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NORTHERN IRELAND: HEADS OF AGREEMENT

1. A constitutional understanding, based on commitment to principle of consent in all its aspects by both British and Irish Governments, and including changes to Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution (the territorial claim) and of British legislation as necessary.

Issues to be resolved:

- (i) Text of the shared understanding on the constitutional issues.
- (ii) Text of consequential amendments to Articles 2 and 3.
- (iii) Text of consequential amendments to British Constitutional legislation.

2. A Northern Ireland Assembly, elected by a system of proportional representation. Devolution of executive and legislative responsibility over at least the responsibilities of the six Northern Ireland Departments.

Issues to be resolved:

- (i) Extent of powers to be devolved.
- (ii) How executive responsibilities are to be exercised and made accountable to the Assembly.
- (iii) A system of suitable checks, balances and safeguards.
- (iv) Size of Assembly and method of election.

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3. A Council of these islands, including the British and Irish Governments, the Northern Ireland administration, and representatives of devolved institutions in the rest of the UK.

Issues to be resolved:

- (i) Remit of Council.**
- (ii) Powers and functions.**
- (iii) Whether there should be a parallel Parliamentary tier.**

4. A Council of Ministers for North/South co-operation with significant purposes and powers, able to act on issues of mutual interest. The Council to bring together those with executive responsibilities in Northern Ireland and the Irish Government, while each side remains accountable to, and acting within the mandate of, the relevant democratic institutions, North and South. All decisions to be by agreement between the two sides, North and South.

Issues to be resolved:

- (i) Powers and functions to be exercised by agreement.**
- (ii) Issues of mutual interest suitable for consideration in the Council.**
- (iii) Methods of implementation of decisions reached by agreement.**
- (iv) Arrangements for transparency and accountability.**

5. Standing Intergovernmental machinery (between the Irish and British governments) to discuss, put forward proposals on and resolve issues of mutual interest, including in relation to Northern Ireland but not limited to that.

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Issues to be resolved:

- (i) **Institutional arrangements for co-operation between the two Governments and in relation to Northern Ireland.**
- (ii) **Relationship with other institutions, including a Northern Ireland Assembly.**

6. Provisions to safeguard the rights of both communities in Northern Ireland and address equality and justice issues.

Issues to be resolved:

- (i) **Nature of rights to be protected, beyond incorporation of the ECHR.**
- (ii) **Whether justice issues should be devolved and what arrangements need be made in relation to them.**
- (iii) **Equality issues to be addressed.**