

PRISONERS

1. Both governments will put in place mechanisms to provide for an accelerated programme for the release of prisoners, including transferred prisoners, convicted of scheduled offences committed before the Ninth of April 1998, and not descheduled by the Attorney General, in Northern Ireland; or in the case of those sentenced outside Northern Ireland (including those convicted in Great Britain, and not transferred to Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland) similar politically motivated offences (referred to hereafter as qualifying prisoners). Any such arrangements will protect the rights of individual prisoners under national and international law.
2. Prisoners affiliated to organisations which have not established or are not maintaining a complete and unequivocal cease-fire will not benefit from the arrangements. If an individual prisoner, currently affiliated to an organisation not maintaining a complete and unequivocal cease-fire, explicitly disassociates himself / herself from that organisation and expresses a personal disavowal of violence in the context of the current peace process, he/she will be considered as a qualifying prisoner. The situation in this regard will be kept under review.
3. Both governments will complete a review process within a fixed time frame and set prospective release dates for all qualifying prisoners. The intention will be to provide for the advance of the release dates of qualifying prisoners in order of the length of time they have left to serve, thus allowing account to be taken of the seriousness of the offences for which the person was convicted as decided by the court. Indeterminate sentence prisoners should immediately be given a notional release date by the appropriate mechanism, based on normal criteria, and then should be included in the release programme on the basis of length of time (notionally) still to be served. The latest release date will be a maximum of two years after the date on which enabling legislation is passed. The trial of those on remand will proceed in the normal way, but those who are qualifying prisoners after sentence will be added to the process on the same basis of length of time left to serve.
4. The governments will ^{intw -}deduce the appropriate legislation to give effect to these arrangements by the end of June 1998.
5. Each government will establish a Truth and Amnesty board whose remit will be to allow the formal testimony of victims about the offences perpetrated against them or their relatives, and to allow former prisoners, or those who may be accused of politically motivated offences, to apply for amnesty and/ or immunity from prosecution. Amnesty would have the effect of removing criminal records and any other disabilities resulting from imprisonment.
6. The governments continue to recognise the importance of measures to facilitate the reintegration of prisoners into the community by providing support both prior to and after release, including assistance directed towards availing of employment opportunities, retraining and / or reskilling, further education and social reintegration.