

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: S J LEACH
ASSOCIATE POLITICAL DIRECTOR (L)
6 June 1996

DESK IMMEDIATE

- PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
- cc PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
- PS/Sir John Wheeler (L&B) - B
- PS/PUS (L&B) - B
- PS/Sir David Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Steele - B
- Mr Ray - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Wood (L&B) - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mr Hill - B
- Mr Perry - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Beeton - B
- Mr Lavery - B
- Miss Harrison - B
- Ms Checksfield - B
- Mrs Mapstone - B
- Mr Whysall - B
- Mr Budd, Cab Office (via IPL)
- Mr Lamont, RID - B
- HMA Dublin - B
- Mr Campbell Bannerman - B

ALL-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS: LAUNCH OF DOCUMENTS

Following agreement on paragraph 4 of the "Scenario" paper last night, the Liaison Group met this morning to finalise the range of papers which, in order to launch the negotiations, it is necessary to send to the prospective Chairmen and (once they have accepted the invitation to serve) to the participating parties and then to publish. We reached agreement with the Irish this morning on all these texts, which are attached:

- ✓ - Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session;
- ✓ - Procedural Guidelines for the conduct of substantive all-party negotiations;

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- ✓ - Draft agenda for substantive all-party negotiations;
- ✓ - Letters of invitation covering the above three documents to Senator Mitchell, General de Chastelain and Mr Holkeri;
- ✓ - Letters to the nominating representatives of parties covering the three documents.

2. Mr Spring gave the Irish side the authority to endorse these papers on his behalf, and they have done this. We should therefore be grateful for the Secretary of State's approval to the attached package. Changes in the documents from earlier versions which the Secretary of State has seen are largely consequential or tidying-up; we are satisfied that no new issues of substance arise.

3. When the Secretary of State has indicated his final endorsement of the papers, these will be faxed to the three members of the chairmanship group under cover of the joint letters from the Secretary of State and Mr Spring which are attached. (We have been given Mr Spring's signature for this purpose.) If the prospective chairmen indicate their acceptance of the invitation rapidly today, it may be possible to write to the parties (using the relevant draft letter) and publish the papers at a joint press conference this afternoon (on current plans Mr Spring is due to leave London around 5.00 pm). If this proves over-ambitious, and the chairmen only signify their acceptance tomorrow, arrangements for the joint launch will be further considered. (If we do not get acceptance from the chairmen by close of play tomorrow, it will, as a fall-back, be necessary to send a shorter letter to the nominating representatives asking them and their teams simply to report to Castle Buildings for the start of negotiations at 2.00 pm on Monday.)

4. Two points of detail should be mentioned:

- a. in parallel with the approach to the prospective Chairmen, their Governments will be notified of what is happening by the relevant British and Irish Ambassadors and given a copy of the letter;

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b. a courteous valedictory letter to Sir Ninian Stephen will be submitted separately shortly.

5. As indicated above, it would be most helpful to have very early Ministerial endorsement of the attached papers.

Social Democratic and Labour Party
O'Connell House
61c Lisburn Road
Belfast, BT7 7TT

6 June 1984

(Signed SJL)

S J LEACH
APD(L)
OAB 6469



We are writing to you about a number of arrangements for the negotiations that are to begin next Monday.

The opening plenary will begin at 2pm in Castle Buildings in Belfast. The Talks Administration Unit will be in touch about access and other practical arrangements.

We enclose a number of papers prepared by the two Governments:

- Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session
- Procedural Guidelines for the Conduct of Substantive All-Party Negotiations (as referred to in paragraph 3 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session")
- Draft Agenda for Substantive All-Party Negotiations (as referred to in paragraph 3 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session"). (The list of Strand 1 issues for inclusion on the agenda is suggested by the British Government alone).

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SMJ/APDL/50547

Mr John Hume MP MEP
Social Democratic and Labour Party
Cranmore House
611c Lisburn Road
Belfast BT9 7YT

6 June 1996

Dear John:

We are writing to you about a number of arrangements for the negotiations that are to begin next Monday.

The opening plenary will begin at 2pm in Castle Buildings in Belfast. The Talks Administration Unit will be in touch about access and other practical arrangements.

We enclose a number of papers prepared by the two Governments:

- Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session
- Procedural Guidelines for the Conduct of Substantive All-Party Negotiations (as referred to in paragraph 5 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session")
- Draft Agenda for Substantive All-Party Negotiations (as referred to in paragraph 9 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session"). (The list of Strand 1 issues for inclusion on the agenda is suggested by the British Government alone).

SUBSTANTIVE ALL-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS

SCENARIO FOR THE OFFICIALS WILMARRA SESSION

PAPER BY THE UK AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS

We look forward to seeing you on Monday.

Yours sincerely

Introduction

1. The communiqué issued by both Governments on 28 February agreed that an elective process "would lead immediately and without further preconditions to the convening of all-party negotiations with a comprehensive agenda". The two Governments agreed that, following consultations, substantive all-party talks would be convened on

Patrick Mayhew

Dick Spring

The Rt Hon Sir Patrick Mayhew QC MP
Secretary of State
for Northern Ireland

Dick Spring TD
Tánaiste and Minister
for Foreign Affairs

2. The Ground Rules paper published in April set out the Governments' intention that the all-party negotiations should start with an opening plenary session. The Governments are agreed that at this session the requirements of paragraph 12 of the 28 February Communiqué must be fulfilled - that is:

- all participants would need to make clear at the beginning of the discussions their total and absolute commitment to the principles of democracy and non-violence set out in the report of the International Body;
- they would also need to address, at that stage, its proposals on decommissioning;
- confidence building would also require that the parties have reassurance that a meaningful and inclusive process of negotiations is genuinely being offered to address the legitimate concerns of their traditions and the need for new political arrangements with which all can identify.

