

12 January 1998

David Andrews

Marjorie Mowlam

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A Chairde

Following the circulation of the joint paper 'Propositions on Heads of Agreement' we indicated in the Plenary that we would be seeking further information and clarification from the two governments. Senator Mitchell suggested that we seek such elaboration in advance of tomorrow's plenary session so that we can then have an informed discussion.

I am therefore putting a number of initial questions to the two governments. As we consider your paper we may have others.

I would appreciate if you could provide me with written answers to the questions below:

1. Is it the view of the two governments that the proposed north/south body will exercise executive, harmonizing and consultative functions?
2. Will the proposed north/south body be directly responsible for policy and implementation of policy?
3. Will the two governments initially designate the range of functions to be discharged or overseen by the north/south body?
4. Would the proposed north/south body be subordinate to or subject in its work or development to the veto of any proposed 6 county institution?

5. In the event of a refusal to positively participate in a north/south body, what overriding powers do the two sovereign governments have to cater adequately for the proper development of a north/south body?

6. Will participation in the proposed north/south body be a duty of service?

7. What are the particular areas envisaged by the two governments which would be the responsibility of the proposed north/south body?

8. Do the two governments envisage any limits on the nature and extent of functions of the north/south body?

9. Would the proposed intergovernmental council referred to represent a summit of the Irish and British governments and, if so, what then would be the role and status of the other bodies referred to in the operation of the council?

I look forward to hearing from you.

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*Martin McGuinness*

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3. I have asked Arlene Neill to arrange for the Secretary of State to sign the letter and get the top copy to Mr Donoghue at the Secretariat as soon as possible: he will secure Mr Andrews' signature and get the letter to Martin McGuinness. (I hope Mr Bell will get a copy of the letter as issued, for the file.)

Signed: David Hill

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