

FORUM FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

Review and Forward Planning of Programme of Work of Forum

Previous decision of Forum

1. At its meeting on 18 November, 1994, the Forum approved the Secretariat's paper Possible Programme of Work to end-February (F005 Rev. 1). A possible calendar was included in this paper but it was explicitly stated that this remained very much a tentative outline, subject to any adjustment that might be necessary.
2. The Forum has, broadly, followed the programme of work, as approved. However, the discussion on the Nature of the Problem etc. has taken considerably longer than originally envisaged, while the Forum is also well behind the planned schedule in dealing with the various sub-themes. Originally, the initial discussions of these were to be completed by 13 January, whereas only two, Economic and Social Consequences of Peace and Parity of Esteem have been dealt with, even by the Co-ordinating Committee. Discussion of the Nature of the Problem was to have been completed by 9 December but will not now be finished until 3 February.
3. As a result of political developments in the South, some time has also elapsed in the wider political and inter-governmental arena in and affecting Northern Ireland. This may mitigate any loss of time in the Forum's planned schedule.

Review of Programme

4. In reviewing and adjusting the planned programme, a number of considerations have to be taken into account, which may be, in part, opposed to one another:
 - (1) it is necessary to bring initial discussion of the Nature of the Problem etc. to an early conclusion;
 - (2) it is desirable not to allow much more time to pass before holding public sessions dealing with submissions to the Forum, so as not to appear unresponsive to the over 300 groups and persons that have made submissions.
 - (3) it is necessary to put further work on sub-themes, particularly any work to be commissioned, in hand without undue delay.
 - (4) the Forum will wish to accommodate distinguished visitors, such as Senator George Mitchell, the U.S. Co-ordinator who wishes to come on 17 February.

- (5) the Forum will wish to set aside sessions to hear presentations on Agriculture (joint submission promised by IFA/UFU), Tourism and Trade (omitted from 16 December hearing) and Education and Youth (requested by a number of delegations).
 - (6) it will be necessary for the Forum to consider how it wishes to handle the Framework Document when it is published.
5. On a rough assessment that about 10% of submissions may warrant public sessions for presentations/questioning, about 30-40 groups or individuals could be involved. On experience in the New Ireland Forum and in this Forum to date, it would not be possible to deal with more than 4-5 in a full day. This implies 6-10 days. On this basis, it does not appear sensible to deal with all submissions in one block; and it would scarcely be possible, consistent with other imperatives, to devote full days to them, as a general rule. It may be preferable to allocate half-days to them, with the remaining halves being devoted to other Forum business.
6. On this basis a possible programme and calender of work to May, 1995 is attached to this note, for the consideration of the Co-ordination Committee. As before, this is tentative and must remain subject to adjustment. In particular, and self-evidently, the scheduling of the Forum's consideration of the Framework Document - assuming that its publication takes place during this period - will have knock-on effects on the programme and calender.

Forum Secretariat
12 January, 1995

ANNEX 1

Possible Schedule of Meetings and Agenda Items for the Forum to May, 1995

<u>Dates of Meetings</u>	<u>Topics for Discussion</u>
20 January	Public Hearing, Participation in Social and Economic Reconstruction: Sharing the Peace Dividend
27 January	Public presentations of papers on Nature of Problem etc. from Independent Deputies, Independent Senators and The Workers' Party Debate in private session on papers from Democratic Left, Senator Wilson and The Green Party/Comhaontas Glas.
3 February	Debate in private session on papers presented on 27 January. Plenary discussion (? in public session) on Parity of Esteem.
10 February	Public presentations (arising from submissions) - half day up to lunch. Afternoon: continue and complete initial discussion on Parity of Esteem.
17 February	Remarks, in public session, by Senator George Mitchell, followed by interim inputs by Forum delegations for May Conference in Washington (? related to 8 questions put by Mr. Meissner). Public Presentations, on submissions with economic themes (? including expert submissions on Tourism and Trade). Initial discussion on North-South Co-operation (? in public session).

24 February	Expert Presentations on Education and Youth, up to lunch. Initial discussion on Reconciliation and Understanding (? in public session).
3 March	Expert presentations on Agriculture and Agri-business (IFA/UFU, ? others), to lunch. Public presentations (p.m.)
10 March	Initial discussion, in private session, on Policing and Justice Issues, to lunch. Public presentations, in afternoon.
24/25 March (?in Belfast)	Public presentations. ?Private meetings with any other political parties or groups.
31 March	Discussion, in private session, on Nature of Problem etc. arising from Secretariat paper drawing on delegations' papers and Forum debates. Initial discussion, in private session, on Constitutional Issues and Political Structures.
7 April	Public presentations. Initial Forum discussion, in private session, on Fundamental Rights and Freedoms.
[14 April	- Good Friday, no meeting]
21 April	Public presentations Initial Forum discussion, in private session, of Security Matters.

28 April

Public presentations

Initial Forum discussion, in private session, on Obstacles in South to Reconciliation.

5 May

Economic and Social Consequences of Peace - review, in private session, of work on this topic.

Public presentations (in afternoon)

12 May

Parity of Esteem - review in private session, of work on this topic.

Public presentations (in afternoon)

May

President Clinton's Washington Conference - Forum representation invited by Mr. Charles Meissner.