SUBSTANTIVE ALL-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS

6 June 1996

SCENARIO FOR THE OPENING PLENARY SESSION

PAPER BY THE UK AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS

Introduction

1. The communiqué issued by both Governments on 28 February agreed that an elective process "would lead immediately and without further preconditions to the convening of all-party negotiations with a comprehensive agenda". The two Governments agreed that, following consultations, substantive all-party talks would be convened on Monday 10 June.

2. The Ground Rules paper published in April set out the two Governments' intention that the all-party negotiations should start with an opening plenary session. The Governments are agreed that at this session the requirements of paragraph 12 of the 28 February Communiqué must be fulfilled - that is:

- all participants would need to make clear at the beginning of the discussions their total and absolute commitment to the principles of democracy and non-violence set out in the report of the International Body;

- they would also need to address, at that stage, its proposals on decommissioning;

- confidence building would also require that the parties have reassurance that a meaningful and inclusive process of negotiations is genuinely being offered to address the legitimate concerns of their traditions and the need for new political arrangements with which all can identify.

3. In accordance with these undertakings, this paper sets out in more detail the scenario the two Governments propose for the opening plenary session.

Chairman and Procedures

4. The British Government will chair Strand One of the negotiations and the British and Irish Governments will jointly chair Strand Three. The two Governments have decided to invite a group consisting of Senator George Mitchell, General John de Chastelain and Mr Harri Holkeri to play a role in chairing various aspects of the negotiations which require independent chairmanship. They have agreed to invite the chairman of the group, Senator Mitchell, to chair the plenary sessions, to which the various strands and any sub-committees which the plenary may establish will report, and which will periodically review progress across the entire spectrum of the negotiations. The two Governments will also invite Senator Mitchell, with the help of his colleagues, to assist them in giving effect to their joint commitment under paragraph 15 of the Ground Rules. They have also agreed to invite General de Chastelain to provide the independent chairmanship in Strand Two. He would also chair the Business Committee, unless the participants in the negotiations, in accordance with the Ground Rules, were to decide otherwise. They have agreed to invite Mr Holkeri to act as alternate Chairman in any of the independent chairmanship roles. They agree that it will be open to the group to propose alternative options to the two Governments in the light of the requirements of the negotiations or as circumstances warrant.

5. The opening plenary session will be conducted by the Independent Chairman in accordance with rules of procedure drawn up by the two Governments for adoption in plenary. The rules drawn up by the Governments will operate unless and until amended by the participants, on the recommendation of the Business Committee.

6. As set out in the agenda for the opening plenary, it will subsequently, if necessary after consideration by the Business Committee, adopt, and commit the parties to negotiate, a

Business of the Opening Plenary

6. The proposed agenda for the opening plenary session is attached at Annex A. At the start of the session, the leader of each of the negotiating teams will be asked to make a formal declaration making clear their party's total and absolute commitment to the principles of democracy and non-violence set out in the report of the International Body. The commitments will then be confirmed in a public statement on behalf of all the participants. In the event of any participant failing to make this clear commitment, the Independent Chairman will report this to the two Governments for their consideration and, after consultation with the other participants, any appropriate action.

7. The plenary session will then move to the appointment of a Business Committee. As envisaged in the Ground Rules paper, the Business Committee would be composed of representatives of the two Governments and of the political parties, chaired by the Independent Chairman of Strand Two or, otherwise, by any person agreed by the participants. Its purpose would be to coordinate the progress and procedures of the negotiations. The Business Committee would not deal with the substance of the negotiations but would address unresolved procedural issues. It would therefore be available to meet during the opening session to provide advice on any such unresolved issues to the plenary. It could also determine the modalities for dealing with any issue which does not fall exclusively within any of the three strands. (It will be open to the parties to agree that certain over-arching issues - for example, human rights - could usefully be addressed in plenary format.)

8. There will then be a round of statements which, as the Ground Rules envisage, will give each delegation the opportunity to set out its approach to the negotiations and its position on key issues.

9. As set out in the agenda for the opening plenary, it will subsequently, if necessary after consideration by the Business Committee, adopt, and commit the parties to negotiate, a

comprehensive agenda for the negotiations. A separate consultation paper is being issued to take the views of parties on the elements of this agenda. The Independent Chairman shall satisfy himself that the agenda provides all the participants with reassurance that a meaningful and inclusive process of negotiations is genuinely being offered to address the legitimate concerns of their traditions and the need for new political arrangements with which all can identify.

10. The opening plenary will also address the International Body's proposals on decommissioning. In this context, both Governments confirm their commitment to all aspects of the report of the International Body including their support for the compromise approach to decommissioning set out in paragraphs 34 and 35 which state:

11. Once the decommissioning issue has been addressed in this way, the parties should consider an approach under which some decommissioning would take place during the process of all-party negotiations, rather than before or after as the parties now urge. Such an approach represents a compromise. If the peace process is to move forward, the current impasse must be overcome. While both sides have been adamant in their positions, both have repeatedly expressed the desire to move forward. This approach provides them that opportunity.

14. In addition, it offers the parties an opportunity to use the process of decommissioning to build confidence one step at a time during negotiations. As progress is made on political issues, even modest mutual steps on decommissioning could help create the atmosphere needed for further steps in a progressive pattern of mounting trust and confidence."

Attachments

Both Governments agree with the International Body that this approach provides the opportunity to move forward, and that it is on the basis of working constructively to implement this and all other aspects of the Report that the negotiations should be advanced. They will therefore work with all the participants to implement all aspects of the Report.

