

INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON DECOMMISSIONING

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REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON DECOMMISSIONING

To: Rt. Hon. Shaun Woodward, MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Belfast

To: Mr Dermot Ahern, T.D.
Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Dublin

Introduction

1. In renewing the Commission's mandate for a final year, both governments asked the Commission to produce a report in August on progress made in decommissioning loyalist paramilitary arms.

Ulster Volunteer Force/Red Hand Commando

2. In verbal reports to both governments in June we said that we had overseen a decommissioning event in which substantial quantities of firearms, ammunition, explosives and explosive devices belonging to the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Red Hand Commando had been decommissioned.

3. The UVF and RHC representatives told us that some of their arms had been lost over the years through seizure by the security services, deterioration or damage, or the death of those responsible for them. They said that the arms decommissioned under our supervision in June comprised all that was under the control of both organizations.

Ulster Defence Association

4. In June 2009 we also reported to both governments that we had overseen an act in which a quantity of weapons belonging to the Ulster Defence Association had been decommissioned. We reported that representatives of the UDA told us this was the first in a series of acts in which they would decommission the remainder of their arms before the expiration of the Commission's mandate. They also

informed us that the weapons decommissioned in that event included some belonging to each of the five UDA brigades.

5. Since June we have continued to meet with UDA representatives to plan further decommissioning events and to encourage the group to complete the task as soon as possible. Given recent speculation on a possible split within the UDA, and the suggestion that the Londonderry/North Antrim brigade had refused – or could not get agreement – to decommission its arms, we met this week with the leaders of all five brigades together. They told us that there was no difference of opinion among them on decommissioning and that each of them was committed to completing the process within the time remaining to the Commission. To that end we will continue to meet with the representatives in the coming months.

UDA South East Antrim Group

6. Over the past number of months we have overseen two events in which some of the UDA South East Antrim group's weapons, ammunition, explosives and explosives devices were decommissioned. The group's representatives have committed to decommission the remainder of their arms before the Commission's mandate ends and we continue to urge them to do this as soon as possible.

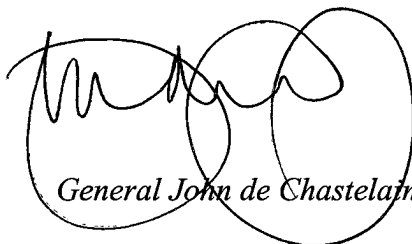
Conclusion

7. In conclusion we feel that substantial practical progress has been made on decommissioning Loyalist paramilitary arms. We believe we have completed the decommissioning of UVF/RHC arms and we have been given a commitment by representatives of the UDA and the UDA South East Antrim group that they will complete the decommissioning of their arms within the timeframe of the Commission's current and final mandate.

8. We will continue to keep the two governments advised on progress.



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