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PUBLIC STATEMENT

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S RESPONSE TO THE LETTER FROM
RT HON DAVID TRIMBLE MP, FIRST MINISTER (DESIGNATE)
NEW NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY**

Amnesty International has researched and campaigned against human rights abuses by all sides in Northern Ireland for many years.

In many of its reports, the organization has documented killings, beatings and other abuses committed by both republican and loyalist armed political groups against members of their own and each other's communities.

We believe that respect for human rights is vital for the future peace of Northern Ireland, and have consistently called for human rights safeguards to be implemented as part of the peace agreements.

It is important that all those found responsible for human rights abuses, including punishment beatings sanctioned by armed political groups, are brought to justice. Witnesses and family members reporting abuses, should be protected from intimidation in order to end impunity for perpetrators.

Amnesty International has been planning a mission to the Northern Ireland to meet parties from all sides to discuss our human rights concerns, including the issue of punishment beatings. We will be liaising with the Northern Ireland Office and various political parties on the timing for the visit.

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