

Good Morning Ulster
Monday morning



Press Statement
No Embargo
21 April 1998

The Belfast Agreement: What's in it for Women

High % of
P.
→ Institutional
→ Assembly
→ NIWC
Equality
Other Issues - Rights

'There are both real risks, and real opportunities for women in the Agreement', stated Kate Fearon, NIWC spokesperson.

'Certain articles are directly beneficial for women, and their involvement in the new institutions. The parties affirm, for instance, **'the right of women to full and equal political participation'**. But we estimate that only about 20 women will be elected to the Assembly (roughly 20%) and it will be interesting to see if we get an all male ministerial team.'

'There are a number of areas where the Agreement is indirectly beneficial for women. For example, the numerous commitments to strengthen human rights; the establishment of a civic forum; and the commitment to acknowledge and support the victims of violence and those who care for them, who are mainly women. These women have been largely left to pick up the pieces in the wake of violence. The Agreement offers them recognition and support.

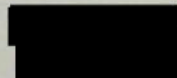
'But these theoretical opportunities also so carry real risks. They need to be prioritised for implementation immediately. And they need to have real resources, if they are not to end up on the rhetorical scrap heap.

// 'With the focus on power sharing there is a risk that the equality agenda will be dominated by nationalism and unionism, and that other equality issues, namely gender, will be sidelined. If we are to build a truly new stable and strong society, the issue of women's participation cannot be ignored. We need the contribution of all our people, and that includes women.'

The Women's Coalition recommends this Agreement to the people of Northern Ireland, but cautions that, while it has the potential to deliver real difference to the lives of women, it will only be in its effective implementation that we will see the true benefits.

Ends.
Further Information

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Timing → Opportunity

Obituary → Across N.I. → no.
→ 1st party & a Parliament Election expect
→ Deposition TRIBAL.

* Registration.

Pol. party → Don't have to for this one → but will later.
↳ legislation

* 1st preference → 2nd pref.

Funding → Posters / Leaflets.
↳ N.I.
↳ S.D.
↳ S. Belfast.

Timescale - 4 year - Local Councils.

Objectives → lobbying

Public profile → Views

Civic forum

Celebrities.

New 20

Timing → Agreement
Referendum → Success

Opportunity

Good will → across / internet → constituency
↳ don't read papers
↳ TRIBAL.
↳ 1st Pref → other parties

Active leadership →

↳ 2nd pref. → other