



PRESS RELEASE

Embargo 28.11.98

## INAUGURAL CONFERENCE OF NIWC CALLS FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

The First Annual General Conference of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition today gathered in Cookstown, to adopt the Women's Coalition Constitution, set up new structures and discuss the way forward.

The morning session, chaired by South Down Councillor Anne Carr, opened on an upbeat note "We have all come such a long way in two short years and we expect the next few years to be just as demanding".

Coalition Assembly Members Monica McWilliams and Jane Morrice called for swift movement on the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. "We have all invested much time and energy in negotiating this Agreement. We need to dedicate as much, if not more time and energy to its implementation. The immediate priority of the Women's Coalition is to root The Agreement firmly within society and prepare the next generation to take up the baton of democracy."

"No single issue must be allowed to wreck the entire Agreement. We firmly believe that decommissioning will take place, said Monica McWilliams, but it will only happen as part of the implementation of all aspects of the Agreement.

Assembly Member Jane Morrice, while welcoming progress made to date, pressed for further action.

"The establishment of North/South bodies which work to our mutual benefit is a valuable step forward," she said, "The setting up of the Civic Forum to give civic society a greater sense of ownership of this process, is something on which we can and should move immediately. There is so much to do and so much to be gained." She concluded.

Women's participation in political and public life in Northern Ireland remains high on the NIWC agenda and the intention is to use all the creative and dynamic strategies which have achieved such significant advances in recent years to further promote women's involvement. ENDS.

**Note to editors:** The NIWC Annual General Conference will be held at the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown on Saturday November 28<sup>th</sup>. Press are welcome to attend the afternoon session commencing at 1.30pm.  
Contact number: 01232.681118

NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S COALITION

52 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast, BT9 6AZ

Tel: (01232) 681118 Fax: (01232) 660424 E-mail: niwc@iol.ie

Website: <http://www.pitt.edu/~nivosel/northern.html>

Northern Bank, University Road, Belfast - Bank A/C No: 41211986