

DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD OF OPENING PLENARY SESSION -
TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 1996 (12.09)

Those present:

Independent Chairmen	Government Teams	Parties
Senator Mitchell	British Government	Alliance Party
Mr Holkeri	Irish Government	Labour
General de Chastelain		Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
		Progressive Unionist Party
		Social Democratic and Labour Party
		Ulster Democratic Party
		Ulster Democratic Unionist Party
		United Kingdom Unionist Party
		Ulster Unionist Party

1. The Chairman convened the meeting at 12.09 and sought approval of the two draft records from week commencing 25 November. On hearing no comments, he approved both records. The Chairman stated that the second item of business concerned the ruling by the chair on procedural questions raised the previous week in relation to the motion put forward by the UKUP.

2. The Chairman read his ruling from a prepared text. Following completion of this, the DUP stated that it wished to have an adjournment, since the ruling was not yet available in writing. The DUP said that, listening to its contents, the ruling was far reaching and it didn't believe that the unionist people of Northern Ireland would go along with the evident suggestion in it that it was not possible to have a determination of such a motion.

3. The Chairman stated that he would accede to the DUP request. Alliance sought clarification on whether the ruling would be

circulated. The Chairman said that it was now being copied and would be available shortly. With this comment, the Chairman proposed that the session be adjourned until 13.15 to allow for lunch etc. On hearing no further comments, the Chairman adjourned the session at 12.19.

Independent Chairmen Notetakers
5 December 1996

OIC/PS53

Alliance Party
Labour
Northern Ireland Women's
Coalition
Progressive Unionist
Party
Social Democratic and
Labour Party
Ulster Democratic Party
Ulster Democratic
Unionist Party
United Kingdom Unionist
Party
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1. The Chairman said that the minutes of the previous two plenary meetings had been circulated and proposed their approval be deferred until the beginning of the next session. This was agreed.

2. The Chairman referred to the action submitted by the UNIP the previous night. He recalled that he had asked the participants to submit their views on procedural issues referred to the meeting of that evening. The participants had submitted written views on the issues and it was expected that others would do so later that day. He then suggested that the procedural issues be discussed and, following consideration by the Chairman of all the oral and written statements, he would make a ruling the following day.

3. On the broader issue of reaching a determination on the decommissioning issue, the Chairman suggested that there be a further discussion in plenary, using the papers submitted on