

# LABOUR

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RIGHTS AND SAFEGUARDS - STRAND 2. Submission by LABOUR.

1. As we have stated, we believe there are a number of fundamental principles that determine the details of the agreement that needs to be reached in Strand 2.
  - a) The people of Northern Ireland alone have the right to determine their future.
  - b) The rights of minorities must be guaranteed and protected.
  - c) North/south bodies need to be developed where they will serve the mutual interests of both parts of Ireland. They should be facilitated to expand their role as required. They should have executive powers whilst being under the supervision of the two governments and requiring the conjoint approval of the two governments at all stages.
2. The rights and safeguards concern the protection of these principles and insuring that they are implemented according to the spirit and intention of the any agreement.
3. The problem is complicated by the question of where authority will rest in the north dimension of this relationship. It is intended that authority over many questions will move step by step formally and actually to the new Assembly that is proposed.
4. It is one thing for an agreement to be reached between the British and Irish governments, whose nature is known and who have worked together over a long period of time. It is a very different thing when this agreement is partly with an untried body whose membership and activities will have an unpredictable dimension.
5. This is one of the reasons why it will be necessary to continue the British Irish Intergovernmental Conference, and for this body to have the right, for a transition period, to consider all relevant issues.
6. As we have said elsewhere, the Conference should become transparent and open, and there should be involvement of Northern Ireland democratic bodies and social partners in its work.
7. The following is a list of further proposals,
  - a) The removal of articles 2 and 3 from the Irish Constitution and with it the removal of state sympathy and support for the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Northern Ireland.
  - b) An equivalent declaration of intention to work to end the unprincipled distrust of the motives of the south. So that people on all sides are encouraged to understand and accept the real support for mutual respect and for equal cooperation that exists throughout Ireland.
  - c) The introduction, north and south, of legislation on civil and individual rights, backed by effective measures to insure that this legislation is enforced and violations punished.
  - d) The continuation of the presence of Senator Mitchell and his team, or an equivalent, to be available to assist arbitration for a transition period of say, 2 years.
  - e) Formal and actual support for the judicial and police systems north and south, by all participants.
  - f) Legislation to guarantee the right to a regular referendum in the north on its political future if requested by a significant proportion of the people or their elected representatives.