

Northern Ireland Women's Coalition

C/o Block B, Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate, BT4

2 August 1996

Dear Talks Team Members

I hope you all had good holidays and have returned ready for action in the Talks from September. For those who have been away, or who have been glad to avoid the Talks chaos so far, the progress has been very slow with only one real job done to date. The **Rules of Procedure** which will be applied during all the substantive discussions have now been agreed.

I have started an information bank for the use of the Women's Coalition, and the Talks Team in particular. It provides background to and specific information on various topics which will form part of the negotiations. Please feel free to come in to our offices in Castle Buildings and spend some time reading up on the issues.

It is suggested now that the procedural business is out of the way we have more regular Talks Team meetings - perhaps twice a month.

The first meeting will be on Tuesday 20 August from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm (with sandwich lunch). The purpose of this meeting will be to consider the agendas proposed by the British and Irish governments for the substantive Talks under the headings Strands One, Two and Three. Copies of these agendas are enclosed; please treat them as **very confidential**.

Following a short update at the meeting, we need to identify if there are any amendments, deletions or additions we wish to make to these agendas. We may also take the opportunity to do some brainstorming on possible elements under each agenda item to assist the preparation of our thinking for the discussions.

A number of other people have been invited to attend this meeting on 20 August to contribute to the discussions. A full list of invitees is enclosed. It is also proposed to build on this discussion by holding a series of meetings in the last week of August in Newry/Armagh; Enniskillen; Derry and Belfast attended by Monica, Pearl and other members as the Talks Team. Also, Pearl is arranging to meet with as many other delegations as possible to get their views on the proposed agendas.

Following this another meeting of the Talks Team will take place on Tuesday 3 September from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm (with sandwich lunch). On this occasion we will need to finalise our views on the agendas and consider any alternative proposals which the Women's Coalition might make in relation to them.

A summary of meeting dates is enclosed. Please let Ann McCann know at [redacted] if you will be attending the two Talks Team meetings and your availability for the local meetings.

Yours sincerely

Bronagh Hinds
Bronagh Hinds

Encs

SUMMARY

1. Tuesday 20 August
11:30 - 3:30
Talks Team and others in
Castle Buildings Stormont
2. 27,28,29, 31 August
Local Meetings to be arranged in
Newry/Armagh, Enniskillen, Derry,
Belfast
3. Tuesday 3 September
11:30 - 3:30
Talks Team in Castle Buildings
Stormont

Northern Ireland Women's Coalition

C/o Block B, Castle Buildings
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[REDACTED]

2 August 1996

Dear Friends

You may know that some small progress has been made in All Party Talks. The **Rules of Procedure** have finally been agreed, thus holding out the hope that we may move into proper substantive discussions in September or October.

Many of you may know that our two delegates to the Talks, Pearl Sagar and Monica McWilliams, are supported by a Talks Team. This Team plans to meet on Tuesday 20 August from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm (with sandwich lunch) to consider the British and Irish Governments' proposals for the comprehensive agenda for substantive talks, known as Strands One, Two and Three; and in particular to begin to consider if amendments, deletions or additions are required. The Talks Team also hopes to brainstorm on each of the agenda items.

We would appreciate it very much if you were free to join us on 20 August to assist our deliberations. I enclose copies of the proposed agendas for the three strands which I would ask you to treat as **very confidential**.

If you need to discuss this further before you can agree to come please feel free to telephone me on [REDACTED]. If you are willing to attend please let Ann McCann know at the Women's Coalition Office (Stormont) at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

Bronagh Hinds

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Stormont Estate, BT4



2 August 1996

Dear Friends

As you know from the other letter the Talks Team plans to meet on Tuesday 20 August, and we hope that you will be able to join us.

It has also been proposed that a series of four local meetings should be held in turn in Newry/Armagh, Enniskillen, Derry and Belfast on 27,28, 29 and 31 August. These would be designed to share information on progress and process in the Talks to date and to develop discussion on the future agenda and direction. Would you be prepared to organise a local meeting to take place during that last week in August at which Pearl and Monica would hope to be present along with some other members of the Talks Team?

If you want to discuss this further please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED]. Otherwise please phone Ann McCann at the Women's Coalition Office (Stormont) on [REDACTED] to let her know that you will organise a local meeting.

Yours sincerely

Bronagh Hinds

Bronagh Hinds

Sent to:

Newry/Armagh

Geraldine Donaghy, Gemma Brolly

Enniskillen

Eithne McNulty, Sheila McCaffrey

Derry/L'Derry

Margaret Logue, Diane Greer,
Angela Hegarty, Helena Schindwein

25 JULY 96

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR STRAND ONE ISSUES

1. Discussion of requirements for a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland.
2. Consideration of possible principles and criteria for new arrangements within Northern Ireland.
3. The question of institutional and other practical implications of these discussions.

Topics likely to arise include:

- The constitutional position of Northern Ireland;
- The nature of institutional arrangements for and within Northern Ireland, which meet any agreed criteria, including, nature and extent of powers eg legislative, executive, administrative; structures for exercising these powers; safeguards to maintain cross-community confidence and financial arrangements;
- The extent to which present or proposed arrangements attract the assent and support of both sides of the community and ensure equity of treatment;
- Relationships with other institutions eg Westminster Parliament, any new North/South relationships, any new Intergovernmental arrangements and the European Union;
- Consideration of arrangements for the protection of rights;
- law and order matters.

This list is not comprehensive and other issues may emerge in discussion.

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR STRAND TWO ISSUES

1. Discussion of requirements for a new beginning for relationships within the island of Ireland, including fundamental aspects of the problem: underlying realities; identity; allegiance; constitutional.
2. Common interests (including matters such as economic co-operation and development, security co-operation and law enforcement co-operation) and themes.
3. The question of institutional arrangements and any other practical implications to meet agreed requirements (including principles to govern any such arrangements).
4. Relationship of such new institutional arrangements to other structures - eg: UK Government and Parliament; Irish Government and Parliament; Northern Ireland structures; Irish-UK intergovernmental structures; the European Union.
5. Measures for the guarantee and protection of rights.
6. Consequential measures needed to implement, support and underwrite such new structures.
7. Report to Plenary.

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR STRAND THREE ISSUES

1. Opening presentations by the two Governments.
2. Establishment of necessary mechanisms to provide a meaningful role for the political parties in respect of Strand Three issues.
3. Examination of the causes of the conflict in Northern Ireland, its impact and its implications for the two Governments.
4. Principles and criteria which should underpin new arrangements, including requirements to acknowledge and recognise the rights of the two major traditions that exist in Ireland.
5. The question of institutional arrangements and provisions of any new agreement or structure.
6. Arrangements needed to implement, support and underwrite any new agreement or structure.
7. Constitutional issues.
8. Consideration of arrangements for the protection of rights.
9. Arrangements for the approval and implementation of a comprehensive agreement.
10. Report to Plenary.