11. The two Governments have accordingly agreed to invite the Independent Chairman, after open discussion in the plenary, to satisfy himself that there are clear indications of good intent on the part of all the participants to work constructively and in good faith to secure the implementation of all aspects of the Report in the context of an inclusive and dynamic process which builds trust and confidence as progress is made on the issues.

12. Once the Independent Chairman has reported that he is so satisfied, the two Governments will propose that a sub-committee of the plenary, representing all the participants and chaired by the Independent Chairman of the plenary, be established with the attached terms of reference.

13. Once the decommissioning issue has been addressed in this way, the Independent Chairman will make a concluding statement and the opening plenary session will come to an end. The negotiations on the issues in the three strands and the sub-committee will then proceed alongside each other. The Independent Chairman may periodically brief the plenary on the progress made in the sub-committee.

14. The two Governments will also propose that a meeting of the plenary should be held at a suitable date, about the end of September, to take stock of progress in the negotiations as a whole, including the work of the sub-committee. At this meeting, all participants will review the position, and the progress which has been made across the entire spectrum of the negotiations.

Attachments

Annex A. Agenda for opening plenary.

Annex B. Terms of reference for proposed sub-committee on decommissioning.

Proposed Opening Plenary Session
Agenda

1. Formal opening by two Governments and hand-over to Independent Chairman.
2. Introductory remarks by Chairman.
3. Participants to make formal declaration making clear their total and absolute commitment to International Body's principles of democracy and non-violence.
4. Public statement on behalf of all participants recording total and absolute commitment to principles.
5. Appointment of Business Committee.
6. Opening statements by the participants.
7. Discussion of comprehensive agenda for negotiations.
8. Discussion of International Body's proposals on decommissioning.
9. Adoption of comprehensive agenda for negotiations and procedural rules.
10. Report of the Chairman for the purpose set out in paragraph 12 of "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session"; Governments' proposal to establish a sub-committee on decommissioning.
11. Concluding statement by the Independent Chairman.

**Proposed Sub-committee on Decommissioning
Terms of Reference**

To secure implementation of all aspects of the report of the International Body, including:

- (a) agreement on the modalities of decommissioning on the basis of the guidelines contained in paragraphs 36 to 50 of the Report of the International Body;
- (b) advice to both Governments, in the light of those discussions, on the legislative and practical implications of the course which is recommended; and
- (c) agreement on any other arrangements necessary for implementation of the Report.

**PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF
SUBSTANTIVE ALL-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS**

The following "Procedural Guidelines for the Conduct of Substantive All-Party Negotiations" (hereafter referred to as the "Procedural Guidelines" are intended to supplement the "Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations" (hereafter referred to as the "Ground Rules"), published by the two Governments on 16 April 1996. It is proposed that the Ground Rules and the Procedural Guidelines will together serve as the rules of procedure for the negotiations unless or until they are amended or replaced by rules of procedure adopted by agreement among the participants in the negotiations. Subject to this, and with the exception of the provision in paragraph 20 of the Procedural Guidelines, which has the effect of specifying the scope of application of sufficient consensus as laid down in paragraph 24 of the Ground Rules, the Ground Rules should be taken as the authoritative text in the case of any difference of interpretation between the two documents.

Format

1. According to the Ground Rules, negotiations will be organised so that issues are discussed in the following formats, with appropriate distinctions as to participation and procedural arrangements:

- Plenary
- Strand One

- Strand Two

- Strand Three

- the Business Committee.

Chairing the Negotiations

2. Paragraph 4 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session" sets out the arrangements as follows:
- "The British Government will chair Strand One of the negotiations and the British and Irish Governments will jointly chair Strand Three. The two Governments have decided to invite a group consisting of Senator George Mitchell, General John de Chastelain and Mr Harri Holkeri to play a role in chairing the various aspects of the negotiations which require independent chairmanship. They have agreed to invite the chairman of the group, Senator Mitchell, to chair the plenary session, to which the various strands and any sub-committees which the plenary may establish will report, and which will periodically review progress across the entire spectrum of the negotiations. The two Governments will also invite Senator Mitchell, with the help of his colleagues, to assist them in giving effect to their joint commitment under paragraph 15 of the Ground Rules. They have also agreed to invite General de Chastelain to provide the independent chairmanship in Strand Two. He would also chair the Business Committee, unless the participants in the negotiations, in accordance with the Ground Rules, were to decide otherwise. They have agreed to invite Mr Holkeri to act as alternate Chairman in any of the independent Chairmanship roles. They have agreed that it will be open to the group to propose alternative options to the two Governments in the light of the requirements of the negotiations or as circumstances warrant."

Committees and Sub-Committees

3. Where appropriate, other committees and sub-committees of the negotiations may be established by agreement among the participants in the format to which the sub-group relates. Committees and sub-committees shall be chaired by the relevant chairman or, by agreement among the participants in that format, by a person nominated by the chairman.

Conduct of Proceedings

4. The relevant Chairman will have responsibility for convening, re-scheduling and adjourning meetings, in consultation, as he considers appropriate, with the relevant participating negotiating teams. However, any negotiating team may request an adjournment of up to 10 minutes at a time and the Chairman shall refuse such requests only if they are made with unreasonable frequency.
5. Where any negotiating team does not attend a meeting at a previously agreed time and fails to provide notice of their inability to attend, the Chairman of that meeting may proceed to conduct the meeting in their absence. If a delegation should withdraw temporarily or permanently from any aspect of the negotiations, the Chairman will be free to proceed with business with the remaining participants, notwithstanding such withdrawal.
6. The Chairman of each meeting will be responsible for the orderly conduct of business and will conduct the proceedings so as to allow an opportunity for a fair hearing of all the issues.
7. All remarks shall be addressed through the Chairman. Time limits on interventions may be imposed at the Chairman's discretion.
8. The Chairman's ruling on questions of procedure and order shall be final. In arriving at such rulings the Chairman may apply the rules for determining sufficient consensus set out in paragraphs 20 and 21.
9. The Chairman may at any time ask one or more of the participating negotiating teams to meet him; and will accede to any reasonable request for a meeting from any negotiating team(s).

