

RECORD OF A PLENARY SESSION HELD AT PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS  
ON THE MORNING OF 9 MARCH 1992

Government Team

Secretary of State  
Minister of State

Mr Fell  
Mr Thomas  
Mr Bell  
Mr Maccabe

Talks Secretariat

Mr Lindsay  
Mr May

Also Present

Mr Fittall  
Mr Brooker  
Mr Smith

Alliance Party

Dr Alderdice  
Mr Morrow  
Mr Neeson

Mr Ford  
Mrs Bell  
Mr McGarry  
Mr McBride  
Mr Dickson  
Mr Maguire  
Mr Jones

SDLP

Mr Hume  
Mr Mallon  
Mr McGrady

Mr Farren  
Mr Haughey  
Mrs Rodgers  
Dr Hendron  
Mr Feeley  
Mr Maginness  
Mr Gallagher  
Mr McClelland

UUP

Mr Molyneaux  
Mr Cunningham  
Mr Nicholson

Mr Empey  
Mr Allen  
Mr Trimble  
Mr Maginnis  
Mrs Bradford  
Mr Donaldson  
Dr McGimpsey  
Rev Smyth

UDUP

Dr Paisley  
Mr Robinson  
Rev McCrea

Mr Dodds  
Mr Campbell  
Miss Paisley  
Mr Gibson  
Mr Vitty

The second plenary meeting began at 11.55 and concluded at 12.45.

2. The Government Team suggested that discussion might concentrate on the differences the party delegations would like to see in the talks process from last summer and whether it was sensible to attempt any substantive discussion of policy matters. Other considerations such as the nature of the gap following the Conference, the practical questions relating to meetings later in the week and with the press could be dealt with later. The Government Team outlined the current position, suggesting there was common agreement on the need for a Business Committee, and for certain issues to be delegated, as necessary, to another forum for discussion in the same way that Standing Committees examined Bills in the House of Parliament.

3. The UUP delegation suggested the Business Committee ought to

have an enhanced role with a greater emphasis over the administration of the Talks themselves. Procedural difficulties could be handled in the Business Committee and need not prevent Talks from continuing in the meantime. Expansion of the Committee to two team members from each party would ensure continuity and reflect the extra responsibility the committee had. The DUP delegation then circulated an alternative committee structure to that proposed by the UUP delegation at the previous plenary session, and this is attached. The UDUP delegation indicated the main difference was that their proposals did not deal with committee arrangements for Strands Two and Three.

4. The SDLP delegation said that they were content for a Business Committee to be established, and for sub-committees to be set up once specific tasks had been identified. There followed some discussion of the distinction between the work the Business Committee and the working sub-committee(s) would perform, and whether it was really necessary to have more than one sub-committee, (the Business Committee). It was finally agreed that the plenary conference would appoint a Business Committee consisting of two members of each party which would consider procedural and administrative matters, and the agenda for the Talks process. It would return with findings and recommendations for consideration by the full plenary conference and the plenary conference could then appoint sub-committees as appropriate. All sub-committees would report to the plenary conference. The UUP delegation nominated Messrs Empey and Cunningham to represent them on the Business Committee and the SDLP delegation nominated Messrs Farren and Haughey. The other parties agreed to submit their nominations on the resumption of the Talks at 1445 that day.

TALKS SECRETARIAT

RN/8326