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(Draft 24.1.97 pm)

POSSIBLE DRAFT PACKAGE FOR RESOLVING DECOMMISSIONING BEFORE THE
ELECTION

OPENING PLENARY AGENDA: COMPLETION OF ITEM 2

1. Each of the participants in the multi-party negotiations hereby commit themselves to work constructively and in good faith to secure the implementation of all aspects of the report of the International Body, including the compromise approach to decommissioning envisaged in paragraphs 34 and 35.
2. The participants welcome, as an important step towards the implementation of the report of the International Body, the progress made by the two Governments towards the enactment of appropriate enabling legislation in their respective Parliaments which will provide the statutory basis for giving effect to the International Body's recommendations on the modalities of decommissioning.
3. The participants agree that
 - the mechanisms for achieving further progress on decommissioning alongside progress in the three strands should comprise an Independent Commission and a Liaison sub-Committee of plenary. There should also be a sub-Committee of plenary to consider developments in relation to confidence building measures. The respective roles and responsibilities of the Commission and the two sub-Committees should be as set out in the attached Annex;

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- those mechanisms should be formally established [following consultation between the Governments and the parties on the identity of potential members of the International Commission] in time for their first meetings to coincide with the launch of the three strands of substantive political negotiation;
 - if the business of the opening plenary session is not completed before the UK General Election it should resume within [2] weeks of the election (unless that would mean meeting after [30] April, in which case the opening plenary session should resume on [2] June). In either case the Chairman is invited to ensure that the business of the opening plenary session is completed by [4] June;
 - the three strands of substantive political negotiations should commence on [9] June.
4. Pending and without prejudice to further progress in the multi-party negotiations the participating political parties see some scope to continue to work together - at local, national and European level - on economic and social issues of mutual concern, especially in the search for inward investment and in wider preparatory exchanges. Accordingly:
- they welcome the intention of the British Government to offer background briefings and presentations on aspects of the administration of Northern Ireland, in preparation for subsequent strand one negotiations and to enhance the ability of local politicians to make a considered contribution to the discussion of social and economic policies.
 - they also welcome the intention of both Governments to offer background briefings and presentations on issues where enhanced contact and cooperation between elected

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representatives and political authorities in the two jurisdictions might be of mutual benefit, in preparation for subsequent strand two negotiations and to help address the void of misunderstanding that presently exists between some politicians in Northern Ireland and those in the Republic.

- they also invite the two Governments to consider organising a major academic-led seminar for talks participants on human rights, group rights and other justice issues, to help identify the range of possible mechanisms for addressing these issues in the relevant strands and more generally.
5. The participants each commit themselves to work constructively and in good faith with the Independent Commission, once it is established, to enable it to carry out its role, in the context of an inclusive and dynamic process in which mutual trust and confidence is built as progress is made on all the issues of concern to all participants. A reality for all present and future participants is that progress in the negotiations will only be possible on this basis;
 6. The participants invite the Independent Chairmen as a group to review progress in the substantive political negotiations on a regular basis; consult with the Liaison sub-Committee on the conditions necessary for mutual decommissioning to occur; and, in the light of that and on the basis of implementing the International Body's compromise approach to decommissioning, offer an opinion, as soon as they judge during the course of the negotiations that the time is right, that the circumstances are such that mutual decommissioning should be expected to commence.
 7. The participants also invite the members of the Independent Commission, following their appointment, to draw attention to any case in which a participant demonstrably dishonours the commitment referred to in paragraph 5 above.

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8. For their part, the British Government and the Irish Government, [the UUP and others] would expect to see the commitments referred to in paragraphs 1 and 5 above reflected in due progress on decommissioning alongside progress in the substantive political negotiations; and will work to achieve that.
9. The participants agree that in order to facilitate the provision of regular reports from the Committee on Decommissioning and to enable regular reviews of progress across the multi-party negotiations as a whole, plenary meetings should be held at intervals of eight weeks or such longer period as may be agreed. At those meetings they would consider whether the necessary basis still exists, or could be recreated, to enable further progress to be made; and they accept that a motion to this effect would need to be agreed at each such plenary before further progress in the substantive negotiations could be attempted.
10. The participants agree that if any party is invited to join (or rejoin) the negotiations the Chairman of the plenary should convene a plenary meeting at the earliest practicable moment at which the party concerned would need to make the same commitments entered into by all the other participants as the basis for progress in the three strands, namely
- affirm its total and absolute commitment to the principles of democracy and non-violence as specifically set out in paragraph 20 of the Report of the International Body;
 - affirm its commitment to the propositions in paragraphs 1 and 5 above;

Such a party would, in common with all the other participants, be subject to all the agreed provisions and rules of procedure adopted by the existing participants.