



Permanent Under-Secretary of State
SIR JOHN CHILCOT, KCB

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20 November 1997

Dear Mr,

ARTICLES 2 AND 3 - BRIEFING NOTE

As we discussed yesterday, I attach a briefing note on Articles 2 and 3.

We see this as one of six core issues in the negotiations:

- a shared understanding on the constitutional issues;
- East/West arrangements embracing the totality of relationship;
- intergovernmental machinery giving the Irish Government no less significant a role than under the Anglo-Irish Agreement;
- a North/South body of significance with appropriate powers;
- devolved institutions in Northern Ireland with suitable checks and balances;
- some address to the rights, equality and justice agenda.

Our analysis is that each of these is a prerequisite for agreement for one side or the other. If you think it would be helpful for the Prime Minister, we could do similar briefing notes on the other core issues.

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I would enter one tactical caution. Articles 2 and 3 are essentially an issue between the Irish Government and the UUP. We should do all we can to encourage these two sides to resolve the issue face to face between them. This week's bilaterals have begun that process - we should not give the UUP reason to think they need not bother to engage with the Irish because HMG will somehow take the burden on.

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Liam,
Jm

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