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Roinn an Taoisigh
Department of the Taoiseach

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Secretary General's Office DEPARTMENT OF THE TAOISEACH

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LINE IN RESPONSE TO SINN FEIN STATEMENT

PMOS said:

This is a significant and welcome move.

It confirms the Prime Minister in his view that Sinn Fein deserve to be taken seriously in their commitment to exclusively peaceful means, and that violence like that in Omagh must be "a thing of the past, over, done with and gone". It should help to build confidence and break down barriers of mistrust.

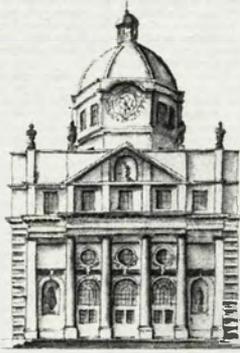
Omagh seems to have had the opposite effect to that intended by the bombers - it has strengthened the Belfast Agreement; it has brought the communities closer together; it has isolated the splinter groups even further.

The advance of the political process, allied to the security measures introduced in Parliament tomorrow, will ensure that the peace process remains on track, and that lasting peace and prosperity can be delivered for the people of Northern Ireland.

1 September 1998

To issue shortly.

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Statement by the Taoiseach welcoming Statement by Sinn Féin

The Taoiseach warmly welcomes today's statement by Mr. Gerry Adams, the President of Sinn Féin. The statement represents a further positive contribution by Sinn Féin to the building of confidence and trust, and marks an important advance in the consolidation of the Good Friday Agreement.

A central principle of the Agreement is the commitment by the parties to it "to exclusively democratic and peaceful means of resolving differences on political issues". Sinn Féin's statement further underlines its commitment, and that of the mainstream republican community which it represents, to that crucial principle.

The Taoiseach also endorses the view of Sinn Féin that there is a shared responsibility to removing the causes of and to achieving an end to all conflict and to making the Omagh bombing the last violent incident of its kind. It is incumbent on all sides to discharge their respective responsibilities in that regard. The best means of ensuring the achievement of that objective is the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in all its aspects, as mandated by the people of Ireland, North and South, in the referendums on 22 May. It is essential that all involved press on urgently with that work without delay.

1 September, 1998.