

Country/entity	Ireland United Kingdom Northern Ireland
Region	Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom establishing the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
Date	26 Aug 1997
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/conflict level	Interstate/intrastate conflict(s)

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	UK government, Irish Government

Third parties

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Description

Agreement to establish the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning which would facilitate the putting of all arms held by paramilitary organisations beyond use and report to the two Governments on progress achieved.

Agreement document

[UK_IE_970826_Agreement on Establishing the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

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 No specific mention.

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	No specific mention.
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 No specific mention.

Ceasefire No specific mention.

Police No specific mention.

Armed forces No specific mention.

DDR

Security sector→DDR→Demilitarisation provisions

[Summary: Untitled preamble of the agreement lists previous documents relating to the decommissioning process, see 'Other Agreements box for full references].

Page 1, Article 1

The Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (hereinafter referred to as "the Commission") is hereby established by the two Governments in accordance with this Agreement.

Page 1, Article 2

- (1) The Commission shall be independent in the performance of its functions.
- (2) The Commission shall have the legal capacity of a body corporate in accordance with the Decommissioning Act, 1997 and any Order made by the Secretary of State under the Northern Ireland Arms Decommissioning Act 1997.

Page 2, Article 3

The objective of the Commission is to facilitate the decommissioning of firearms, ammunition, explosives and explosive substances (hereinafter referred to as "arms") in accordance with the Report of the International Body, and regulations or arrangements made under the Decommissioning Act, 1997 and any decommissioning schemes within the meaning of section 1 of the Northern Ireland Arms Decommissioning Act 1997.

Page 2, Article 4

In fulfilment of the objective set out in Article 3, the Commission shall have the following functions:

- (a) to consult with the participants in political negotiations in Northern Ireland, including both Governments, and others whom it deems relevant on the type of scheme or schemes for decommissioning including the role it might play in respect of each scheme;
- (b) to present to the two Governments proposals for schemes for decommissioning having due regard to the views expressed by those it has consulted;
- (c) to undertake, in accordance with any regulations or arrangements made under the Decommissioning Act, 1997 and any decommissioning schemes within the meaning of section 1, and in accordance with section 3, of the Northern Ireland Arms Decommissioning Act 1997, such tasks that may be required of it to facilitate the decommissioning of arms, including observing, monitoring and verifying decommissioning and receiving and auditing arms; and
- (d) to report periodically to both Governments and, through whatever mechanism they may establish for that purpose, the other participants in political negotiations in Northern Ireland.

Page 2, Article 5

The Commission shall consist of not less than two members. The members shall be appointed jointly by the two Governments who may also appoint additional members from time to time. The two Governments may jointly appoint one of the members as chairperson. The members of the Commission shall serve on terms and conditions decided by the two Governments.

Page 2, Article 6

The Commission, its property and premises, and the persons referred to in section 3(4) (b) of the Decommissioning Act, 1997 and in section 7(2)(c) of the Northern Ireland Arms Decommissioning Act 1997 shall have such privileges, immunities and inviolabilities as may be conferred or provided for in accordance with orders made by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Secretary of State under those Acts.

Page 3, Article 10

Intelligence services	No specific mention.
Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces	No specific mention.
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 Irish Dept of Foreign Affairs

CAIN Web Service - Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland.
