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Strand 1

1. An assembly of 85 members elected by proportional representation (under current arrangements this would mean elections by STV in 17 five member constituencies). A panel of three members separately elected by proportional representation from a single Northern Ireland constituency.
2. Transfer of executive and legislative responsibilities over at least as wide a range of subjects as in 1973, with scope for further transfers.
3. Executive responsibilities discharged through Northern Ireland departments, subject to the role and powers of the panel. The head of department to be the chairman of the relevant assembly departmental committee. Chairmen and members of committees allocated broadly in proportion to party strengths.
4. Legislation on transferred matters by the assembly, subject to the role and powers of the panel. Majority voting in the assembly normally, but weighted majorities for certain important legislation (for example, financial measures or legislation with significant implications for community relations).
5. Roles, responsibilities and decision-making powers of departments, committee chairmen, committees and the assembly set out in a code of practice, with measures to protect minority interests.
6. Panel with significant consultative, monitoring, referral and representational functions, and with certain determinative powers over proposed legislation, public expenditure, public appointments (including nomination of committee chairmen) and administrative actions. All panel decisions by consensus.

7. Non-transferred matters remain the responsibility of the UK Government. NI Select Committee at Westminster, if Parliament agrees.

8. Greater formal protection for human and civil rights.

2. A panel of three people to be elected from a single Northern Ireland constituency by a system of proportional representation.

3. Legislative and executive responsibility over at least as wide a range of subjects as in 1973 to be transferred to these new political institutions, with scope for further transfers if the arrangements prove stable and durable and there is agreement on how to exercise such powers.

Non-transferred issues

4. The Secretary of State to remain accountable to the Westminster Parliament for matters which are not transferred. The relationship between the new political institutions and the Westminster Parliament, and the role of the Secretary of State, to be along the lines of Annex D to the Strand 1 sub-committee's report of 10 June 1992.

5. Additionally, the British Government to be ready to support in the House of Commons the establishment of a Northern Ireland Select Committee to consider matters within the responsibility of the Secretary of State.

Transferred matters - executive responsibilities

6. Executive responsibilities in the transferred field to be discharged through Northern Ireland departments, subject to the

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STRAND 1: NEW POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Outline framework

1. A single unicameral assembly of 85 members to be elected by a system of proportional representation.
2. A panel of three people to be elected from a single Northern Ireland constituency by a system of proportional representation.
3. Legislative and executive responsibility over at least as wide a range of subjects as in 1973 to be transferred to these new political institutions, with scope for further transfers if the arrangements prove stable and durable and there is agreement on how to exercise such powers.

Non-transferred powers

4. The Secretary of State to remain accountable to the Westminster Parliament for matters which are not transferred. The relationship between the new political institutions and the Westminster Parliament, and the role of the Secretary of State, to be along the lines of Annex D to the Strand 1 sub-committee's report of 10 June 1992.
5. Additionally, the British Government to be ready to support in the House of Commons the establishment of a Northern Ireland Select Committee to consider matters within the responsibility of the Secretary of State.

Transferred matters - executive responsibilities

6. Executive responsibilities in the transferred field to be discharged through Northern Ireland departments, subject to the

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powers and role of the panel. The chairman of the relevant assembly departmental committee to be the head of department. These committees to be established from among the members of the assembly on a basis which provides an appropriate, fair and significant role for representatives of all main traditions in Northern Ireland.

7. In particular the chairmanships and deputy chairmanships (at least) of assembly committees might be allocated from among members of the assembly by the assembly, acting by weighted majority, on the nomination of the panel, acting by consensus. In detail:

- the panel, acting unanimously and after consultation with the assembly party leaders, to draw up a list of nominations broadly reflecting proportionate party strengths in the assembly, and having regard to the likely ability of nominees to command the confidence of the assembly
- the assembly to vote on the list of nominations as a whole, approval requiring a weighted majority of assembly members
- if the nominations are not approved, the panel to draw up a revised list of nominations
- if a vacancy occurs during the life of the assembly, this procedure to be repeated, with the panel making a nomination for assembly approval, for each such vacancy.
- appointments to be held for the whole term of the assembly, subject only to dismissal on the proposal of the panel, acting unanimously, and with the approval, by weighted majority, of both the relevant committee and the assembly as a whole.

