

**Alliance Party -  
Top Ten Issues, arising from Draft Paper (8 April 1998)**

1. The concept of "parity of esteem between both communities" appears frequently in the draft paper. This in a very clear way reinforces the sectarian division. A deal constructed on the acceptance of two opposing blocs will frustrate the development of a stable and properly integrated society. We suggest that a better phraseology would be "equality of treatment for the whole community".
2. Within Strand One, there seems to be a commitment in principle to executive type government. However, the wording of the current draft is not always clear and consistent on this point. The paper must emphasise that executive authority will be exercised by ministers operating to a broadly agreed programme.
3. There must be space within the Assembly for a non-aligned grouping, in addition to any Unionist or Nationalist grouping. Our amendment on Assembly voting systems, and the appointment of First Minister, Deputy First Minister, and the Speaker is a suitable way of recognising the different strands within NI politics.
4. Within Strand Two, the plenary meetings of the Ministerial Council will not be broadly acceptable to Talks participants, and in practice will be unwieldy and impractical. It should be clearly explained that this Council can meet in one of two formats: (1.) a twice yearly summit format; and (2.) a sectoral format, involving relevant ministers, when appropriate. Similarly, the standing joint Secretariat will not be broadly acceptable and furthermore is unnecessary.
5. Both Annexes A and B should be completely deleted. There is however scope for adding additional implementation bodies in the areas of policing, energy, animal health and sports to Annex C.
6. Under Strand Three, it is crucial that relevant executive members of the Northern Ireland Administration be involved in all meetings of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference.
7. The inclusion of any further human rights protections in addition to the ECHR must reflect international standards and conventions rather than the drafting of specific measures designed solely for the protection of Unionists and Nationalists as collective groupings.
8. The Irish Government should make clear that it too will incorporate the ECHR into its domestic law, and remove all its anti-terrorist legislation when appropriate, as HMG as stated.
9. Any accelerated release of prisoners can only take place in the context of a complete and unequivocal cessation of violence, including an end to paramilitary beatings and shooting as well as progress on decommissioning.
10. On policing, we have submitted a fresh paper. We have difficulties with the proposal for a commission, and are concerned with the potential for moves towards 'restorative justice'.

Amendments to the draft paper that reflect each of these points are available.