Opening of the negotiations

10. Paragraph 12 of the Ground Rules specified that negotiations will begin on Monday 10 June with an opening Plenary session. Arrangements for the opening Plenary are set out in the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session".
11. Following the conclusion of the opening Plenary, the appropriate Chairmen will convene meetings of the negotiations within the three strands and in the Sub-Committee of the Plenary established to carry forward work on decommissioning.
12. The Independent Chairman of the Plenary may convene further meetings of the Plenary as he considers necessary, in the light of developments across the negotiations as a whole.

Agenda

13. Participants will negotiate in the various formats, committees and sub-committees, on the basis of the comprehensive agenda for the negotiations as a whole, adopted in the opening session of the Plenary, as it relates to their area of competence. They may, by agreement, develop or refine it.
14. The Business Committee shall establish and maintain an indicative calendar for the negotiations as a whole and within the various formats. The timing and duration of meetings in the various formats shall be determined by the relevant Chairman in consultation with the participants in accordance with this indicative calendar.
15. The agenda for each meeting of the negotiations shall be settled by the participants on the basis of proposals put forward by the Chairman in accordance with the overall agenda for the relevant format, and taking into account the indicative calendar and the views of the Business Committee.

Decision-taking

16. The negotiations will operate on the basis of consensus. However, if, in relation to issues whose determination falls outside the discretion available to the Chairman under the Ground Rules or the Procedural Guidelines, it appears to the Chairman, after a reasonable period of discussion, that there is no unanimity, he may follow one or more of the courses of action set out below:

Sufficient Consensus

- (a) the Chairman may consult with the participants, with a view to putting forward a solution that he believes will secure agreement; and/or
- (b) the Chairman may invite the participants to set up a small but broadly representative working group (the composition to be determined by the Chairman after consultation with the participants, but which must, other than in relation to Strand One issues, include nominees of each of the two Governments) to consider the specific issues in dispute within an agreed time scale and, at the discretion of the Chairman, to recommend possible ways forward; and/or
- (c) the Chairman may seek the agreement of all the participants to refer the matter to a group of experts for advice, requesting a report within an agreed specified period.
17. It will also be open to the participants, acting solely by agreement and only at their instigation, and subject to the provisions set out in paragraph 22 below, to refer the matter to the forum for consideration, requesting a report.
18. If, after the participants have considered any further proposals arising from one or more of the courses of action set out above, it appears to the Chairman that there is no unanimity on a particular point, the Chairman shall have the

discretion to determine whether sufficient consensus, as defined in paragraph 21, exists to allow the negotiations to proceed.

19. Where it does not prove possible to achieve either unanimity or sufficient consensus to proceed, the Chairman will work, in consultation with the participating negotiating teams, to seek to remove obstacles to the reaching of agreement.

Sufficient Consensus

20. The rules for establishing sufficient consensus as described in paragraph 24 of the Ground Rules are set out in paragraph 21 below. In addition to Strands One and Two, sufficient consensus may also apply in the Plenary and the Business Committee. Sufficient consensus may also apply in committees and sub-committees of the Plenary, Strand One and Strand Two and in sub-committees of the Business Committee.

21. A particular proposition may be deemed to have sufficient consensus where the Chairman is satisfied, having regard to the political parties' voting strengths according to the percentage of the valid poll each received Northern Ireland-wide at the elections on 30 May 1996, that it is supported by parties which, taken together, obtained a clear majority of the valid poll and which between them represent a clear majority in both the unionist and nationalist communities in Northern Ireland respectively. With the exception of Strand One, both Governments must also endorse the particular proposition for it to be deemed to have achieved sufficient consensus.

Reference to the Forum

22. The negotiating teams in any format of the negotiations, acting solely by agreement and on the formal proposal of a participant in that format, may direct the relevant Chairman of the format in question to request the members of the forum,

through the Secretary of State, to consider, investigate or discuss a specified subject and to submit a report on that subject to the negotiating teams within a specified period. Any such report from the forum may only be formally taken under notice by the negotiating teams if it has consensus support in the forum in accordance with the forum's rules of procedure.

Liaison arrangements with the Irish Government in relation to Strand One

23. The British Government, as Chairman of Strand One, will keep the Irish Government informed of the progress achieved in Strand One, through liaison arrangements agreed between the two Governments following consultation with the political parties.

Meetings between the Governments and the Political Parties in relation to Strand Three

24. As set out in paragraph 21 of the Ground Rules for substantive all-party negotiations, negotiations on Strand Three issues will be between the two Governments. However, with a view to providing a meaningful role for the political parties, the two Governments will, during the course of their negotiations:

- ensure regular meetings at which the political parties will be briefed and, as appropriate, consulted on progress in the negotiations, and at which they would be able to put forward their views on Strand Three issues under discussion;
- meet the political parties at their request for further discussion of Strand Three issues.

25. To this end, the two Governments will convene regular meetings involving up to three members of the negotiating team of each political party. Such meetings will be co-chaired by the two Governments. The two Governments will also meet negotiating teams at their request, either separately or together.
26. It will be open to the parties to submit their own views, either orally or in writing both on issues under discussion in Strand Three and on any other issues appropriate to Strand Three which the parties may wish to raise. Any response that may be given by the two Governments will be given jointly.
27. The outcome of Strand Three issues will be considered by all the participants alongside the outcome of the other elements of the negotiations as a whole.

