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STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MR. GERARD COLLINS, T.D.,

ON ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

I wish to express the Government's revulsion at the serious escalation of violence in Northern Ireland in recent days, which has claimed several lives and has left a number of others injured, including an infant child.

Over the past few months, paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland have waged a campaign of unrelenting savagery against each other. This campaign, whose victims have included individuals who were entirely uninvolved in paramilitary activities, has brought grief and despair to families on either side of the divide. It is an abhorrent waste of life whose only effect is to deepen the sectarian divisions which already exist and to increase human suffering and hardship.

The Government utterly condemns this campaign and is prepared to do all in its power to ensure that those who resort to violence for political ends will not succeed.

These dreadful events further strengthen the Government's determination to work for the earliest possible renewal of the efforts launched earlier this year to achieve a lasting political settlement.

15 NOVEMBER 1991.