

## TRIMBLE: SPEAKING NOTE

- Believe the basis of a settlement may be beginning to emerge, even though the talks themselves are not moving much;
- Irish and SDLP both ready to contemplate the kind of East/West institutional architecture we talked about, as long as you are ready to contemplate a meaningful North-South arrangement; and believe we can solve the Strand 3 "override" problem.
- still need to sort out how East-West and North-South arrangements relate to each other ie one under the other, alongside, or whatever.
- [Have worked up a paper which you may like to see].
- Irish also ready to move on Articles 2 and 3, though we will need to push them hard on the details.
- Still see no insuperable problems in Strand One, though lots of devil in the detail of electoral system, checks and balances etc.
- So see good chance of UUP being able to secure key negotiating objectives.
- Happy to go on working in this fashion, but important for UUP not to seem to disregard talks themselves, or other parties.

*constitutional change in UK.*

- Glad UUP are now establishing a relationship with the Irish. Your meeting with Ahern on Thursday will be important. Seeing him myself in Luxembourg following day.
- How do we bank these broad agreements, and feed them into negotiating process? No one wants to move first. Should we draft? Could you?

### Republican movement

- Aware of danger of Sinn Fein using split talk for their own ends.
- But these developments not just a tactic and need careful watching. Best response is to show talks can make progress.
- May see Adams here before too long - usual tactic of ensuring no grievances to be exploited against us, in US or elsewhere.

### Decommissioning

- Working with Independent Commission to ensure their draft report is substantive. Could be discussed with parties next week.
- Some useful practical work done. Key is to keep up pressure on paramilitaries to show willingness to do some decommissioning. No backing away from commitment on our part.
- Equally hope we can avoid any breakdown of the talks over this. Will help no one in practice.



Bills

- Pursuing all the issues you have raised. Pleased about victims of violence consultation.
- Where are you on the Parades Bill? [Some in the Orange Order now want to drop the extended remit, but will want something else instead. We are looking at this].