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## **NORTHERN IRELAND TALKS SUSPENDED AHEAD OF EASTER**

13.04.2017

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Anadolu Agency (12 April 2017)

Divided region remains without power-sharing administration as pro-British unionists, Irish nationalists feud.

The political stalemate that followed last months elections in Northern Ireland continued on Wednesday as stalled talks between local parties were suspended until after Easter.

According to a U.K. government statement the current phase of roundtable talks over the past ten days to help resolve issues will pause for Easter, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland James Brokenshire said.

Bilateral discussions between the parties and with the U.K. and Irish governments will continue, Brokenshire said but added he will need to take further steps to ensure Northern Ireland has the political stability it needs, if the parties fail to form a new power-sharing administration by early May.

The pro-British Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and its Irish nationalist Sinn Fein opponents won the most seats in the March 2 snap election, which was announced when Northern Irelands devolved power-sharing government collapsed following the resignation of its Sinn Fein deputy first minister, Martin McGuinness, over a botched energy scheme.

The DUP and Sinn Fein remain bitterly divided over a range of issues, including state recognition for the Irish language and legacy issues stemming from the Troubles -- an almost 40-year period of violence which cost over 3,000 lives in the divided region.

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Kaynak/Source: