

The British and Peace in Northern Ireland

How did the British Government and Civil Service shape the Northern Ireland peace process? What kind of tensions and debates were being played out between the two governments and the various parties in Northern Ireland? Addressing texts, negotiations, dialogues, space, leverage, strategy, ambiguity, interpersonal relations and convergence, this is the first volume to examine how senior British officials and civil servants worked to bring about power-sharing in Northern Ireland. With a unique format featuring self-authored inside accounts and interview testimonies, it considers a spectrum of areas and issues that came into play during the dialogues and negotiations that led to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and political accommodation in Northern Ireland. This book provides a compelling insight into what actually happened inside the negotiating room and how the British tried to shape the course of negotiations.

GRAHAM SPENCER is Reader in Politics, Conflict and the Media at the University of Portsmouth, Distinguished Senior Research Fellow in the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, and Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Politics at the University of Liverpool. His books include *From Armed Struggle to Political Struggle: Republican Tradition and Transformation in Northern Ireland* (2015), *Protestant Identity and Peace in Northern Ireland* (2012), *The Media and Peace* (2008), *The State of Loyalism in Northern Ireland* (2008), *Omagh: Voices of Loss* (2005), *Ulster Loyalism after the Good Friday Agreement* (editor with James W. McAuley, 2011) and *Forgiving and Remembering in Northern Ireland* (editor, 2011). He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. His research interests include conflict transformation, political negotiation and communication, identities in conflict and reconciliation.

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‘Principles and rules are intended to provide a thinking man with a frame of reference’
– Carl von Clausewitz

‘The world of theories is not my world. These are simply the reflections of a practitioner’
– Milan Kundera

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*The Process and Practice of
Reaching Agreement*

Edited by
Graham Spencer



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For Lynn

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Notes on contributors

LORD ROBERT ARMSTRONG was educated at the Dragon School, Oxford, Eton, and then Christ Church, Oxford. He served as the prime minister's personal representative for the Economic Summit from 1978 to 1984, and is also a former secretary to the British Cabinet. He served as principal of the Treasury from 1955 to 1957, and again from 1959 to 1964; as principal private secretary of state to the prime minister from 1970 to 1975; as permanent undersecretary of state from 1977 to 1979; and as head of the Home Civil Service from 1982 to 1988. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Armstrong of Ilminster, of Ashill in the County of Somerset in 1988.

SIR KENNETH BLOOMFIELD KCB, was born in Belfast in 1931, the son of English parents. He was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution and St Peter's College, Oxford, where he read Modern History. On the basis of the Open Competition 1952, he opted to serve in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, where for almost forty years he served as private secretary to three finance ministers, as a cabinet secretary to unionist and power-sharing cabinets, as permanent secretary to local departments, and from 1984 to 1991 as head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Thereafter, he has held a wide range of public and other appointments, including authorship of his report *We Will Remember Them* on victims of terrorism. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and the recipient of honorary doctorates from the Open University, the University of Ulster and Queen's Belfast. He is the author of four published books: *Stormont in Crisis*, *A Tragedy of Errors*, *A New Life* and *The BBC at the Watershed*.

SIR JOHN CHILCOT was permanent secretary at the Northern Ireland Office from 1990 until he retired from a career as a senior civil servant at the end of 1997. Since then he has been a (non-party) member or chairman of a number of reviews, inquiries and other bodies, including the Independent Commission on the Voting System (1997–8), the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on Public Records and its successor National Archives Council (1999–2004), a review of Royal and VIP security, an inquiry into the PIRA break-in at the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Special Branch HQ

(2002), and the Review of the Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction by a Committee of Privy Counsellors, chaired by Lord Butler (2004). He was staff counsellor to the Security and Intelligence Agencies (1999–2004) and the National Criminal Intelligence Service (2002–6). He is currently head of the Iraq War Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the March 2003 invasion of Iraq and its aftermath. He was interviewed three times in London between 2012 and 2013.

DAVID COOKE was a civil servant from 1977 to 2004, based mainly in the Home Office, the Northern Ireland Office and the Cabinet Office. Since then he has been CEO of the British Board of Film Classification under the presidency of Sir Quentin Thomas, who stepped down in 2012. David Cooke was a head of division in the Northern Ireland Office from 1990 to 1993, and then associate political director from 2002 to 2004, working closely with Jonathan Powell and Jonathan Phillips on policy and negotiations as part of the political process at that time.

