

DRAFT INTRODUCTION TO DISCUSSION OF CHAIRMANSHIP (after Prime Minister and Taoiseach have left the Conference Room)

1. At this point in the proceedings I should like on behalf of both Governments, to initiate a brief discussion of our invitation to Senator George Mitchell, General John de Chastelain and Mr Harri Holkeri to act as Independent Chairmen for relevant parts of the these negotiations.
2. We are, as the Prime Minister and Taoiseach have said, delighted that they have accepted the two Government's invitation to act on the basis set out in paragraph 4 of the "Scenario for the Opening Plenary Session".
3. I would like to give each delegation an opportunity to comment on those invitations but before doing so I would like to briefly explain why we extended them.
4. The formal requirement for Independent Chairmanship arises at any point in the negotiations where both sovereign Governments will be participating alongside the political parties. The only alternative would be for the two Governments to co-chair those parts of the negotiations, which would be unsatisfactory on several counts. Senator Mitchell, General de Chastelain and Mr Holkeri have a number of outstanding qualifications for the roles they have been invited to assume. They are relatively familiar with the issues as a result of their work on the International Body. In that capacity they have met most of you before and amply demonstrated their independence, their political sensitivity and their capacity for hard work, elegant drafting and fine judgement. The relevance of their report to many of the key issues under consideration in these negotiations has been ever clearer and more inescapable as time has passed. The principles of democracy and non-violence which they inunciated and their proposed approach to decommissioning continued to be key features of the present negotiations and that fact will be reinforced if the authors of that report continue to have a role in securing its implementation and helping to move the process of substantive political negotiations forward.
5. Those are among the reaons which led to the two Governments to invite these gentlemen to assume the roles described in the Scenario for the Opening Plenary. The Tanaiste and I would, however, be happy to hear the views of the other delegations and would welcome the opportunity to respond to any reservations which may be expressed.
- [6. It may also be convenient for party delegations to have confirmation at this point and the two Governments would be receptive to the proposal that the agenda for the latter part of this Opening Plenary Session should be fully considered at the



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appropriate juncture. This consideration might take place under agenda item 5 or once the Business Committee has been established. The Business Committee could perhaps be tasked to give initial consideration to the latter part of the agenda and report back to the plenary.]

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