

There are a number of main themes which I think you should highlight.

### 1. The Purpose of the Forum?

- what is it? what is it trying to achieve?

In the terms of reference for the forum it states it will provide an opportunity "to both major traditions as well as to others to assist in identifying and clarifying issues which could most contribute to creating a new era of trust and co-operation on the island". Might say that by having the APNI there we have "the others" but do not have one of the islands major traditions - the unionists. Why not? Is it completely their fault? There are many hard questions and facts that nationalists on this island must face - go on to talk about how the notion that Unionists are merely lapsed Irish nationalists must be erased from the nationalist (particularly southern nationalist) mindset. **The Unionist nettle must be grasped** - this cannot be done in a cosy forum in Dublin but, this forum, if conducted properly, can send the right messages to the majority of the population in NI - this is one of the reasons why the APNI chose to be represented here. *(No great achievement to have APNI @ forum)*

Should at an early stage set out what the APNI is and what it hopes to contribute, although I think that you should say that we cannot act as a conduit for the unionists. - We have our own separate identity which includes nationalists, unionists and those who don't care either way but who all prioritise reconciliation between the people in NI and on the island as a whole. Not taking a hard stand on the constitutional issue (the politics of convenience) in NI for over 20 years has been a struggle. This is a great opportunity to tell people in the south who and what we are. *... The liberal agenda, which we can all see a need NI*

- to sanitise SF and give them their first opportunity to enter democratic politics.

We must remember that a "fundamental guiding principle" of this forum is that all matters "will be resolved exclusively by peaceful and democratic means". By sitting beside you (SF) today the APNI has taken risks in showing some faith in SF committing itself to "peaceful and democratic means". (everybody here has made a "working assumption"). But, what the majority of people in NI want to know is what the IRA has done with its guns and bombs. We know because you have told us that SF cannot speak for the IRA but this is not good enough, if needs

be, you must go to the IRA and find out and then tell us. If you cannot or will not then I think the two governments should take the advice I gave to John Major some weeks ago and deal directly with the IRA and gain the assurances needed to convince the populace of Northern Ireland that the armed conflict is over.