

09-OCT-1997 12:40

PRIV OFF STORMONT

01232 760481 P.03

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: TED HALLETT
FCO
8 OCTOBER 1997

*File
Hallett.*

cc: as attached

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

TALKS SUMMARY: TUESDAY 7 OCTOBER 1997

The day saw the formal launch of substantive dialogue in Strands 1, 2 and 3.

Strand 1

Strand 1 commenced at 10.00am with Mr Murphy, in the Chair, inviting the parties to make their opening statements. **Mr Adams** (Sinn Fein) formally recorded his opposition to the UK Government acting as Chairman of Strand 1, in view of its support for partition and the status quo. **Mr Murphy** said that the Rules of Procedure had long been agreed and would be difficult to change. He would act as an impartial chairman.

The parties and the British Governments then made their opening statements. All except PUP and the UUP read from prepared texts which have been circulated separately. The PUP's unscripted remarks expressed support for the Talks process, called for a willingness to listen to the ideas of others and for the parties to stand by whatever agreements emerged from the process.

Mr Empey (UUP) did not read his party's text but called on other parties to show realism in accepting that the framework underlying

CONFIDENTIAL

JC/TALKS

09-OCT-1997 12:40

PRIV OFF STORMONT

01232 760481 P.04

CONFIDENTIAL

the process was that Northern Ireland would continue as part of the UK.

In the discussion of procedure, the Alliance Party and SDLP urged that the discussions should not get bogged down on specific issues and stressed the need for the 3 Strands to be kept moving concurrently. The SDLP pressed for an early move to the "core elements" and the avoidance of set-piece presentations on general principles.

Mr Empey (UUP) protested about Mr Murphy's unscripted suggestion that he would brief the Irish Government "on a daily basis" about proceedings in Strand 1. Mr Murphy agreed to reconsider this.

Strand 2

Strand 2 commenced at 14.40, with Senator Mitchell in the Chair. He proposed to take one agenda item per week and invited the parties to submit papers in advance. He did not propose to seek agreement on each agenda item before proceeding to the next. There was no dissent.

The two Governments and the parties then made their opening statements. Once again, all except the PUP and UUP read from prepared texts which have been circulated separately. The only point of contention arose over the unscripted remarks of Mr Maginnis (UUP) who referred to the Sinn Fein delegation as "un-reconstructed terrorists". This prompted protests from the Women's Coalition and Sinn Fein. Senator Mitchell urged all parties to show restraint in their use of language both within and outside the Talks process.

CONFIDENTIAL

JC/TALKS

09-OCT-1997 12:40

PRIV OFF STORMONT

01232 760481 P.05

CONFIDENTIALStrand 3

Strand 3 was formally launched at a brief meeting of the two Governments at 1830, with an exchange of texts outlining their general approach to the Strand 3 agenda. Introductory remarks by Ms O'Donnell and Mr Murphy drew attention to the significance of the day and indicated willingness to consider a new and more broadly based agreement to succeed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the parameters for which had been set out in the Framework document.

TED HALLETT

CONFIDENTIAL

TOTAL P.05