mention.

International funds No specific mention.

Business No specific mention.

Taxation No specific mention.

Banks No specific mention.

Land, property and environment

Land reform/rights No specific mention.

Pastoralist/nomadism rights No specific mention.

Cultural heritage No specific mention.

Environment No specific mention.

Water or riparian rights or access No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees

Page 4, Committee of Plenary, (b) Liaison sub-Committee on Confidence Building Measures.

The sub-Committee will be charged with assisting the implementation of all aspect of the Report of the International Body relating to the further confidence building measures mentioned in that report which participants may raise, and any others which may be referred to it, by agreement, by the plenary. In particular it will be expected:

- to consider developments in relation to such measures;
- to consider any reports on such measures as may be submitted by those with responsibility for the issue in question;
- to draw to the attention of the Chairman of the relevant strand any institutional or systemic implications which may arise from its consideration of particular confidence building measures.

Ceasefire

No specific mention.

Police

No specific mention.

Armed forces

No specific mention.

DDR

Security sector→DDR→Demilitarisation provisions

Page 1, Commitments, 1.

Participants, recalling their total and absolute commitment to the following principles set out in paragraph 20 of the Report of the International Body:...

(b) to the total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations;

(c) to agree that such disarmament must be verifiable to the satisfaction of an independent commission;

(d) to renounce for themselves, and oppose any efforts by others, to use force, or threaten to use force, to influence the course or outcome of all-party negotiations;

(e) to agree to abide by the terms of any agreement reached in all-party negotiations and to resort to democratic and exclusively peaceful methods in trying to later any aspects of that outcome with which they may disagree; and,

(f) to urge that “punishment” killings and beatings stop and to take effective steps to prevent such actions;

agree that there should be an immediate and total end to violence in Northern Ireland, and that they will work to achieve the earliest possible decommissioning of all paramilitary weapons.

Page 2, Commitments, 2.

Although individual participants would prefer to see the implementation of their own proposals, they have collectively come to acknowledge that the Report of the International Body offers the only realistic basis on which to proceed. Accordingly, the participants hereby commit themselves to work constructively and in good faith with the governments in their efforts to secure the implementation of all aspects of the Report of the International Body, including the compromise approach to decommissioning envisaged in paragraphs 34 and 35.

Page 2, Commitments, 3.

The participating parties welcome, as an important step towards the implementation of the Report of the International Body, the enactment of appropriate enabling legislation in the two parliaments which will provide the statutory basis for giving effect to the International Body's recommendations on the modalities of decommissioning.

Page 2, Commitments, 4.

The participants also commit themselves to work constructively and in good faith with the Independent Commission described below, once it is established, to enable it to carry out its role in the context of an inclusive and dynamic process in which mutual trust and confidence is built as progress is made on the issues of concern to all participants. They invite the Independent Commission to draw their attention to any case where the Commission consider that a participant has failed to engage with the Commission in accordance with this commitment.

Page 2, Mechanisms, 5.

The participants agree that:

- the mechanisms for achieving further progress on decommissioning alongside progress in the three strands should comprise an Independent Commission and a Committee of the Plenary. To enable that Committee to deal, as necessary, with all aspects of the Report, it should have two sub-Committees dealing with decommissioning and with developments in relation to other confidence-building measures respectively. The roles and responsibilities of the Commission and the Committee should be as set out in the attached annex;...

Page 3, Mechanisms, 6. Page 10 of 12

The Report of the International Body envisaged mutual progress on political issues and decommissioning as helping to create a progressive pattern of mounting trust and

Intelligence services	No specific mention.
Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces	<p>Page 1, Commitments</p> <p>The participants, recalling their total and absolute commitment to the following principles set out in paragraph 20 of the Report of the International Body:</p> <p>(a) to democratic and exclusively peaceful means of resolving political issues;</p> <p>(b) to the total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations;</p> <p>(c) to agree that such disarmament must be verifiable to the satisfaction of an independent commission;</p> <p>(d) to renounce for themselves, and oppose any effort by others, to use force, or threaten to use force, to influence the course or outcome of all-party negotiations;</p> <p>(e) to agree to abide by the terms of any agreement reached in all-party negotiations and to resort to democratic and exclusively peaceful methods in trying to alter any aspect of that outcome with which they may disagree; and,</p> <p>(f) to urge that "punishment" killings and beatings stop and to take effective steps to prevent such actions; agree that there should be an immediate and total end to violence in Northern Ireland, and that they will work to achieve the earliest possible decommissioning of all paramilitary weapons.</p>
Withdrawal of foreign forces	No specific mention.
Corruption	No specific mention.
Crime/organised crime	No specific mention.
Drugs	No specific mention.
Terrorism	No specific mention.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general	No specific mention.
Amnesty/pardon	No specific mention.
Courts	No specific mention.
Mechanism	No specific mention.
Prisoner release	No specific mention.

Vetting	No specific mention.
Victims	No specific mention.
Missing persons	No specific mention.
Reparations	No specific mention.
Reconciliation	No specific mention.

Implementation

UN signatory No specific mention.

Other international signatory No specific mention.

Referendum for agreement No specific mention.

International mission/force/similar No specific mention.

Enforcement mechanism No specific mention.

Related cases No specific mention.

Source CAIN Web Service
<https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ai25697.htm>
