

SPEAKING NOTE

- Pleased with formal invitation to Sinn Fein. General reactions so far not bad, but Unionists very unhappy about claim that Sinn Fein have established commitment to exclusively peaceful means. (Understandable).
- Don't want to get Sinn Fein in, and lose all the Unionists. So very keen to find ways to bind in UUP – go extra mile, as we did for Sinn Fein.
- Difficult meeting with Trimble yesterday – he is under pressure in his own party. But he has left his options open and wants to stay in. UUP Executive Committee meets on 6 September.
- Looking for CBMs to help Trimble – pursuing separately. But also clear that further movement by two governments on decommissioning and consent, as we discussed before, crucial.
- No guarantee he will play ball if we can agree. But he gave me enough reassurance about his intentions to make it worth trying.
- On decommissioning, need:
 - (i) all arrangements in place by 15 September, including options for draft schemes and Chairman of Commission and members. Vital for UUP that de Chastelain chairs, but they cannot accept his replacement by Mitchell on Strand 2. If work really too great, obviously Mitchell/Holkeri would have to step in to help, as usual. Could you live with this? May otherwise become a real stumbling block.

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(ii) words on "actual decommissioning". What about something like "The two Governments believe that it would be a major contribution to the development of the necessary mutual confidence and momentum towards agreement, if, as progress is made on political issues, illegal arms were being decommissioned during the negotiations, on a mutual basis, by Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries."

- Consent is the key issue for the Unionists. What about:
"In their approach to the negotiations the two Governments remain committed to the principles set out in the Downing Street Declaration, including the principle of consent. This should be a guiding principle through the negotiations and the political settlement to follow".
- If we can agree forms of words and a suitable way to publicise them, real chance of Trimble staying in and allowing the talks to move beyond decommissioning. Alternative is bilateral approach, which I dislike.
- Realise difficulties you face, but one last effort in these areas is worth trying.