Records of Meetings

28. Records of formal meetings will be prepared by note-takers under the general direction of the Chairman of the format within which the meeting takes place. A draft record of each formal meeting will be circulated as soon as possible to the negotiating team of each Government and political party participating in the meeting and will be subject to their approval at the next meeting in that format, or earlier if appropriate.
29. The British Government will provide a team of civil servants responsible for taking the record of formal Strand One meetings. The two Governments will provide a pool of civil servants responsible for taking the record of formal meetings in other formats. The Chairman of the format in question shall appoint note-takers for each meeting from among the officials nominated by the two Governments.
30. The participants in any meeting may, with the agreement of the Chairman of the format concerned, agree to depart from the arrangements set out in paragraphs 28 and 29.

25. To this end, the two Governments will convene regular meetings involving up to three members of the negotiating team of each political party. Such meetings will be co-chaired by the two Governments. The two Governments will also meet negotiating teams at their request, either separately or together.
26. It will be open to the parties to submit their own views, either orally or in writing both on issues under discussion in Strand Three and on any other issues appropriate to Strand Three which the parties may wish to raise. Any response that may be given by the two Governments will be given jointly.
27. The outcome of Strand Three issues will be considered by all the participants alongside the outcome of the other elements of the negotiations as a whole.

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29. The British Government will provide a team of civil servants responsible for taking the record of formal Strand One meetings. The two Governments will provide a pool of civil servants responsible for taking the record of formal meetings in other formats. The Chairman of the format in question shall appoint note-takers for each meeting from among the officials nominated by the two Governments.
30. The participants in any meeting may, with the agreement of the Chairman of the format concerned, agree to depart from the arrangements set out in paragraphs 28 and 29.

6 JUNE 1996

DRAFT AGENDA FOR SUBSTANTIVE ALL-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS

1. Paragraph 14 of the Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations provides that the opening plenary session of the negotiations will adopt a comprehensive agenda for the negotiations which will:
 - be in accordance with the necessity for confidence building measures as spelt out in paragraph 12 of the joint Communiqué adopted by the two Governments on 28 February 1996;
 - provide reassurance, both in terms of addressing the report of the International Body and ensuring that a meaningful and inclusive process of negotiations is genuinely being offered; and
 - include all the significant items which the various negotiating teams consider relevant and which will, therefore, have to be addressed in the search for an agreement.
2. Paragraph 3 of the Ground Rules provides that any participant in the strand in question will be free to raise any aspect of the three relationships, including constitutional issues and any other matter it considers relevant.
3. The attached draft agenda is intended to be compatible with the requirements of paragraph 14 of the Ground Rules and is without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 3. Consideration of the agenda, therefore, is not at this stage intended to determine whether or not a particular matter should be on the table, but rather to facilitate agreement on an efficient structure for discussion of all the relevant issues which does not prejudice a fair hearing for any of them.
4. A preliminary list of issues which the two Governments consider it necessary, as a minimum, to include on the agenda is attached. (The list of Strand 1 issues for inclusion on the agenda is suggested by the British Government alone.)

OPENING PLENARY SESSION

1. Consideration of any proposed changes to the rules of procedure.
1. Formal opening by two Governments and hand-over to Independent Chairman.
2. Introductory remarks by Chairman.
3. Participants to make formal declaration making clear their total and absolute commitment to International Body's principles of democracy and non-violence.
4. Public statement on behalf of all participants recording total and absolute commitment to principles.
5. Appointment of Business Committee.
6. Opening statements by the participants.
7. Discussion of comprehensive agenda for negotiations.
8. Discussion of International Body's proposals on decommissioning.
9. Adoption of comprehensive agenda for negotiations and procedural rules.
10. Report of the Chairman for the purpose set out in paragraph 12 of "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session"; Governments' proposal to establish a sub-committee on decommissioning.
11. Concluding statement by the Independent Chairman.

THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE

1. Consideration of any proposed changes to the rules of procedure drawn up by the two Governments for adoption in plenary.
 2. Adoption of an indicative calendar for the negotiations.
 3. Possible consideration of draft agenda.
 4. Decisions on venues of Strand Two meetings.
- Topics likely to arise include:
- The constitutional position of Northern Ireland
 - The nature of institutional arrangements for and within Northern Ireland, which meet any agreed criteria, including, nature and extent of powers eg legislative, executive, administrative; structures for exercising these powers; safeguards to maintain cross-community confidence and financial arrangements;
 - The extent to which present or proposed arrangements attract the assent and support of both sides of the community and ensure equity of treatment;
 - Relationships with other institutions eg Westminster Parliament, any new North/South relationships, any new Intergovernmental arrangements and the European Union;

STRAND ONE ISSUES

1. Discussion of requirements for a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland.
2. Consideration of possible principles and criteria for new arrangements within Northern Ireland.
3. The question of institutional and other practical implications of these discussions.

Topics likely to arise include:

- The constitutional position of Northern Ireland
- The nature of institutional arrangements for and within Northern Ireland, which meet any agreed criteria, including, nature and extent of powers eg legislative, executive, administrative; structures for exercising these powers; safeguards to maintain cross-community confidence and financial arrangements;
- The extent to which present or proposed arrangements attract the assent and support of both sides of the community and ensure equity of treatment;
- Relationships with other institutions eg Westminster Parliament, any new North/South relationships, any new Intergovernmental arrangements and the European Union;

- Consideration of arrangements for the protection of rights

1. Discussion on law and order matters now beginning for relationships within the island of Ireland, including fundamental. This list is not comprehensive and other issues may emerge in discussion.
2. 4. Annual Report to Plenary on matters such as economic co-operation and development, security co-operation and law enforcement co-operation) and themes.
3. The question of institutional arrangements and any other practical implications to meet agreed requirements (including principles to govern any such arrangements).
4. Relationship of such new institutional arrangements to other structures - eg: UK Government and Parliament; Irish Government and Parliament; Northern Ireland structures; Irish-UK intergovernmental structures; the European Union.
5. Measures for the guarantee and protection of rights.
6. Consequential measures needed to implement, support and underwrite such new structures.
7. Report to Plenary.

