

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Participants

FROM: The Independent Chairmen

March 30, 1998

At last week's meeting of the Plenary, the participants agreed to try to reach a comprehensive agreement by Thursday 9 April. During our bilateral meetings with the participants last week, most of you suggested that the Independent Chairmen table an overall paper to facilitate discussion of a comprehensive agreement.

In order to do so, we need further consultation with the participants, particularly on the key outstanding issues to be resolved. Following consultation with the Chairmen of Strands One and Three, we have drawn up a list of what we believe to be the key outstanding issues. We propose to group these issues for discussion over the remainder of today and the following three days in intensive bilaterals with each party and, as necessary, in group meetings. A list of these issues is attached. This suggested list of issues would not prejudice the right of any participant to raise any matter of concern to them, either during their meetings with us, or with other participants, or in group meetings.

We urge the participants to meet as widely as possible with each other to consider the same matters. Our staff will be available, if required, to assist in coordinating schedules for bilaterals to ensure the most efficient use of your time.

We intend to call together the leader and deputy leader of each of the participants every evening for a short meeting at which we would review the day's discussions and confirm arrangements for the following day.

It is our intention, following our discussions with the participants, to table an overall paper as soon as possible, but in any event before the end of business this week. This will allow participants to consider the paper carefully before the final week of negotiation. As agreed last week, we will then work through that final week until a comprehensive agreement is reached.