

NEG 696

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**A PROPOSITION FROM THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS.  
25 JULY 1996**

1. It is common ground that all participants wish to see the maximum possible progress before the summer recess. The two Governments have considered how this could best be facilitated.
2. The Opening Plenary session must complete the following points:
  - (a) adoption of the rules of procedure;
  - (b) establishment of the Business Committee;
  - (c) consideration of the International Body's proposals on decommissioning, including agreement on the mechanism necessary to enable further progress to be made on decommissioning alongside negotiations in the three strands;
  - (d) discussion and adoption of the comprehensive agenda for the negotiations;
  - (e) opening statements; and
  - (f) the launch of the three-stranded negotiations in parallel with the establishment of the agreed machinery to carry forward work on decommissioning.
3. With a view to achieving the desired progress, the two Governments believe that the Opening Plenary should aim to complete its work on points (a) to (d) before the summer break.

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4. We welcome the independent Chairmen's decision to publish draft rules of procedure reflecting their best judgement of what is likely to prove acceptable to all delegations. We support these proposals.

5. In order to assist further progress in the negotiations, we attach a draft agenda for the remainder of the Opening Plenary for the consideration of the parties.

6. We propose that the agenda and the rules of procedure be agreed and formally adopted by the reconvened Opening Plenary on Monday 29 July.

7. We believe that it should be possible to reach agreement on the proposed rules of procedure and agenda relatively quickly. We support the proposal that the draft rules on decision making should be agreed first.

8. We would also propose, with a view to preparing the ground for next week's work in the Plenary, that the relevant participants should be invited to forward to the Chairmen of the relevant strands by 6 pm on Monday 29 July, any written additions or amendments proposed to the attached draft agendas for the three strands. (The draft agenda for Strand One issues is tabled by the British Government alone.)

9. Following ratification of the rules of procedure and the agenda for the Opening Plenary, the reconvened Plenary meeting would proceed to work through the remainder of its agenda, beginning with the establishment of the Business Committee, before moving on to consideration of the International Body's

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proposals on decommissioning.

10. We also take the view that, before rising for the summer break, the Plenary should consider any proposals on the agendas, if necessary in sub-committee, and proceed to the adoption of the comprehensive agenda for the negotiations.

11. Following adoption of the comprehensive agenda, we would propose that the Opening Plenary should be adjourned until 9 September, and reconvene with opening statements, followed, not later than 16 September, by the launch of the negotiations in the three strands in parallel with the establishment of the agreed machinery to carry forward work on decommissioning.

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# PROPOSED AGENDA FOR RESUMED OPENING PLENARY

1. Adoption of Agenda for Opening Plenary
2. Adoption of Rules of Procedures.
3. Establishment of Business Committee.
4. Consideration of International Body's proposals on decommissioning:
  - (a) Discussion of Proposals:
  - (b) Participants' commitment to work constructively to implement all aspects of Report of International Body:
  - (c) Consideration of mechanisms necessary to enable further progress to be made on decommissioning alongside negotiations in three strands.
5. Discussion of comprehensive Agenda for negotiations.
6. Adoption of comprehensive Agenda.
7. Opening Statements.
8. Establishment of agreed machinery to carry forward work on decommissioning; launch of three-stranded negotiations.
9. Concluding remarks by Independent Chairman.

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## PROPOSED AGENDA FOR STRAND ONE ISSUES

1. Discussion of requirements for a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland.
2. Consideration of possible principles and criteria for new arrangements within Northern Ireland.
3. The question of institutional and other practical implications of these discussions.

Topics likely to arise include:

- The constitutional position of Northern Ireland;
- The nature of institutional arrangements for and within Northern Ireland, which meet any agreed criteria, including, nature and extent of powers eg legislative, executive, administrative; structures for exercising these powers; safeguards to maintain cross-community confidence and financial arrangements;
- The extent to which present or proposed arrangements attract the assent and support of both sides of the community and ensure equity of treatment;
- Relationships with other institutions eg Westminster Parliament, any new North/South relationships, any new Intergovernmental arrangements and the European Union;
- Consideration of arrangements for the protection of rights;
- law and order matters.

This list is not comprehensive and other issues may emerge in discussion.



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### PROPOSED AGENDA FOR STRAND TWO ISSUES

1. Discussion of requirements for a new beginning for relationships within the island of Ireland, including fundamental aspects of the problem: underlying realities; identity; allegiance; constitutional.
2. Common interests (including matters such as economic co-operation and development, security co-operation and law enforcement co-operation) and themes.
3. The question of institutional arrangements and any other practical implications to meet agreed requirements (including principles to govern any such arrangements).
4. Relationship of such new institutional arrangements to other structures - eg: UK Government and Parliament; Irish Government and Parliament; Northern Ireland structures; Irish-UK intergovernmental structures; the European Union.
5. Measures for the guarantee and protection of rights.
6. Consequential measures needed to implement, support and underwrite such new structures.
7. Report to Plenary.

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## PROPOSED AGENDA FOR STRAND THREE ISSUES

1. Opening presentations by the two Governments.
2. Establishment of necessary mechanisms to provide a meaningful role for the political parties in respect of Strand Three issues.
3. Examination of the causes of the conflict in Northern Ireland, its impact and its implications for the two Governments.
4. Principles and criteria which should underpin new arrangements, including requirements to acknowledge and recognise the rights of the two major traditions that exist in Ireland.
5. The question of institutional arrangements and provisions of any new agreement or structure.
6. Arrangements needed to implement, support and underwrite any new agreement or structure.
7. Constitutional issues.
8. Consideration of arrangements for the protection of rights.
9. Arrangements for the approval and implementation of a comprehensive agreement.
10. Report to Plenary.