



Press Statement
No Embargo, 29 June 1998

Women's Coalition supportive of Parades Commission Drumcree Decision

The Women's Coalition today expressed its support for the decision taken by the Parades Commission with respect to the Church Parade due to take place in Portadown next weekend.

Jane Morrice, newly elected member for North Down, said:

"We have always taken the view that dialogue is the only way to reach an accommodation. Given that such dialogue did not happen in this case, the Parades Commission took the only decision possible in the circumstances.

There is always great difficulty where conflicting rights must be accommodated. In line with other recent decisions, the Parades Commission has again delivered a pragmatic and considered decision in this case.

The decision, though, must be considered in context. There have been over 700 parades by the Loyal Orders so far this year, and only 7 have required amended routes.

We urge all parties to understand the rationale of the decision, and to support it. There is, though, time for dialogue ahead of the march, and all parties should be willing to engage in order to reach an agreed accommodation. For our part we will do all we can to achieve this."

Ms. Morrice said that the Women's Coalition was pleased that the Commission considered the issue of the parade in Portadown in the context of the impact of the parade on community relationships, both locally and in Northern Ireland as a whole.

She continued:

"We will do whatever we can to support the implementation of this decision. As we enter a new era in Northern Ireland's history, we must make a decisive break with the past. The best way of doing that would be by ensuring a peaceful parade at Drumcree this summer."

Ends.

Further Information

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