



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

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### Irish prime minister sees a united Ireland coming from Trimble's coalition



Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern believes the current developments in the Northern Ireland peace process could lead to a united Ireland.

In his New Year's message on Irish radio, Mr Ahern also expressed confidence that next month's deadline for the start of paramilitary decommissioning would be met.

Bertie Ahern said he was pleased that the institutions set up under the 1998 Good Friday Agreement could begin work. He added: "Then, in time, God knows what that will bring. My aspiration would still be in the longer term that we will have a united Ireland." "I think there is a good chance that it will happen. But we should now concentrate on operating the institutions there is a huge agenda - and not be too caught up on the aspirations of the future."

The Irish Premier also spoke confidently about decommissioning. He said he was sure republicans and other groups involved in discussions with the body overseeing paramilitary disarmament were "conscious of their responsibilities." "The reality of the situation now is that the republican leadership are part of the government, the Northern Ireland executive - they hold senior portfolios," he said.

At the end of December, he also said that he would not enter a coalition in the Republic of Ireland with Sinn Fein before IRA decommissioning.

This only serves to show the utter hypocrisy of the Irish government when we think of how it connived and cajoled the spineless Trimble Ulster Unionists into entering a voluntary coalition with Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland while the IRA is still fully armed and refuse even to declare that its terrorist campaign is over.