Transferred matters - legislation

8. The Northern Ireland assembly to be the legislature in respect of transferred matters in Northern Ireland, subject to the powers and role of the panel. All legislation to require the support of (at least) a majority of both the relevant committee and the full assembly. Legislation to be dealt with by majority decision unless the business committee decides that the proposal is contentious, thus requiring weighted majority approval (level to be determined), or unless a petition to that effect secures a certain threshold support (level to be determined.) Examples of contentious measures might include some financial measures or those with constitutional implications or significant implications for community relations.

Financial arrangements

9. The financial arrangements for the new political institutions to be on the lines of those set out in the relevant paper agreed by the Strand 1 sub-committee on 16 June.

Assembly

10. The assembly to be presided over by a speaker, elected by weighted majority.

11. Non-departmental committees to include a business committee to co-ordinate assembly business; a general purposes committee (to include the chairmen of departmental committees) to assist in co-ordinating the interests of the relevant committees in respect of issues which cross departmental boundaries; a public accounts committee; and other committees to act as a focus for the assembly interest in particular areas such as non-transferred matters, cultural expression and diversity, and relationships with bodies or institutions outside Northern Ireland.

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12. A code of practice to be drawn up to specify the respective roles, responsibilities and decision-taking powers of departments, committee chairmen, assembly committees and the assembly at large. Code to be reflected in standing orders for the assembly, subject to weighted majority approval. The code and standing orders to be based on Annex B and B1 of the Strand 1 sub-committee report of 10 June, taking account also of the points in Annex C to that report.

Panel

13. The panel to have significant consultative, monitoring, referral and representational functions. The panel to operate by consensus. Procedures to be devised for what, if anything, should happen where consensus not reached. The panel to have a general duty to liaise, formally and informally, with the assembly and the Secretary of State and to give advice.

14. Its role, powers, rights, duties and responsibilities to be carefully specified, for example in legislation where appropriate, and to include:

- a. a role in the nomination of chairmen and deputy chairmen of assembly committees (see paragraph 28 above);
- b. power to accept or reject all draft primary legislation in the transferred field approved by the assembly;
- c. the consideration of proposed legislation specifically referred to it under assembly procedures (with power to accept, reject, give an opinion on or propose amendments);

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- d. the ability to refer any proposed legislation for appropriate judicial consideration - eg of whether it might be discriminatory or ultra vires;
- e. liaising with the Secretary of State on the overall level of public expenditure allocated to Northern Ireland departments;
- f. arbitrating public expenditure allocation disputes between departments, having regard to the views of the relevant committees and the finance committee;
- g. the approval of designated public appointments in respect of transferred matters;
- h. advising the Secretary of State in respect of appointments within his responsibility;
- i. (possibly) the consideration of actions or proposals referred to it under assembly procedures (with power to give an opinion on or make recommendations about such actions, and to refer them for any appropriate judicial consideration);
- j. the preparation for the assembly and the Secretary of State of regular (annual) reports on the activities of the panel and their view of the operation of the new political institutions.

15. The panel to have an important representational and promotional role, with a special commitment to the economic development of Northern Ireland through participation in joint promotional activities in collaboration with the appropriate agencies.

16. The panel to secure its share of resources from the Secretary of State independently from the rest of the "transferred" block, in order to ensure that it has financial independence and its resources are sufficient to carry out the full range of its statutory functions.

17. Arrangements for replacing panel members who cannot continue to discharge their duties to be considered.

Relationships with other institutions

18. Panel members and relevant members of the assembly to play a significant role in any new North/South institutions and in respect of any new inter-governmental arrangements to emerge from the Talks process (as specified elsewhere).

Relationships with the EC

19. The new institutions to be responsible for implementing EC requirements in the transferred field, and to play an appropriate role within the EC, recognising the responsibility of the British Government for representing UK interests to the institutions of the EC.

20. Further consideration to be given, with the British Government, as to how this role will be carried out, taking account of the positions set out in Annex E to the Strand 1 sub-committee report of 10 June. That consideration also to take account of the potential role of any new North/South institutions in co-ordinating proposals to the EC for funds for cross-border or all-Ireland programmes.

Rights

21. Greater formal protection for human and civil rights to be put in place on a basis to be agreed, taking account of the positions set out in the relevant paper agreed by the Strand 1 sub-committee on 16 June.