



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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### Government Statement on the Release of the Birmingham Six

The Government very warmly welcome today's release of the Birmingham Six and the final vindication of their innocence. I know that the overwhelming majority of people in this country, together with concerned people in Britain, the United States and elsewhere, will share similar feelings of relief and joy at this news. Inevitably, however, these feelings are mixed with sadness at the length of time these innocent men spent in prison.

The Government would in particular wish to express again their admiration of the courage and fortitude shown by the Six over sixteen wasted years. The outcome is above all their own personal victory. We acknowledge the great humanity of all those who campaigned so courageously on their behalf, and express our great debt of gratitude to them. Their efforts, together with the skill and perseverance of the men's legal advisers and the support and solidarity of their families, have brought about today's historic development.

The Court's decision is especially satisfactory as it comes a relatively short time after the dramatic repudiation of the convictions of the Guildford Four and the encouraging developments in the Maguire case. Nothing can, of course, recompense the men for their lost years but an immediate first step at this stage must be for the British authorities to ensure that the level of compensation paid to the Six is commensurate with the scale of the injustice endured by them and their families.

It is also clearly imperative that the implications of these cases be looked at to ensure that the miscarriages of justice which led to the convictions and lengthy imprisonment of innocent people can never be repeated.

We wish the men and their families peace and happiness for the future.

Department of the Taoiseach.  
14th March 1991.