



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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POSSIBLE AGENDA FOR STRAND 2

1. Chairman's opening statement
2. Report from Chairman of Strand 1
3. Approval of agenda
4. Opening presentations (to be delivered and tabled by the two Governments and the four political parties)
5. Responses to opening presentations
6. Fundamental aspects of the problem: underlying realities; identity; allegiance; constitutional
7. Common interests (including matters such as economic cooperation and development, security cooperation and law enforcement) and themes
8. Other requirements to address problem
9. Possible institutional arrangements to meet the requirements (including principles to govern any such arrangements)
10. Relationship of any new institutional arrangements to other structures, including the EC
11. Consequential measures needed to implement new structures
12. Consideration of how an overall agreement might be endorsed
13. Matters referred for consideration to Strand 3
14. Approval of conclusions and closing statements

Opening meeting of Strand Two

London, 6-8 July

STEERING NOTE

1. The meeting will open at 2.00pm on Monday 6 July in Lancaster House. It is expected to conclude at approximately 6pm on Monday, to resume on Tuesday for the whole day and to resume on Wednesday until midday or possibly the early afternoon. It is envisaged that delegations will lunch together (buffet style) on Tuesday/Wednesday.
2. The meeting will be chaired by Sir Ninian Stephen, a former Governor General of Australia who was appointed by the Irish and British Governments last year as the Independent Chairman for Strand Two. Seated around the table will be four-member delegations from, respectively, the Irish and British Governments, the SDLP, the Alliance Party, the Democratic Unionist Party (UDUP), the UK Government and the Ulster Unionist Party. (They will be seated in alphabetical order starting from the Chairman's left - see diagram on brief). Three advisers will be permitted to sit behind each delegation (thus, a maximum of seven per delegation in the room at any time).
3. A "possible agenda" for Strand Two was agreed ad referendum at a meeting on 19 June and is attached on this brief. It is envisaged that items 1-3 will be covered during the Monday afternoon session (i.e., opening statement by the Chairman; report from the Chairman of Strand One, i.e., the Secretary of State; and approval of the agenda). Depending on the length

of time required to dispose of these items, it is possible that item 4 (opening presentations) may also be reached before the conclusion of the Monday session. This item would otherwise be taken on Tuesday, with three opening presentations envisaged for the morning (Alliance, the Irish Government and the SDLP) and three in the afternoon (the UK Government, the UUP and the UDUP). Item 5 (responses to opening presentations) would be reached either on Tuesday afternoon or on Wednesday morning.

4. The Chairman's opening statement is likely to be brief and uncontroversial. (Delegations may wish to express their thanks to him for having undertaken this role). At the end of the Chairman's statement, the Secretary of State will mention that the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister have issued a joint message to mark the opening of Strand Two and he will invite the Tanaiste to read it out.
5. It is understood that the Secretary of State's report on Strand One will be brief. (The report, and any Unionist or Alliance reactions to it, will need to be studied carefully for any suggestions that more agreement was reached in Strand One than was in fact the case - a point to which, of course, the SDLP will also be sensitive).
6. The approval of the draft agenda will also offer scope for obstructive or polemical Unionist interventions. The Unionist delegations may seek to alter the (relatively concealed) position on the agenda which was allocated to "constitutional issues" at the agenda-setting meeting. As suggested in the Speaking Points attached on the brief, the Government delegation might argue that the heading "constitutional" is a flexible rubric under which (in accordance with the terms of the 26 March 1991

SPEAKING POINTS UNDER AGENDA ITEMS 1-3

(1) Chairman's opening statement

(Response)

- On behalf of the Irish Government, I wish to express our profound appreciation to you, Sir Ninian, for your willingness to take on this task. You have been extremely accommodating in your readiness to remain available for this assignment a year after your initial appointment. We in the Irish Government are deeply grateful to you and we hope that the outcome of these negotiations will reward your perseverance.

- We agree with you on the historic nature of these talks and can assure you of our determination to make every possible effort in the discussions which you will chair to ensure a successful outcome to the talks as a whole.

(2) Report from Chairman of Strand One

(Response)

- We were not, of course, a party to the discussions in Strand One. However, it seems clear that very valuable and constructive discussions have taken place there and the report from the Chairman of Strand One bears this out.

- Of particular importance, I believe, was the common ground achieved in relation to the definition of the underlying problem and the requirements for addressing the fundamental realities. A shared analysis of the problem is an essential starting-point for any efforts to resolve it.

- We believe that lasting progress in relation to Northern Ireland can only be found through a wide-ranging political dialogue which addresses the totality of the relationships involved. This is clearly accepted in the statement of 26 March 1991, the basis for our present talks. Now that the talks process has moved to Strand Two, a dimension of critical importance has been added to this process. I believe that the process will benefit from the wider perspectives which will now be brought to bear and that Strand Two will have a crucial contribution to make to the final outcome.

(3) Approval of agenda

- The Irish Government confirms its approval of the "possible agenda" for Strand Two discussions which was agreed at a meeting on 19 June.

- As we indicated on that occasion, we favour a flexible and all-embracing agenda which, consistent with the 26 March agreement, is not restrictive and allows participants to raise whatever issues they like. We therefore fully endorse the broad headings of this proposed agenda (and would not favour any amendment whose effect would be to limit what might be discussed).

- We also favour an agenda which does not prejudice any delegation in its terms and does not seek to anticipate any particular outcome to the talks. It is important that all of the viewpoints around this table should be accorded equal treatment and that none should appear to be privileged in the agenda which we draw up.

(If efforts are made to give more Prominence on the agenda to "constitutional issues")

- The draft agenda envisages that, following opening presentations, we would turn to consideration of certain fundamental aspects of the problem. This seems to us to be an entirely sensible and logical way of proceeding. It is also consistent with the orderly conduct of our business, dealing with general issues before moving to more particular subjects.

Among these "fundamental aspects", provision has been made first for a discussion of "underlying realities" and then of "identity" and "allegiance". The final aspect to be considered is "constitutional". Thus, constitutional issues feature as part of the first agenda item following the opening presentations and responses.

- We regard the ordering of these items in the draft agenda as perfectly sensible and see no reason to amend it.

(If efforts are made to specify the "constitutional issues")

- At the meeting on 19 June to discuss the agenda, there was a clear consensus in favour of a broad heading of this kind, which would enable participants to raise whatever particular constitutional issues they considered appropriate. I would suggest that there is little to be gained from seeking to make this heading more detailed or specific and that, as it stands, it offers a perfectly reasonable basis for the discussion which we can anticipate.