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MEETING WITH TAOISEACH: POINTS TO MAKE

Sinn Féin

1. Grateful for your support. How did your meeting with Adams go on Tuesday? Will they rejoin on 9 March?
2. I plan to see Adams [next week/week beginning 9 March]. Anxious to avoid keeping them centre stage, but want them on board if possible. Better in than out.

Negotiations end-game

3. We must show progress or the process risks collapse. Believe the UUP are in the market for a genuine, realistic deal. How are your contacts with them going?
4. The key steps are:
 - 23 March: overall proposals tabled;
intensive negotiations with parties, possibly residential in Wales;
 - 9 April: agreement reached;
referendum order passed;
referendum campaign;
 - 7 May: referendum;
 - June: possible Assembly elections (but parties may prefer Autumn though there is the potential for the process to unravel).
5. Can you meet this timetable? Realistic proposals will only come from two Governments. Suggest our officials should now work up joint proposals for us to review around 9 March. Aim to table by 23 March, after briefing/consulting the main parties.

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6. Must take UUP and SDLP, and if possible the rest of the talks process with us. So important:

- no suggestion Governments are coming with 'take it or leave it' proposals;
- we agree when we brief/consult the main parties so none can claim unfair treatment (eg start briefing after 9 March);
- we think carefully about presentation in the talks. UUP might find proposals presented by Mitchell easier (even though two Governments will have to do the work).

7. Let's keep in touch. A lot is at stake - we must each monitor progress carefully.

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