WILLIAM FITTALL was principal private secretary to Peter Brooke and Patrick Mayhew 1992–3, in charge of the Home Office Counter-Terrorism Division 1993–5, cabinet office chief of the Assessment Staff and a member of the Joint Intelligence Committee 1995–7, Director of the Crime Reduction and Community programmes in the Home Office 1997–2000, and associate political director of the Northern Ireland Office from August 2000 until he left the Civil Service at the end of September 2002 to become the secretary general for the Church of England, where he is still in post. He was interviewed twice in London in 2014.

SIR DAVID GOODALL GCMG was born in 1931 and educated at Ampleforth College and then at Trinity College, Oxford, where he read Classical Mods and Greats. After two years' military service (in Kenya, Aden and Cyprus), he joined the Foreign (now Diplomatic) Service in 1956, serving in Jakarta, Nairobi, Vienna and twice in Bonn. From 1982 to 1984 he was a deputy secretary in the Cabinet Office, and from 1984 to 1987 deputy undersecretary of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. From 1987 to 1991 he was British high commissioner to India. After retirement from the Diplomatic Service, he was chairman of the Leonard Cheshire Foundation (now Leonard Cheshire Disability) from 1995 to 2000; and chairman of the British–Irish Association from 1997 to 2001.

DAVID HILL was head of the Constitutional and Political Division of the Northern Ireland Office from October 1989 to May 1993, and again from December 1995 to February 1999. As such, he was centrally involved in the initiation and management of the Northern Ireland talks process, from its formal inception in January 1990 through to the Belfast Agreement of April

1998, the ensuing referenda and the establishment and first meetings of the new Northern Ireland Assembly. He is one of the very few people to have participated in virtually every meeting of the ‘talks about talks’, the ‘Brooke’ and ‘Mayhew’ talks of 1991 and 1992, and the multiparty talks that ran from June 1996 to April 1998. Apart from advising ministers on the underlying strategy to promote a political settlement and the tactical handling of the talks process, he had lead responsibility within the Northern Ireland Office for constitutional matters.

SIR JOHN HOLMES GCVO, KBE, CMG is the director of the Ditchley Foundation and co-chair of the International Rescue Committee UK. He is the former UN undersecretary-general for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief coordinator. A career diplomat, he has served the British Government for more than thirty years and has extensive experience on conflict. Having worked on the Lebanon and Middle East peace processes, he was awarded a knighthood in 1998 primarily for his role in the Northern Ireland peace process and the Good Friday Agreement. He served as private secretary (Overseas Affairs) to John Major before becoming principal private secretary to Tony Blair in 1997.

SIR BILL JEFFREY was political director at the Northern Ireland Office from early 1998 until November 2002, following a career spent mainly in the Home Office. He subsequently headed the Immigration and Nationality Directorate of the Home Office, was permanent secretary and Security and Intelligence coordinator at the Cabinet Office at the time of the attacks on London in July 2005, and for the last five years of his service was permanent secretary at the Ministry of Defence.

CHRIS MACCABE began his career as a researcher in the Northern Ireland Cabinet Office. Between 1973 and 1977, he was a private secretary to chief minister of Northern Ireland Brian Faulkner and to several Northern Ireland Office ministers, including the deputy secretary of state. After various appointments, including special assistant to the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and a director in the Northern Ireland Prison Service, he became head of the Northern Ireland Office’s Political Affairs Division at the beginning of 1992. Between 2000 and 2008 he was British joint secretary of the British–Irish Intergovernmental Conference and the political director of the Northern Ireland Office. He is currently a member of the International Verification Commission monitoring the ETA ceasefire.

SIR JONATHAN PHILLIPS worked at Whitehall for some twenty-five years in areas of economic policy before moving to the Northern Ireland Office in 2002, where he became political director. He was then appointed as permanent secretary in 2005, and left the Civil Service in 2010 after devolution

of policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Executive. He is now warden of Keble College, Oxford. He was interviewed three times in Oxford between 2012 and 2013.

