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Inquiry put on hold

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 THURSDAY
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Finucane inquiry put 'on hold'

The British government put on hold 18 months ago preparations for a public inquiry into the controversial murder of Belfast solicitor Pat Finucane, it emerged today.

As she prepared for what will be her family`s final meeting with Bertie Ahern before he stands down as Irish Taoiseach next month, Geraldine Finucane, whose husband was gunned down by loyalists in his north Belfast home in 1989, revealed they had recently discovered a decision was taken Peter Hain to stop preparations for the inquiry.

Mrs Finucane said ahead of today`s meeting with Mr Ahern in Government Buildings in Dublin: "On April 7, 2008, my solicitor received a letter from the Northern Ireland Office, which stated that, 18 months ago in autumn 2006, a decision was taken by the then Secretary of State, Peter Hain, to cease all preparations for an inquiry.

"We were not informed of this decision at the time.

"The letter stated that the decision was taken because my family refused to accept ministerial control of an inquiry under the notorious Inquiries Act 2005.

"They appear to be saying that unless we agree that British Government ministers should be allowed to control what information the inquiry is permitted to examine in public, there will be no inquiry at all."

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- Finucane inquiry put 'on hold'

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In 2003, former Metropolitan Police chief Sir John Stevens reported his investigative team had uncovered evidence that rogue elements in British Army intelligence and the Royal Ulster Constabulary colluded with the Ulster Freedom Fighters in the murder of Mr Finucane and a student, Adam Lambert two years earlier.

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