

## Possible Programme of work to end-February

### Outcome of Meeting of Co-ordinating Committee on 11 November, 1994.

1. An earlier version of this paper was considered by the Co-ordinating Committee at its meeting on 11 November. The paper has been amended to reflect the broad consensus reached on the programme of work. The Co-ordinating Committee agreed that the revised paper should be submitted for approval at the meeting of the Forum on 18 November.

### Background

2. As requested at the conclusion of the Forum's meeting on 3 November, 1994, the Secretariat prepared this further and more detailed note on how the Forum might proceed henceforth, by way of a possible programme and pattern of work. In preparing the paper, the Secretariat took account of the different viewpoints expressed on 3 November concerning the Forum's focus and programme of work and sought to strike a balance between them that might command a wide measure of acceptance.
3. Among the points made on 3 November, the following seemed to be most relevant to the programme of work:
  - (1) a number of speakers and delegations considered that the nine points in the paper from the Chairperson and Secretariat circulated that day represented a reasonably satisfactory, if not exhaustive, basis;
  - (2) speakers pointed to a number of areas not obviously or explicitly covered by the nine points that should be added;
  - (3) other speakers set out in specific detail a wide range of issues that the Secretariat feel could be regarded as falling within the ambit of various points among the nine;
  - (4) some speakers suggested that the Forum commence by taking up issues on which it would be expected there would be a reasonable measure of common ground and thus building confidence and mutual respect among delegations before moving to issues on which agreement may be more difficult to achieve;
  - (5) a number of speakers proposed that at an early stage, the Forum should analyse the basic problem underlying the overall conflict - and do so on a basis founded on realism - and seek to explore the principles which, following from this analysis, should underlie, and would help advance, a resolution of the problem; and that this approach be adopted regarding each main theme to be considered by the Forum;

- (6) it was suggested that aspects likely to be covered by the Joint Framework Document, particularly the question of a balanced constitutional accommodation, be left over for discussion until after the publication of the Joint Framework Document.

#### Suggested approach

4. The Secretariat suggested that these various viewpoints might best be accommodated by:
  - (1) initiating an examination of the basic problem and an attempt at identifying the principles which should underlie its resolution.
  - (2) taking up at an early stage, in parallel with (1) above, each of the specific topics identified, starting with (1) the social and economic consequences of peace and economic reconstruction and (2) parity of esteem within Northern Ireland and within Ireland as a whole.

The Co-ordinating Committee agreed that these two overlapping exercises could be taken forward in parallel, mainly in private sessions between now and the end of February. It agreed that the major part of each private session be devoted to the analysis/principles issue, with the consideration of the "specific topics" during the remainder of the session. It agreed that for the private session of, say three and a quarter hours on the morning of 18 November, two and a half hours should be devoted to analysis/principles and 45 minutes to social and economic consequences of peace and economic reconstruction. This pattern could continue for, say four meetings, by which time the analysis/principles area might be deemed to have had a satisfactory 'first reading':

#### High Profile Presentations

5. As the opportunity for attendance of distinguished visitors presents itself, or as such appointments can be made by direct approaches, provision could be made for parts of meetings - perhaps on Friday afternoons - to be public sessions at which presentations could be made to the Forum, perhaps largely on economic possibilities and approaches by the Co-ordinating Committee. It was agreed that the European Parliament observers be heard on the afternoon of 18 November.

Other potential visitors might include:

- the President of the European Commission
- the United States Secretary of Commerce
- top Irish-American business people who take a keen interest in Ireland and wish to support the peace process.
- the Northern Ireland Spokesperson of the British Labour Party.

### Presentations to be arranged on foot of Submissions to the Forum

6. As submissions are received and/or as the Forum directly approaches persons or bodies who could, with benefit, make presentations, arrangements could be put in hand for the Forum to hear such presentations, as a rule in public session.

### Discussion of Themes and further Programme of Work

7. The basic list of themes circulated on 3 November has been amended to take account of points made on that occasion and at the meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee on 11 November. The new list is at Annex 1 to this note. It is suggested that each topic could be taken up successively on the basis of "Terms of Reference" and possible arrangements for follow-up in each case to be approved by the Co-ordinating Committee from proposals submitted by the Chairperson and Secretariat. The Plenary would discuss and decide how to take the work further on each theme, e.g.

- by commissioning a study from a recognised authority or from consultants; or
- by commissioning further work by the Secretariat; or
- by establishing a sub-Committee.

As this follow-up work begins to mature, from, say, February/March, 1995, the Plenary Forum could revisit the various themes.

### Possible Calendar

8. The Co-ordinating Committee agreed that to tackle such a programme of work would call for a weekly pattern of meetings. A possible calendar based on this assumption is set out in Annex 2. While this was broadly accepted by the Co-ordinating Committee, it remains very much a tentative outline, subject to any adjustment that may be necessary, as the Forum proceeds.

### Basis of consideration of Analysis of the Problem, the Economic Consequences of Peace and Economic Reconstruction and Parity of Esteem

9. Short notes, setting out possible "Terms of Reference"/Arrangements for Follow-up, for each of these three areas, prepared by the Secretariat were considered by the Co-ordinating Committee on 11 November. The Committee agreed that these notes, amended to reflect its own discussions, would be submitted to the Forum, as the basis or part of the basis for its discussion of these topics.