SIR JOSEPH PILLING has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Macmillan Cancer Relief since December 2005. He previously worked in the Home Office, the Department of Health and the Northern Ireland Office. He was the director general of HM Prison Service in England and Wales, and then permanent secretary of the Northern Ireland Office from 1997 until his retirement in 2005. He was educated at King's College, London, and at Harvard University, and is currently chair of the Church of England Bishops' Review on Human Sexuality. He was interviewed three times in London between 2012 and 2013.

JONATHAN POWELL worked for the BBC and Granada TV before joining the Foreign Office in 1979. He then became a diplomat based at the British Embassy in Washington before joining Tony Blair's 'kitchen cabinet' as chief of staff in 1995; a position he occupied until 2007. Jonathan Powell played a central role in the negotiations leading to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, and continued as a key player coordinating and managing New Labour policy in Northern Ireland until he left office in 2007. He was interviewed three times, initially in 2009, then in 2012 and 2013.

SIR QUENTIN THOMAS had a Whitehall career in the Home Office, the Northern Ireland Office and the Cabinet Office, where he headed the Constitution Secretariat (1998–9). He served in the Northern Ireland Office as political director (1991–8). He chaired the BBC Governors' Impartiality Review of the BBC's coverage of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. He was president of the British Board of Film Classification (2002–12).

Acknowledgements

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Brief chronology of the peace process

November 1987	The Provisional IRA (PIRA) kills eleven people and injures many more at a Remembrance Sunday service in Enniskillen.
January 1988	Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) leader John Hume meets Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams.
October 1988	British Government imposes broadcasting ban on Sinn Féin and other groups linked to paramilitaries.
March 1989	Gerry Adams comments on the need for a ‘non-armed political movement to work for self-determination’.
November 1989	Northern Ireland secretary Peter Brooke states that the PIRA cannot be militarily defeated and that talks could follow an end to violence.
November 1990	Peter Brooke states that the United Kingdom has ‘no selfish strategic or economic interest’ in Northern Ireland. Brooke goes on to say that ‘It is not the aspiration to a sovereign, united Ireland against which we set our face, but its violent expression.’
March 1991	Talks begin chaired by Peter Brooke. Talks end when the Intergovernmental Conference, which emerged from the Anglo-Irish Agreement, is resumed. The talks focus on Strand 1 only and the process of talks is constructed long the lines of three strands: relations in Northern Ireland, relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and relations between Dublin and London.
February 1992	Sinn Féin publishes the document <i>Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland</i> setting out a political peace strategy.
May 1992	Strand 2 talks chaired by Patrick Mayhew on North–South relations are launched in Dublin and last until November. The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) attends but the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) does not.

Brief chronology of the peace process

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April 1993	John Hume and Gerry Adams make a joint statement about the Irish people as a whole requiring a right to self-determination. The statement is made after Gerry Adams is seen visiting the home of John Hume in Derry.
October 1993	Ten people are killed when a PIRA bomb explodes in a fish shop on the loyalist Shankill Road.
November 1993	Secret communications between the PIRA and London are revealed.
December 1993	Downing Street Declaration is released stating that Irish unity would require the 'double consent' support of majorities in both parts of Ireland and that no constitutional change would occur without the consent of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland.
January 1994	President Clinton agrees a visa for Gerry Adams to visit the United States.
June 1994	Loyalists kill six Catholic men at a bar in Loughlinisland, Co. Down.
August 1994	The PIRA announces 'a complete cessation of military activities'.
September 1994	The British Government lifts the broadcasting ban on Sinn Féin.
October 1994	The Combined Loyalist Command (an umbrella body for the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association) announces a ceasefire.
February 1995	British and Irish governments release the Frameworks Document.
March 1995	Northern Ireland secretary Patrick Mayhew reveals a three-point plan to try to remove PIRA weapons in advance of talks, making decommissioning a key condition for reaching agreement.
May 1995	Sinn Féin meet British Government minister Michael Ancram after exploratory dialogue with senior officials.
July 1995	Drumcree parade becomes flashpoint of the marching season after members of the Orange Order are prevented from marching through a nationalist area.
November 1995	President Clinton visits Northern Ireland.
January 1996	The <i>Mitchell Report</i> is published. It canvasses for elections to round table talks and stresses a commitment to non-violence as a basis for participation.
February 1996	The PIRA ends its ceasefire with a bomb in Canary Wharf, London, killing two. Sinn Féin is excluded from talks.

