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DRAFT LETTER FROM SECRETARY OF STATE TO FOUR NORTHERN IRELAND PARTY LEADERS ON EU ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PACKAGE

The European Union has expressed a strong wish to make a positive contribution to the peace process in Northern Ireland, and as an immediate response to recent developments has already made a commitment to increase its annual subvention to the International Fund for Ireland.

The European Commission has also appointed a dedicated Task Force under the personal supervision of President Delors to consider the scope for further assistance. A new integrated European Union programme for Northern Ireland designed to help heal divisions between the two communities and to stimulate economic growth and employment now seems likely.

While the Commission has not yet given any indication of the level of additional funding that will be available for Northern Ireland, my officials have been seeking to identify ways in which the European Union could help underpin the reconciliation process. I favour measures that will immediately assist this process by addressing Northern Ireland's underlying economic, social and community difficulties. Already themes such as training and employment, economic development, urban and rural regeneration and help for the tourism sector have emerged.



I would welcome your Party's views on these emerging themes, or on any others you believe should feature in discussions with the Task Force, by mid-November if possible.

Jan,/suichedy,

The Rit. Hon James H. Molynesuse

Ar John Alderdice

The Rev. Dr. I. R. K. Psieley

Sir James A. Kulfedder

PSISOS LLB CC: PS/Sir John Wheeler (DFP, B&L) PS/Michael Ancram (DKNI, B&L) PS/Baroness Denton (DKD, DANI&L) PS/Mr Moss (DOR, DHSS&L) -PS/PUS (B&L) PS/Mr Fell -Mr Thomas -NI Permanent Secretaries Mr Bell -Mr Williams -Mr Gibson, DKD Mr Quinn, DFP Mr McNeill, DANI Mrs Brown, DOB Mrs Brown - B Mr Hewitt, DFP Mr Hamilton, DRD Dr McCormick, DENI Mr Kearney, DHSS Mr Maxwell Mr Dodds Mr Stephens Mr Maccabe Mrs Kenny Mr Capella