## Annex 1

### Forum for Peace and Reconciliation

#### Sectoral Topics for Consideration by Forum

1. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Secretariat's note on a possible programme of work to end-February, the specific topics outlined below suggest themselves as being worthy of detailed examination by the Forum. In each case it is intended that initial discussion would be on the basis of a note on possible terms of reference/arrangements for follow-up. Approval by the Forum of given terms of reference in each area would lead on to more detailed work. At least in the Forum's initial stages, these discussions would be conducted in parallel with consideration of the nature and scope of the overall problem and of the principles underlying its resolution.

#### Possible Topics

2. (a) The Social and Economic Consequences of Peace and Economic Reconstruction

The Forum might examine the likely social, economic and financial consequences for both North and South, and for the island economy as a whole, of a stable and lasting peace in Ireland. It could also look at the principles which should underlie economic reconstruction, in particular as it might promote equality, especially in employment, and target the most disadvantaged areas, communities and individuals.

- (b) Parity of Esteem

The Forum might examine the concept of parity of esteem and consider its practical implications.

- (c) North/South Co-operation

The Forum might examine those areas of economic, social and cultural activity offering the greatest scope for concerted partnership approaches between North and South, including in relation to the challenges and opportunities of European Union membership. The Forum might also study the possibilities for enhanced cross-border co-operation at local or regional level.

- (d) Policing and Justice Issues

The Forum could explore how best to build cross-community confidence in civilian policing and the rule of law in Northern Ireland.

- (e) Promotion of Reconciliation and Mutual Understanding

The Forum might examine ways to promote reconciliation and mutual

understanding, looking inter alia at issues such as education, sectarianism, communal segregation and cultural traditions. Under this heading it might also look at ways of recognising the effects of violence upon its victims and their families.

(f) Obstacles in the South to Obstacles of Trust

In line with the commitments made by the Taoiseach in paragraph 6 of the Joint Declaration, the Forum might consider ways to remove any elements in the democratic life and organisation of the Irish State which could be represented as a real and substantial threat to the Unionist way of life or ethos, or that can be represented as not being fully consistent with a modern democratic and pluralist society.

(g) Security Matters

The Forum might consider ways and means of bringing about all-round demilitarisation and an end to the threat of violence.

(h) Fundamental Rights and Freedoms

The Forum might identify those rights and freedoms, both individual and communal, which need to be permanently protected by fundamental law either within the two parts of the island separately or in any new political/constitutional framework which could conceivably arise in future. The Forum might also consider appropriate models(e.g. a Bill of Rights) for such fundamental law.

(i) Constitutional Issues and Political Structures

While the Forum is not a negotiating body, it would be open to it, by way of follow-up to its consideration of the nature of the problem and the principles underlying its resolution, to consider how those principles might best be reflected in constitutional frameworks and political structures.

Annex 2

## Schedule of Meetings and Agenda Items for the Forum to the end of February 1995

If it is decided to hold weekly meetings with a break during the Christmas holiday period, there will be scope for 12 Plenary sessions between now and the end of February.

The following outline, broadly accepted by the Co-ordinating Committee, indicates how the Forum's agenda might be organised. Such a schedule of meetings would enable the Forum to make progress in dealing with the themes identified during the Plenary session of 3 November (including the broad issue of defining the nature of the problem) and the principles for its resolution while striking a balance between public and private sessions.

The Co-ordinating Committee agreed that besides debates within the Forum, it was desirable to make provision in the Programme for outside contributions, i.e.:

- (i) from individuals or bodies with special expertise in areas being debated by the Forum; and
- (ii) from some of those who seek to make their views known to the Forum on foot of the advertisement placed in the media.

Unless there is a particular reason for doing otherwise, these contributions should be heard in Public Session.

From time to time, the Forum will be attended by distinguished visitors, for example the observers from the European Parliament. When such visitors address the Forum, it is envisaged that brief public sessions be held.

### Schedule of Meetings

### Topics for Discussion

18 November

- \*Nature of problem and principles for resolution
- \*The Social and Economic Consequences of Peace and Economic Reconstruction
- \*Address by Distinguished Visitors and exchange of views with Forum members (Public Session)

25 November

- \*Nature of the problem and principles for resolution
- \*Parity of Esteem
- \*North-South Cooperation

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| 2 December  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Nature of problem and principles for resolution</li> <li>*Address by Distinguished Visitor and exchange of views with Forum members (Public Session).</li> <li>*Policing and Justice Issues</li> </ul>   |
| 9 December  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Nature of problem and principles for resolution</li> <li>*Promotion of Reconciliation and Understanding</li> <li>*Obstacles in the South to Relationships of Trust</li> </ul>  |
| 16 December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Public Session on the Economic Consequences of Peace and Economic Reconstruction with contributions from expert witnesses.</li> <li>*(Possible Private Session on Constitutional Issues and Political Structures)</li> </ul>                           |
| 13 January  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Security Matters</li> <li>*Fundamental Rights and Freedoms</li> <li>*Constitutional Issues and Political Structures</li> </ul>   |
| 20 January  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Public Submissions</li> </ul>  |
| 27 January  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Fundamental Rights and Freedoms</li> <li>*Constitutional Issues and Political Structures</li> </ul>  |
| 3 February  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Public Submissions</li> <li>*Possible Address by Distinguished Visitor</li> </ul>  |
| 10 February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Public Submissions</li> </ul>  |
| 17 February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Possible Further Public Submissions</li> <li>*Preliminary Examination of Findings on the Social and Economic Consequences of Peace and Economic Reconstruction and on Parity of Esteem</li> </ul>  |
| 24 February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Further Examination of Findings on Parity of Esteem and on the Social and Economic Consequences of Peace and Economic Reconstruction.</li> <li>*Consideration of interim Conclusions on nature of problem and principles for its resolution</li> </ul> |

**Forum Secretariat..14 November..1994**