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May 1996	Elections take place to decide participants at talks. Sinn Féin gets 15.5 per cent of the votes but does not take part having not made the necessary commitment to non-violence. The PIRA ceasefire is not renewed. Talks take place in Castle Buildings, Belfast and are chaired by senator George Mitchell.
June 1996	The PIRA plants a bomb in Manchester city centre.
July 1996	Drumcree creates a stand-off, but police allow marchers to complete route. This is followed by major rioting.
April 1997	The PIRA creates hoax bomb alerts in the United Kingdom, targeting motorways and the Grand National horse race.
May 1997	Tony Blair is elected as British prime minister.
July 1997	The PIRA announces a renewal of its ceasefire after the British Government resumes contacts with Sinn Féin.
August 1997	Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) is established to oversee decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.
September 1997	Unionists, including the DUP, boycott talks because of the decision to allow Sinn Féin re-entry. Sinn Féin sign up to the <i>Mitchell Principles</i> .
October 1997	Gerry Adams meets Tony Blair.
January 1998	Northern Ireland secretary Mo Mowlam visits loyalist inmates in the Maze prison to convince them to continue supporting the peace process.
January 1998	Tony Blair announces the Bloody Sunday Inquiry.
April 1998	The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) is reached. The DUP opposes the Agreement.
April 1998	The PIRA announces there will be no decommissioning.
May 1998	'Dissident' republicans opposed to the Agreement and the Sinn Féin strategy form the Real IRA.
May 1998	A referendum to gauge support for the Agreement produces a 71 per cent 'for' vote in Northern Ireland, although there is a large 'no' vote from unionists.
June 1998	Elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly lead to the UUP and the SDLP being elected as the biggest parties.
July 1998	Drumcree stand-off leads to widespread violence.
August 1998	Real IRA bombing in Omagh kills twenty-nine people and unborn twins.
September 1998	President Clinton visits Northern Ireland to try to bolster the peace process.

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September 1998	Gerry Adams and UUP leader David Trimble lead first talks between unionists and republicans for seventy-five years.
September 1998	Early prisoner releases made possible by the GFA take place.
September 1998	Demolition of security installations and checkpoints takes place under the auspices of 'confidence-building' measures and demilitarisation.
October 1998	David Trimble and John Hume receive the Nobel Peace Prize.
February 1999	Disagreement between the parties over decommissioning continues to hamper power-sharing.
April 1999	Sinn Féin states that PIRA decommissioning cannot take place before the Assembly is up and running.
July 1999	Attempts to nominate ministers for the Assembly fail as the UUP rejects Sinn Féin's inability to deliver PIRA decommissioning.
September 1999	<i>Patten Report</i> is released recommending root-and-branch reform of policing. Recommendations include changes to the name, badges and symbols used by police and the setting up of a Policing Board, which would be 'community-led'. Patten also recommends a 50:50 recruitment of Catholics and Protestants to the police service.
November 1999	Sinn Féin agrees to talk with the IICD on decommissioning.
November 1999	Assembly meets and nominates ministers as power-sharing commences.
February 2000	Northern Ireland secretary Peter Mandelson suspends the Assembly because of no progress on decommissioning.
March 2000	Bloody Sunday Inquiry begins in Londonderry.
May 2000	The PIRA announces it will open some arms dumps for inspection. This corresponds with a proposed sequence of events to facilitate a return to power-sharing, but is also linked to a PIRA commitment to decommission. Any PIRA action on weapons to run parallel with movement on policing reform and demilitarisation. For republicans this would create the 'context' within which arms would be 'completely and verifiably put beyond use'.
May 2000	Unionists agree a return to the Assembly on the understanding that arms would be dealt with parallel to the Assembly being up and running.