STRAND TWO ISSUES

1. Discussion of requirements for a new beginning for relationships within the island of Ireland, including fundamental aspects of the problem: underlying realities; identity; allegiance; constitutional.
2. Common interests (including matters such as economic co-operation and development, security co-operation and law enforcement co-operation) and themes.
3. The question of institutional arrangements and any other practical implications to meet agreed requirements (including principles to govern any such arrangements).
4. Relationship of such new institutional arrangements to other structures - eg: UK Government and Parliament; Irish Government and Parliament; Northern Ireland structures; Irish-UK intergovernmental structures; the European Union.
5. Measures for the guarantee and protection of rights.
6. Consequential measures needed to implement, support and underwrite such new structures.
7. Report to Plenary.
10. Report to Plenary.

STRAND THREE ISSUES

1. Opening presentations by the two Governments.
2. Establishment of necessary mechanisms to provide a meaningful role for the political parties in respect of Strand Three issues.
2. Consideration of arrangements for the approval and
3. Examination of the causes of the conflict in Northern Ireland, its impact and its implications for the two Governments.
4. Principles and criteria which should underpin new arrangements, including requirements to acknowledge and recognise the rights of the two major traditions that exist in Ireland.
5. The question of institutional arrangements and provisions of any new agreement or structure.
6. Arrangements needed to implement, support and underwrite any new agreement or structure.
7. Constitutional issues.
8. Consideration of arrangements for the protection of rights.
9. Arrangements for the approval and implementation of a comprehensive agreement.
10. Report to Plenary.

CONCLUDING PLENARY SESSION

- 1 Consideration of outstanding issues arising from the three strands and the sub-committee on decommissioning.
- 2 Consideration of arrangements for the approval and implementation of a comprehensive agreement.

Dear Senator Mitchell,

Our two Governments have worked to secure the launch of comprehensive negotiations to achieve a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland, within the island of Ireland and between the peoples of these islands, and to agree new institutions and structures to take account of the totality of relationships. We believe the negotiations which start on 10 June offer the best opportunity for many years to secure this goal.

On behalf of our two Governments, we invite you to chair a group of distinguished individuals to play a role in chairing the various aspects of the negotiations which require independent chairmanship.

The two Governments have agreed to invite you, as chairman of this group, to chair the Plenary sessions, to which the various strands and any sub-committees which the Plenary may establish will report and which will periodically review progress across the entire spectrum of the negotiations. We also invite you, with the help of your colleagues, to assist our two Governments in giving effect to our joint commitment under paragraph 13 of the Ground Rules for the negotiations, a copy of which is enclosed.

PERSONAL

The Hon George J Mitchell
Special Representative of the President of the United States
US Department of State
Room 709
2201 C Street NW
Washington DC 20520

Dear Senator Mitchell,

Our two Governments have worked to secure the launch of comprehensive negotiations to achieve a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland, within the island of Ireland and between the peoples of these islands, and to agree new institutions and structures to take account of the totality of relationships. We believe the negotiations which start on 10 June offer the best opportunity for many years to secure this goal.

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PERSONAL

PERSONAL

Ulster Democratic Party (UDP)

The other members of the group invited by the two Governments are your former colleagues on the International Body, General de Chastelain and Mr Holkeri. The roles envisaged for the other members of the group are set out in paragraph 4 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session", a copy of which is enclosed.

As that paragraph also makes clear, both Governments are agreed that it will be open to the group to propose alternative options in the light of the requirements of the negotiations or as circumstances warrant.

The negotiations will be launched at 2.00 pm on Monday 10 June at Castle Buildings, Belfast, by the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister, after which they would hand over to you as Chairman of the opening plenary. The arrangements envisaged for this opening session are set out in the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session".

Some other key documents which provide guidance on the negotiations and the role of the chairmen are also enclosed.

Representatives of the following parties have been invited to nominate their negotiating teams:

- Alliance Party
- Democratic Unionist - DUP
- Labour
- Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
- Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)
- Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
- UK Unionist Party (Robert McCartney)

PERSONAL

- Ulster Democratic Party (UDP)
- Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

The above list does not include Sinn Féin, in line with the policy set out by the Prime Minister and Taoiseach when they met on 28 February. Sinn Féin's participation in the negotiations requires the unequivocal restoration of the IRA ceasefire of August 1994. We very much hope that Sinn Féin can take their place in the negotiations, but this will not be possible unless and until there is an unequivocal restoration of the ceasefire.

We remain profoundly grateful for the distinguished service in the cause of peace offered by you and your colleagues on the International Body. We very much hope you will feel able to accept our invitation to play a key role in these negotiations also.

Naturally, we stand ready to answer any questions, and to follow up with all haste in providing you with such other guidance as you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Dick Spring

Patrick Mayhew

Dick Spring TD
Tánaiste and Minister for
Foreign Affairs

The Rt Hon Sir Patrick Mayhew QC MP
Secretary of State for
Northern Ireland

PERSONAL
PERSONAL

6. JUN. 1996 15:40

NIO CPL 0171 210 0229 PERSONAL

NO. 829 P. 10

General de Chastelain
170 Acacia Avenue
Rockcliffe Park
Ottawa
Ontario
KIM OR3

June 1996

Dear General de Chastelain,

Our two Governments have worked to secure the launch of comprehensive negotiations to achieve a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland, within the island of Ireland, and between the peoples of these islands, and to agree new institutions and structures to take account of the totality of relationships. We believe the negotiations which start on 10 June offer the best opportunity for many years to secure this goal.

