

# The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland Alliance

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“ P R E S S R E L E A S E ”

## Talks not a precondition for Decommissioning - Alderdice

Alliance Leader, Dr John Alderdice, has said tonight on RTE that progress in Talks must not be made a precondition for Decommissioning. "The two must move in parallel," he said, "and neither must be used as an obstacle to achieving the other."

Dr Alderdice said:

"We have in the past had an insistence by one side that De-commissioning must start prior to the commencement of Talks, whilst the other side insisted on the opposite. The Mitchell Commission was established in order to resolve this dispute, and Senator Mitchell and his colleagues clearly set out, in their excellent report, a recommendation for parallel decommissioning. That does not mean that De-commissioning begins at the end of the Talks. It means that it proceeds alongside of the Talks.

Those who have insisted that progress in Decommissioning cannot be a requirement for progress in Talks, cannot now insist that progress in Talks is a pre-condition for Decommissioning. We must all abide by the report of the Mitchell Commission. I rather have the impression that both republicans and loyalists are now beginning to balk at the notion of actually giving up their attachment to weapons of death and destruction. Talking is one thing, but really committing yourself to democracy is more than just talk.

Actually getting rid of illegal weapons is a requirement of this process, not an option, and there should be no doubt about that."