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June 2000	The IICD confirm that they have inspected some PIRA arms dumps and that arms could not be removed without detection.
September 2000	'Dissidents' attack MI6 headquarters in London.
March 2001	'Dissidents' plant a car bomb outside the BBC in London.
May 2001	The slow progress on decommissioning leads to growing tensions within the UUP, and David Trimble threatens to resign as first minister one month after the forthcoming elections if decommissioning is not dealt with.
June 2001	The DUP, under leader Revd Ian Paisley, becomes the dominant unionist party at the elections, and Sinn Féin overtake the SDLP to be the largest nationalist party.
July 2001	David Trimble stands down as leader of the UUP to create a six-week negotiating space.
August 2001	The IICD announces that the PIRA has a plan to put arms 'beyond use'.
August 2001	Assembly is suspended for twenty-four hours. The effect of this is to allow the parties another six weeks to agree who would be first minister and deputy first minister (by 22 September 2001).
August 2001	Three men arrested in Colombia are accused of being in the PIRA and training Marxist rebels. The PIRA announces that it is withdrawing its plan to put weapons beyond use.
September 2001	Clashes and violence occur in Belfast between loyalists and republicans outside Holy Cross Girls' Primary School.
September 2001	Suspension of the Assembly because of slow progress leads to another six-week hiatus (until 3 November 2001) to give the parties more time to reach agreement and elect a first and deputy first minister.
October 2001	The IICD announces that it has witnessed a first act of PIRA decommissioning.
November 2001	Initial deadline of 3 November for the election of first and deputy first minister passes, with Northern Ireland secretary John Reid proposing 5 November as another deadline.
November 2001	Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) renamed the Police Service of Northern Ireland.
March 2002	Suspected PIRA involvement in break-in at Castlereagh police headquarters.

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October 2002	Police raid Sinn Féin Stormont offices on suspicion that the PIRA is running a spying operation and search for evidence of republican intelligence-gathering.
October 2002	Devolution is suspended and power-sharing collapses amid allegations over continuing PIRA activity.
October 2002	Tony Blair makes a keynote speech on 'acts of completion' at Belfast Harbour, telling the PIRA that it cannot be 'half in, half out' of the process.
April 2003	London and Dublin propose a way forward through the Joint Declaration document.
May 2003	The Joint Declaration is released. Assembly elections are postponed.
September 2003	Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) is given the role of examining the dismantling of paramilitary structures and the transition to stable democratic institutions.
October 2003	Moves are initiated to choreograph a return to power-sharing based on positive verification of PIRA decommissioning. However, an IICD statement on a third act of PIRA decommissioning is seen as not sufficiently transparent by David Trimble and a return to power-sharing is postponed.
November 2003	DUP and Sinn Féin emerge from Assembly elections as dominant parties, but Paisley refuses to sit in a government until the PIRA has disarmed.
March 2004	Substantive talks between the Irish and British governments and the parties fail to bring about a breakthrough.
September 2004	Talks at Leeds Castle. Sinn Féin name two independent clergy witnesses who will verify decommissioning (Revd Harold Good and Father Alec Reid). The DUP want visual proof of decommissioning, which is rejected by Sinn Féin.
December 2004	A record £26.5 million is stolen from the Northern Bank in Belfast. Security chiefs point towards the PIRA as being responsible, and believe the money is to be a 'retirement fund' for PIRA personnel as well as used for election funding.
January 2005	Robert McCartney is murdered by PIRA men outside a pub in Belfast. McCartney's sisters launch a campaign for justice that leads to international pressure for the PIRA to be brought to an end.
February 2005	The PIRA withdraws an offer to complete the decommissioning of weapons.

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March 2005	American pressure on the PIRA to disarm intensifies following McCartney's murder.
September 2005	The IICD announces that it is satisfied that the PIRA has decommissioned all arms.
January 2006	Proposed legislation to allow around 150 'On-the-Run' republican fugitives – accused of paramilitary crimes before 1998 – to return to Northern Ireland is widely rejected by the parties.
April 2006	Tony Blair and Irish taoiseach Bertie Ahern unveil blueprint for restoring devolution, confirming that the Assembly will be reformed on 15 May, with the parties given six weeks to elect an Executive. A fall-back position is that if this fails a further twelve weeks will be given to get a multiparty government up and running or salaries will be stopped.
May 2006	Assembly operates for the first time since its suspension in 2002.
June 2006	The two governments restate that 24 November is the last chance for devolution to be restored.
October 2006	The IMC announce that some of the PIRA's most important structures have been dismantled.
October 2006	DUP leader Revd Ian Paisley takes part in formal talks with Catholic Archbishop Sean Brady and deems conversations to be 'helpful and constructive'.
October 2006	Three days of intensive multiparty talks designed to restore devolution take place at St Andrews, Scotland. May 2008 is called for as the deadline for the transference of policing and justice affairs from London. St Andrews Agreement ratified.
December 2006	The Sinn Féin Executive meets to discuss backing the police service.
January 2007	Sinn Féin members vote to support policing in Northern Ireland
January 2007	Assembly elections are confirmed for 7 March and a transitional Assembly at Stormont is dissolved to allow this to take place.
March 2007	Assembly elections return DUP as the largest party with thirty-six seats, with Sinn Féin taking twenty-eight, the UUP taking eighteen, the SDLP sixteen and the Alliance Party seven.