On behalf of our two Governments, we invite you to join a group of distinguished individuals, chaired by Senator George Mitchell, to play a role in chairing the various aspects of the negotiations which require independent chairmanship.

Our two Governments have agreed to invite you to provide the independent chairmanship in Strand Two of the negotiations. As such, you would also chair the Business Committee, unless the participants in the negotiations, in accordance with the Ground Rules, were to decide otherwise. We also invite you to help Senator Mitchell in assisting our two Governments in giving effect to our joint commitment under paragraph 15 of the Ground Rules for the negotiations, a copy of which is enclosed.

Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)
Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
UK Unionist Party (Robert McCartney)

PERSONAL

PERSONAL

The other members of the group invited by the two Governments are your former colleagues on the International Body, Senator Mitchell and Mr Holkeri. The roles envisaged for the other members of the group are set out in paragraph 4 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session", a copy of which is enclosed.

As that paragraph also makes clear, both Governments are agreed that it will be open to the group to propose alternative options in the light of the requirements of the negotiations or as circumstances warrant.

The negotiations will be launched at 2.00 pm on Monday 10 June at Castle Buildings, Belfast, by the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister, after which they would hand over to Senator Mitchell as Chairman of the opening plenary. The arrangements envisaged for this opening session are set out in the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session".

Some other key documents which provide guidance on the negotiations and the role of the chairmen are also enclosed.

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- Labour
- Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
- Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)
- Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
- UK Unionist Party (Robert McCartney)

PERSONAL

Sir Patrick Mayhew QC MP
Secretary of State for
Northern Ireland

Ulster Democratic Party (UDP)
Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

The above list does not include Sinn Féin, in line with the policy set out by the Prime Minister and Taoiseach when they met on 28 February. Sinn Féin's participation in the negotiations requires the unequivocal restoration of the IRA ceasefire of August 1994. We very much hope that Sinn Féin can take their place in the negotiations, but this will not be possible unless and until there is an unequivocal restoration of the ceasefire.

We remain profoundly grateful for the distinguished service in the cause of peace offered by you and your colleagues on the International Body. We very much hope you will feel able to accept our invitation to play a key role in these negotiations also. Naturally, we stand ready to answer any questions, and to follow up with all haste in providing you with such other guidance as you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Dick Spring

Patrick Mayhew

Dick Spring TD
Tánaiste and Minister for
Foreign Affairs

The Rt Hon Sir Patrick Mayhew QC MP
Secretary of State for
Northern Ireland

PERSONAL

PERSONAL

Mr Harri Holkeri
Bank of Finland
PL160
00101 Helsinki
Finland

Handwritten signature/initials

Dear Mr Holkeri,

The negotiations will be launched at 2.00 pm on Monday 10 June at
Our two Governments have worked to secure the launch of
comprehensive negotiations to achieve a new beginning for
relationships within Northern Ireland, within the island of Ireland
and between the peoples of these islands, and to agree new
institutions and structures to take account of the totality of
relationships. We believe the negotiations which start on 10 June
offer the best opportunity for many years to secure this goal.

On behalf of our two Governments, we invite you to join a group of
distinguished individuals, chaired by Senator George Mitchell, to
play a role in chairing the various aspects of the negotiations
which require independent chairmanship.

The two Governments have agreed to invite you to act as Alternate
Chairman in any of the independent chairmanship roles. We also
invite you to help Senator Mitchell in assisting our two Governments
in giving effect to our joint commitment under paragraph 15 of the
Ground Rules for the negotiations, a copy of which is enclosed.

The other members of the group invited by the two Governments are
your former colleagues on the International Body, Senator Mitchell
and General de Chastelain. The roles envisaged for the other
members of the group are set out in paragraph 4 of the "Scenario for
the Opening Plenary Session", a copy of which is enclosed.

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As that paragraph also makes clear, both Governments are agreed that it will be open to the group to propose alternative options in the light of the requirements of the negotiations or as circumstances warrant.

We remain profoundly grateful for the distinguished service in the

The negotiations will be launched at 2.00 pm on Monday 10 June at Castle Buildings, Belfast, by the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister, after which they would hand over to Senator Mitchell as Chairman of the opening plenary. The arrangements envisaged for this opening session are set out in the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session".

Some other key documents which provide guidance on the negotiations and the role of the chairmen are also enclosed.

Representatives of the following parties have been invited to nominate their negotiating teams:

- Alliance Party
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- Labour
- Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
- Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)
- Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
- UK Unionist Party (Robert McCartney)
- Ulster Democratic Party (UDP)
- Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

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We remain profoundly grateful for the distinguished service in the cause of peace offered by you and your colleagues on the International Body. We very much hope you will feel able to accept our invitation to play a key role in these negotiations also. Naturally, we stand ready to answer any questions, and to follow up with all haste in providing you with such other guidance as you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Dick Spring

Patrick Mayhew

Dick Spring TD
Tánaiste and Minister for
Foreign Affairs

The Rt Hon Sir Patrick Mayhew QC MP
Secretary of State for
Northern Ireland

PERSONAL

The Reverend Dr Ian R K Paisley MP MEP
91 Dundela Avenue
BELFAST
BT4 3BU

4 June 1996

Dear Ian,

Under the terms of section 2 of the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations, etc) Act 1996 I am writing to you as the nominating representative of a party which has been successful in the elections, to invite you to nominate a team to participate in the negotiations beginning next Monday.

