



PC.DEL/105/05  
10 February 2005

ENGLISH only

**United Kingdom  
Delegation**

To the Organisation for Security and  
Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)  
Vienna

**Permanent Council No 544, 10 February 2005: Statement delivered by  
Ambassador Colin Munro in response to the Russian Federation.**

Mr Chairman,

I would like to thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation for his intervention.

The British Government remains committed to securing a peaceful and prosperous society in Northern Ireland. Although an imperfect peace exists, enormous progress has been made since the IRA cease-fires came into effect and efforts are focussed with the Irish Government, on securing a lasting political solution and, of course, ending of all paramilitary activity.

I would be the first to admit that recent political developments in Northern Ireland have been disappointing. But the UK Government believes that progress can still be made and the people of Northern Ireland are moreover enjoying the benefits of a more peaceful and stable society, and the prosperity that rising levels of employment and falling unemployment have brought.

The Independent Monitoring Commission was set up by the British and Irish Governments on 7th January 2004. Its purpose is to help promote the establishment of stable and inclusive devolved government in a peaceful Northern Ireland. It does this by reporting to both Governments on activity by paramilitary groups, on the normalisation of security measures in the province, and on claims by Assembly parties that other parties, or Ministers in a devolved Executive, are not living up to the standards required of them. The four Commissioners are entirely independent of both Governments. More information on their work can be obtained from my delegation.

Mr Chairman,

I would like to add another point, not included in my instructions, that is the reference by the Russian Federation to disproportionate use of force by armed forces and police in Northern Ireland. It is a matter of fact that the British Armed Forces have developed particular expertise in the use of minimum force proportionate to the situation they face. There are many problems in Northern Ireland, but use of excessive force is not one of them.

In the meantime, I would be grateful if he could furnish my delegation with more details about what the specific tasks of such a fact-finding mission would be, and what sort of information it should gather, bearing in mind that this problem was been extensively examined by many distinguished personalities over the years.