

Ireland and the UK enjoy a close and productive political relationship:

- Queen Elizabeth's State Visit in 2011 marked a new phase of **Government-to-Government relations**. In March the following year, the Taoiseach and Prime Minister met to review cooperation, stating that "The relationship between our two countries has never been stronger or more settled, as complex or as important, as it is today."
- Since then the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister have **met annually in summit** format, agreeing on several new initiatives. They have established a unique forum for dialogue between senior civil servants, bringing the heads of government departments in Ireland and the UK together once a year.
- The two sovereign States, together with the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and the Crown Dependencies of the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey, work closely together as members of the **British Irish Council** and members of our legislatures meet as the **British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly**.

International Cooperation:

- Cooperation on practical matters has always been a feature of our relationship.
- Ireland and the UK have been partners together in the **EU** since we both joined the EEC, 41 years ago. This period has seen great advances in both countries, and many instances where we worked together on issues of mutual interest. Our troops currently serve together in a UN-mandated EU mission in Mali.

- We work together in multilateral organisations, such as **the UN**, where we cooperate on such initiatives as combating hunger in the developing world.

Northern Ireland Peace Process:

- Since the Agreement reached in the Multi-Party Talks in 1998, the British and Irish governments and the NI Executive have worked together within its framework to advance **political and economic cooperation** and in support of reconciliation.
- The UK and Ireland directly, and with our international partners, also actively support **reconciliation work at a community level** in Northern Ireland, through government funds, the EU PEACE programmes and the International Fund for Ireland.
- Both governments support fully a successful conclusion to the **ongoing Political Talks**, initially chaired by Dr Richard Haass, and now being led by NI Executive Party Leaders.

Commemorations:

- The State Visit takes place during **the Decade of Commemorations**, when we mark the centenary of a series of transformative events in Irish and British society, including Ireland's independence from the United Kingdom.
- Over 200,000 Irishmen served in British uniform during the **First World War** and almost 50,000 died in that conflict. Thousands of Irish women served in the Voluntary Aid Detachment in the front line.

IRELAND AND the United Kingdom

A close and productive Political Relationship

- Both governments work together in marking upcoming centenary anniversaries in a spirit of **historical accuracy, mutual respect, inclusiveness and reconciliation**.
- The Taoiseach and Tánaiste took part in **Remembrance Ceremonies in Northern Ireland** in November 2012 and 2013. In December 2013, the Taoiseach and the British Prime Minister made a joint visit to WWI sites and war graves in Flanders.