The negotiating team must under the Act be composed of delegates returned at the elections. There is no limit to the number of delegates who may be included. The Ground Rules for the negotiations agreed by the two governments would however generally limit a party's team for any one meeting to three (with a further three people, who need not be elected, in support if they wish).

We need to make arrangements with all speed. It would be helpful if your nomination could be passed to me as quickly as possible, and in any event no later than 6 June, via the head of our Talks Administration Unit, Mr Peter Dickinson. His telephone number is 01232 522128 and his fax number 01232 522119.

SOFS/31469

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will make a statement about nominations to the forthcoming political negotiations, and about progress in setting up the house established by the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations, etc) Act 1986.

It would be convenient also if Mr Dickinson could be notified as soon as possible after you receive this letter of the name of a person with whom he should be in contact (a colleague, or indeed yourself if you wish) over initial administrative arrangements for the negotiations.

I am enclosing for your information a copy of a response I propose to give tomorrow to a parliamentary question about nominations to the negotiations.

I also enclose a note about the allowances which the two Governments intend to pay to delegates, in respect of the meetings in the relevant strands.

We shall be in touch further about arrangements for the negotiations.

I believe we are embarking on a process of dialogue with great potential to improve the lives and prospects of the people of Northern Ireland, and of everyone in these two islands. I look forward very much to your contribution.

SIGNED

P.M

PQ REPLY

of the British and Irish governments that the participation of Sinn Féin in the negotiations requires the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will make a statement about nominations to the forthcoming political negotiations, and about progress in setting up the forum established by the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations, etc) Act 1996. If it is not met, no invitation can be issued in respect of Sinn Féin.

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

Letters have also been sent to the nominating representatives of all I have issued invitations to nominate teams to participate in the negotiations, under section 2(2) of the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations, etc) Act 1996, to the nominating representatives of the following parties:

we have now identified suitable premises for it at the Interpoint Centre in Belfast. I am placing a copy of the Library of the House.

Alliance Party

Democratic Unionist Party - DUP

Labour

Northern Ireland Women's Coalition

Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)

Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)

UK Unionist Party - Robert McCartney

Ulster Democratic Party (UDP)

Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

I am required by section 2(3) of the Act to refrain from inviting nominations in respect of any party if I consider that requirements set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Ground Rules for substantive all-party negotiations (published as command paper 3232) are not met in relation to it. Paragraph 9 of the Ground Rules makes clear the

SOFS/DEH/31465

agreement of the British and Irish governments that the participation of Sinn Fein in the negotiations requires the unequivocal restoration of the ceasefire of August 1994.

After consultation with the Irish Government, both Governments are agreed that this requirement is not met and that for so long as it is not met, no invitation can be issued in respect of Sinn Fein.

Loss of earnings

Letters have also been sent to the nominating representatives of all parties returned at the elections, including Sinn Fein, about for arrangements for the forum. With them is a draft of initial rules of procedure, on which we seek comment. The letters also deal with the location of the forum: we have now identified suitable premises for it at the Interpoint Centre in Belfast. I am placing a copy of these letters in the Library of the House.

delegates (and party support staff) will be able to claim subsistence and travel expenses at the standard Civil Service rates.

In addition, it is intended to pay the following to parties:

Party Allowance

a flat rate party allowance of £300 (or such lesser figure as may be agreed in the Business Committee) for each day in which the party concerned is involved in negotiations.

Party Research Grants

a party research grant in respect of vouched expenditure on relevant items of work, up to a maximum of £5,000 per quarter.

ALLOWANCES FOR DELEGATES AND PARTIES

As indicated in Michael Ancram's letter of 18 April, it is intended to pay the following allowances to individuals:

Loss of earnings

a loss of earnings allowance at a daily rate of £100, and £50 for less than 4 hours will be payable to elected delegates only, on the basis of relevant attendance for the purposes of the negotiations. This can be claimed in arrears.

Subsistence/travel expenses

delegations (and party support staff) will be able to claim subsistence and travel expenses at the standard Civil Service rates.

In addition, it is intended to pay the following to parties:

Party Allowance

a flat rate party allowance of £300 (or such lesser figure as may be agreed in the Business Committee) for each day in which the party concerned is involved in negotiations.

Party Research Grants

a party research grant in respect of vouched expenditure on relevant items of work, up to a maximum of £6,000 per quarter.

SOFS/31465

SOFS/DEH/31465

SECRET
POLICY DIVISION
10 JAN 1994

- cc: PS/Michael Annett (112) - 2
- PS/PUS (LAB) - 2
- PS/Sir David Hall - 2
- Mr Legge - 2
- Mr Thomas - 2
- Mr Bell - 2
- Mr Leach - 2
- Mr Steals - 2
- Mr Watkins - 2
- Mr Wood (LAB) - 2
- Mr Boston - 2
- Mr Hill - 2
- Mr Lavery - 2
- Mr Maccabe - 2
- Mr Parry - 2

The Secretary of State has also written in similar terms to:

- Cllr Dr John Alderdice - Alliance Party - 2
- Cllr Mark Langhammer - Labour - 2
- Ms Napstone - 2
- Mr Whyteall - 2
- WMA Dublin - 2
- Mr Lavery, MID - 2
- Ms Collins, Cabinet Office - 1

Robert McCartney QC MP (LAB) - 2
Ulster Unionist Party

David Trimble MP
Ulster Unionist Party

John Hume MP
SDLP

Cllr Gary McMichael
Ulster Democratic Party

Alderman Hugh Smyth
Progressive Unionist Party

Ms Monica McWilliams
Northern Ireland Women's Coalition

SDFS/31469

12/12/2000