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ANNEX B

## PAPER BY HMG: REVIEW OF POLICING AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

This paper sets out what the Government believes to be the key issues on policing and related criminal justice areas, and seeks views on the case for an independent Commission to review these arrangements, to inform the Government and the parties. These issues are widely recognised as important, complex and sensitive, where detailed technical consideration as well as challenging and constructive thinking is required, in order to produce practicable options for the way ahead.

2. There has been useful and wide ranging discussion on the paper "Principles for Policing in Northern Ireland". The Government has also published a paper on Criminal Justice. The strong linkages between policing and the wider criminal justice system emerged; and Government believes that the future of Northern Ireland's criminal justice system as a whole, and its relationships with new institutions needs to be considered in parallel with the consideration of the future of policing.

3. The "Principles for Policing" paper canvassed the possibility of a "wide-ranging, multi-faceted review of policing, perhaps by an Independent Commission, to produce recommendations to inform the Government and the parties". Several of the parties have commented favourably on this possibility, emphasising that such a Commission should be authoritative, independent, and produce recommendations within a reasonable timescale.



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4. A wide-ranging, multi-faceted review of policing and those aspects of the criminal justice system which impinge on policing, to be carried out by an Independent Commission, perhaps a Royal Commission, including international experts in its membership, and required to produce emerging findings within 12 months of its first formal actions, and final conclusions and recommendations by Christmas 1999, would be one way in which, in the context of an overall agreement, consideration of policing could be carried forward.

5. A parallel review of those aspects of criminal justice not within the remit of the Commission, could be carried out by the Government in consultation with the new institutions which emerge from Talks, within broadly the same timescale as the proposed Commission.

6. The Government would welcome the views of the parties on this proposal and stands ready to discuss the proposal with parties bilaterally or, if time permits and the parties so wish, in a Strand One discussion.