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## Adams, Mandela to meet in S Africa

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THE Sinn Fein president, Mr Gerry Adams, is to visit South Africa next month and will meet President Mandela during his stay, The Irish Times has learned.

The visit is being organised by the international affairs department of the ruling African National Congress and is scheduled to begin on June 14th. While neither Sinn Fein nor the organisers responded to inquiries yesterday, sources close to the ANC confirmed that the meeting has already been arranged.

A spokesman for President Mandela, Mr Joel Netshitenzhe, said that a meeting had been proposed and that Mr Mandela had agreed to it in principle. His final consent had not yet been obtained, but a decision would be made when he returned from his state visit to Tanzania this week.

A meeting with Mr Mandela would further enhance Mr Adams's international image as a peacekeeper. It would also have great symbolic importance for the republican movement, which has long sought to associate itself with the ANC and the South African freedom struggle.

While it is understood that arrangements for the meeting began several weeks ago, Mr Mandela's office was denying any knowledge of it as recently as last week. South Africa is no doubt keen to minimise any impact the meeting might have on relations with Britain, its main European trading partner and source of foreign investment.

Mr Mandela said recently that he would be prepared to meet Mr Adams to discuss the Northern Ireland peace process Mr Adams is now scheduled to address a similar meeting in Johannesburg on June 15th.

However, last month Mr Mandela said: "It would be very presumptuous of me to advise the IRA, or the British government, with all the wealth of experience which they have," he said.

Since the IRA announced its ceasefire, there have been several South African/Northern Ireland initiatives. Last December representatives of the SDLP, DUP, UUP and Alliance Party were invited to South Africa for meetings with senior political leaders. A Sinn Fein delegation followed a similar programme in February.

Next week five senior South African politicians will travel to Belfast for a conference on Northern Ireland organised by the University of Ulster and sponsored by the New York-based **Project on Justice in Times of Transition** of the Foundation for a Civil Society.

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