

Gerry Adams steps down

Seen by many as the face of the IRA during its campaign against British rule in Northern Ireland, and hailed by others as a peacemaker, Gerry Adams has been a pivotal figure in Irish political life for almost 50 years

■ **1948:** **Gerry Adams** born into strongly republican family in West Belfast

■ **1969:** British government deploys Army to Northern Ireland following sectarian clashes between Catholics and Protestants

■ **1970s:** Becomes active in civil rights movement with **Martin McGuinness** (below right)



■ **1972-76:** Interned (held without trial) on suspicion of heading unit of **Irish Republican Army (IRA)** – paramilitary group seeking united Ireland. Briefly released to take part in secret peace talks with British government

■ **1978:** Adams, reputedly now top IRA strategist – claim he has consistently denied – is re-arrested but charges are dismissed

■ **1981:** Plays leading role in planning hunger strikes by republican prisoners, which sees **Sinn Féin** become political force

■ **1983:** Elected president of Sinn Féin and member of British parliament – but refuses to take seat to avoid taking oath of loyalty to Queen

■ **1984:** Survives assassination attempt by loyalist paramilitaries

■ **1988:** Holds secret talks with moderate republican **Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)**, paving way for wider peace process

■ **1994:** U.S. President **Bill Clinton** grants Adams controversial 48-hour visa for peace conference in New York, which leads to first IRA ceasefire

■ **1997:** Meets British Prime Minister **Tony Blair** for first time

■ **Apr 10, 1998:** **Good Friday Agreement** signed in Belfast. Accord paves way for devolution through power-sharing coalition of unionists and nationalists

■ **Jun:** Elected to new Northern Ireland Assembly

■ **2003:** Power-sharing deal collapses – Adams plays key role in efforts to broker new agreement between Sinn Féin and one-time enemies, **Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)**

■ **2005:** IRA formally ends armed campaign

■ **2007:** Adams and DUP leader **Ian Paisley** reach agreement to restore N. Ireland Assembly

■ **2011:** Resigns from West Belfast seat. Elected to Dáil, Irish parliament

■ **2014:** Questioned in connection with 1972 IRA murder of Belfast woman **Jean McConville**, but no charges are brought

■ **Mar 2017:** McGuinness dies after short illness

■ **Feb 10, 2018:** Adams succeeded as Sinn Féin president by **Mary Lou McDonald** seen as offering party a way to soften its image

