

## ANNEX C2

### A POSSIBLE FORM OF WEIGHTED VOTING (A paper from the SDLP)

1       Weighted majority for particular kinds of decisions can provide a degree of safeguard against the possibility of large parties *forcing* their wishes on an Assembly. Such safeguards are generally invoked for major decisions and, or for those decisions which can be regarded as potentially contentious. along with the possible need for a weighted majority consideration should be given to the possible threshold requirement for appeals/petitions being entered on behalf of Assembly members against, or in favour of certain decisions.

2       Agreeing the precise formula for a weighted majority/threshold requirement is difficult. however, it is clear that such procedures must be of a kind that meet the basic test of providing *cross-community* support for decisions on important/ contentious issues, so demonstrating *fairness*, while at the same time being *workable*.

3       A requirement for a weighted majority of 75% of those elected to an Assembly for Northern Ireland is the best figure that we feel would ensure that representatives from both sides of the community would be giving their support to such decisions. In turn, this should ensure significant levels of cross-community support.

4       If this weighted majority was to be based on the number of members present and voting, a very different situation would arise. Important decisions could be made which would not command cross-community support of a significant kind. It is for this reason that we would not favour the adoption of such a mechanism.

5       It follows from the recommendation in 3, that a threshold of xx% would be required for the admission of any appeal, or petition against a decision.