

Jan. 1997.

IN THIS FIRST PLENARY OF THE NEW YEAR WE MUST BRING RENEWED VIGOUR AND IMPETUS TO THIS TABLE.

WE ARE AWARE THAT SOME OTHER PARTIES ARE TALKING ABOUT WINDING DOWN THESE TALKS NOW FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION.

WE ARE NOT IN FAVOUR OF A PREMATURE CLOSURE, AND WE BELIEVE PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND IN THESE ISLANDS WOULD NOT APPRECIATE THE ELECTION TAKING PRECEDENCE OVER ENGAGING IN SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL STABILITY AND LASTING PEACE.

WE BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE WANT PROGRESS IN THESE TALKS. THIS IS BEING STATED CLEARLY BY INDIVIDUALS, BY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES AND BY BUSINESS LEADERS. THEY WOULD WELCOME PROGRESS ON ITEM 2 ON DECOMMISSIONING AND FROM ITEM 2 TO FINISH THE OPENING PLENARY AGENDA.

WE MUST CHALK UP EVEN THIS SMALL MEASURE OF PROGRESS AND SUCCESS BEFORE WE ADJOURN.

WE WELCOME THE COMMITMENTS FROM THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER PARTIES ROUND THIS TABLE TO PRESS FORWARD. LIKE MANY OTHERS WE WOULD WELCOME PRO-ACTIVE FACILITATION BY THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMEN TO ASSIST US IN ACHIEVING A RESULT. WE ARE READY AND WAITING TO PLAY A POSITIVE PART IN MOVING FORWARD.

NI WOMEN'S COALITION