

# Office of the Independent Chairmen

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## MEMBERS

## MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 1997 AT 10.00 A.M.

**CHAIRMEN:** General de Chastelain  
Mr Holkeri

**THOSE PRESENT:** British Government  
Irish Government  
Alliance  
Labour  
Northern Ireland Women's Coalition  
Progressive Unionist Party  
Sinn Féin  
Social Democratic and Labour Party  
Ulster Democratic Party  
Ulster Unionist Party

### Item 1 - Agenda for the 30 September Meeting

The Business Committee agreed that the draft Agenda, circulated by the Chairman on 29 September, be followed.

### Item 2 - Media Attendance

Following discussion of the Alliance Party's proposal to permit media coverage of future Plenary sessions, the Business Committee agreed not to recommend such a proposal to Plenary. The Business Committee agreed, however, that further investigative work should be undertaken by its participants, in consultation with the Chairmen, in order to establish the most viable options available to achieve media coverage which best served the interests of the process.

### **Item 3 - Strands 1, 2 and 3**

The Business Committee agreed to recommend to the appropriate Chairmen that the launch of the substantive negotiations, under rule 11, would take place on Tuesday 7 October with Strand One taking place between 10.00-13.00, Strand Two, 14.30-17.30 and Strand Three, 19.00-21.00. The Business Committee suggested that each of the Strand Chairmen consult with their respective participants, in the period between 30 September and 7 October, as to the agenda for each meeting that day, as well as the scheduling of future meetings. The outcome of such consultation would be reported to the Business Committee at its next meeting. The meeting noted that during discussion of this topic Sinn Féin gave its view that it had difficulties with the British Government chairing Strand One as it did not view the latter as a neutral chair.

### **Item 4 - Liaison Sub-committees on Decommissioning and on Confidence Building measures**

The Business Committee recommended that unelected representatives be permitted to sit in as members of the sub-committees and support staff should be permitted to attend meetings as well. The Business Committee recognised that the number of support staff was an issue for the Chairman of the sub-committees (Senator Mitchell) to decide. The Business Committee also noted that the scheduling of sub-committee meetings was an issue for decision by the Chairman (Senator Mitchell).

### **Item 5 - Minutes**

The Business Committee agreed that the minutes from its proceedings should only record decisions taken. It was agreed that the previous practice for the distribution and approval of minutes in Plenary would continue in the Business Committee.

### **Item 6 - Confidence Building Measures**

It was agreed that the Liaison Sub-committee on this subject would deal with those issues mentioned in the Report of the International Body and any others which may be referred to it by agreement with the Plenary. It was recognised that any question as to whether mechanisms, other than the Plenary,



could be used to raise additional confidence building measures was something on which only the Plenary could rule.

**Item 7 - Business Committee**

The Business Committee agreed that, in the interim, each participating delegation would be limited to two delegates. This position was, open to review as the frequency and content of meetings developed. The Business Committee also agreed that for the foreseeable future, meetings should not be fixed to a firm schedule, but could be at the call of the Chair.

**Item 8 - Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Business Committee would take place on Wednesday 8 October at 10.00 am.

**Addendum**

Following further assessment of accommodation requirements, the next meeting of the Business Committee will be held in Committee Room 5.16, adjacent to the main Conference Room.

**Independent Chairmen Notetakers  
30 September 1997**

BCMI/01/97