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March 2007	Devolved government is restored in Northern Ireland after DUP and Sinn Féin leaders hold breakthrough meeting.
May 2007	The DUP's Revd Ian Paisley is sworn in as first minister and Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness is sworn in as deputy first minister.
October 2007	The Executive agree a new legislative programme with a ten-year investment strategy.
July 2008	Slow progress on policing and justice brings the Assembly to a standstill.
November 2008	Executive meetings resumed after a DUP–Sinn Féin agreement is reached on the process for devolving authority for policing and justice.
March 2009	British soldiers and a policeman are killed by 'dissident' republicans. Both the DUP and Sinn Féin condemn the killings.
June 2009	Ulster Volunteer Force decommissions weapons.
December 2009	Legislation passed by the Assembly to pave the way for the transfer of policing and justice powers to Northern Ireland.
January 2010	British and Irish governments meet Northern Ireland parties to finalise steps for the devolution of authority over policing and justice.
January 2010	Ulster Defence Association and Irish National Liberation Army decommission weapons.
February 2010	The IICD stands down.
February 2010	Ten days of negotiations lead to the Hillsborough Agreement with Sinn Féin and the DUP finally agreeing a deal on the devolution of authority over policing and justice. A deadline of 12 April 2010 is set for devolution.
March 2010	The Assembly formally recognises the Hillsborough Agreement.
April 2010	Authority for policing and justice is devolved with David Ford of the Alliance Party elected as justice minister.
April 2011	Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) officer Ronan Kerr killed by 'dissident' republicans.
May 2011	Queen Elizabeth II makes state visit to Ireland.
June 2012	Queen Elizabeth II on visit to Northern Ireland shakes hands with Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness.
July 2012	Extensive rioting in Ardoyne, Belfast, following rival Protestant and Catholic parades.

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November 2012	Prison officer David Black is killed by a ‘dissident’ republican group claiming to be the ‘new IRA’.
December 2012	Decision taken by Belfast City Council to move Union flag from flying permanently over Belfast City Hall to designated days sparks protests and riots by loyalists which continue throughout 2013.
July 2013	Formation of the Panel of Parties in the Northern Ireland Executive with ambassador Richard Haass as chair and Meghan L. O’Sullivan as vice chair to initiate consensual recommendations on parades, protests, flags, symbols, emblems and related matters, and the past.
December 2013	Haass and O’Sullivan produce proposed agreement, which is accepted by nationalists and republicans but rejected by unionists.
May 2014	Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams is arrested, questioned and detained for four days by police in Antrim, Northern Ireland over the abduction, murder and disappearance of Jean McConville in 1972 and for membership of the PIRA. He is released without charge.

Abbreviations

AP	Alliance Party
CLMC	Combined Loyalist Military Command
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
EC	European Community
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
IICD	Independent International Commission on Decommissioning
IMC	Independent Monitoring Commission
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
IRSP	Irish Republican Socialist Party
LVF	Loyalist Volunteer Force
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
OTRs	‘On-the-Runs’
PAB	Political Affairs Belfast
PIRA	Provisional IRA
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
RIRA	Real IRA
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDP	Ulster Democratic Party
UKUP	UK Unionist Party
UPRG	Ulster Political Research Group
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

Key documents

Sunningdale Agreement 1973 (SA)
Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985 (AIA)
Downing Street Declaration 1993 (DSD)
Frameworks Document 1995
Good Friday Agreement 1998 (GFA)
Joint Declaration 2003 (JD)
St Andrews Agreement 2006 (SAA)
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