



The Downing Street declaration did not seem important at the time. however, in the long term it can be seen as paving the way towards:

- the 1994 IRA Ceasefire
- the road towards the Good Friday Agreement. It was a step confidence for Republicans to commit to the process while providing Unionists some security that they are not being sold out

This was a **ground breaking agreement** between the **BRITISH and IRISH governments** in 1993 in a bid to get the **peace process moving**.

It followed several years of increasing **violence** and tension which at one stage threatened civil war. (Shankill bomb and Greysteel massacre)

The declaration proved in the **long term a significant step towards encouraging Sinn Fein and republicans** that they should start a **ceasefire** and follow a **peaceful settlement**

HUME ADAMS TALKS

The leader of the SDLP John Hume took the brave and controversial step of having talks in **SECRET** with the leader of SINN FEIN - Gerry Adams. Hume believed that peace could only be achieved by getting the IRA to have a ceasefire and by involving Sinn Fein in the political process. These talks went on from 1988 and helped to shape the thinking of Sinn Fein & the British and Irish governments



SINN FEIN STRATEGY

Sinn Fein were becoming gradually convinced that they should follow a peaceful strategy 'if conditions were right'

They called for **SELF DETERMINATION**. This was the idea that all nationalists in Ireland should work towards the common goal of a United Ireland

It also wanted the British Government to commit to persuading the unionists that this was the best outcome for them too. Its aim was to squeeze unionism into an unviable minority in Ireland making a United Ireland inevitable.

UNIONISTS

- UUP Ulster Unionist Party- the biggest and most moderate of the unionist parties. They were unhappy with some areas such as Britain's declaration of no strategic interest. They also disliked what they called the 'Green tinge' of some sections- suggesting that parts were too nationalist. They wanted action to take place quickly such as on the constitution. However they liked the Dublin governments acceptance of consent. They also appreciated that the UK government remained committed to N.Ireland and wasn't abandoning them.

- The DUP Democratic Unionist Party was more hard line. Paisley, their leader, suggested the agreement was a step towards a United Ireland.



5) Long term results?

1) Background

4) Reactions to declaration

SINN FEIN *welcomed some sections* such as the UK declaration of no strategic or economic interest. However, they wanted the UK government to *go further and actually encourage unionists to unify*. They also *did not want any talk of changes to the Irish constitution*



SDLP- the moderate, nationalist **SDLP** view this as a **strong step forward** towards a long term peaceful solution.



DOWNING STREET DECLARATION 1993

The British government encouraged the idea that they were **listening to a Sinn Fein...** with the aim of encouraging a ceasefire



They promised they would provide **imaginative solutions**

The British Secretary of State Peter Brooke made a ground breaking statement that Britain had '**no selfish economic or strategic interest in Northern Ireland**' (SF always suggested the opposite).

Secret communications with the IRA and British government

2) Who agreed the Downing Street declaration of 1993?

The declaration was agreed by the **BRITISH GOVERNMENT** led by Prime Minister **JOHN MAJOR**

The **IRISH GOVERNMENT** led by Irish Taoiseach **ALBERT REYNOLDS**.

They both aimed to kick start a peace process based on points they felt would be grudgingly acceptable for all sides.



It was signed in December 1993

3) What was agreed?

1) IRISH GOVERNMENT-

Accepted **CONSENT**- the principle that the people of Northern Ireland alone would be able to decide the future of the country and no one else.

The Irish government also **empathised** with the unionist anger at the **two articles in the Irish constitution** that laid claim to the whole island of Ireland. They suggested they may address this in future. (These were all Unionist demands)

2) BRITISH GOVERNMENT -

Accepted that '**Northern Ireland had no economic or strategic interest in NI** (this encouraged nationalists/ republicans)

The British Government also stated that they would **abide by the wishes** of the people of NI and if they ever wished to become a **United Ireland** they would not stand in the way of this.

To persuade Unionists - the British government reaffirmed that they regarded NI as British territory unless a vote changed that. They **rejected the idea that they would actively encourage unionists to accept a united Ireland.**

