

(B) BRITISH - IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL²

1. New British-Irish Agreement to establish standing **British-Irish Intergovernmental Council**, bringing together the British and Irish Governments, to promote co-operation at all levels between the two Governments. The Council to comprise British and Irish Governments, represented by appropriate Ministers. To meet, as required, at Summit level (ie British Prime Minister and Taoiseach).
2. Within this framework, an **Intergovernmental Conference**, concerned solely with Northern Ireland and with relations within the island of Ireland. Conference to provide a continuing institutional expression of the British Government's recognition of the Irish Government's concern and role in relation to Northern Ireland.
3. Meetings to be co-chaired by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Other Ministers to attend as appropriate on the invitation of the co-chairs. Meetings to be regular and frequent and at request of either side.
4. Intergovernmental Conference to enable the two Governments to:
 - (i) discuss non-devolved Northern Ireland matters, on which the Irish Government may put forward views and proposals;
 - (ii) intensify co-operation between them on the all-island or cross-border aspects of non-devolved matters, (matters to be transferred between the remits of the Conference and the North/South Ministerial Council, depending on the extent of the matters devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly);
5. The Conference in particular to address the areas of security, rights, justice, prisons

²It is proposed that what is described in the *Propositions on Heads of Agreement* as "standing intergovernmental machinery" be described as "The British-Irish Intergovernmental Council".

and policing. Co-operation within the framework of the Conference to include facilitation of co-operation in security matters between North and South.

6. The Conference also to enable the two Governments
 - (i) jointly to keep under review the workings of the overall agreement reached in the multi-party negotiations and to promote and support the fair and effective operation of all of its provisions. Conference could consider any proposal for action in response to any breach of the new agreement, while responsibility for any action would remain with each Government in its jurisdiction;
 - (ii) to agree an annual report on the workings of the Agreement, and to undertake a formal published review [three] years after the Agreement comes into effect.
7. Devolved Northern Ireland issues normally to be excluded from discussion, save in connection with purposes set out in paragraph 6 above.
8. All decisions by agreement between both Governments. The Governments to make determined efforts to resolve disagreements between them. No derogation from sovereignty of either Government.
9. The Northern Ireland Administration to be given advance notice of what is to be discussed at the Conference, and to be invited to express views to both Governments in advance. At the invitation of the Governments, to make presentations to the Conference. Open to the two Governments, in consultation with the Northern Ireland Administration, to propose ways in which the latter's involvement could over time be enhanced.
10. Conference to be supported by a standing joint secretariat of officials of the British and Irish Governments.