

**DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD OF OPENING PLENARY SESSION -
WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER 1996 (14.00)**

Those present:

Independent Chairmen	Government Teams	Parties
Senator Mitchell	British Government	Alliance Party
Mr Holkeri	Irish Government	Labour
General de Chastelain		Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
		Progressive Unionist Party
		Social Democratic and Labour Party
		Ulster Democratic Party
		Ulster Democratic Unionist Party
		United Kingdom Unionist Party
		Ulster Unionist Party

1. The Chairman reconvened the discussions at 14.10, and invited the UUP to continue its oral presentation. At 14.50 the SDLP asked if the UUP would permit an intervention. The UUP was unwilling. The Chairman undertook to recognise the SDLP when the UUP presentation was complete which occurred at 15.05.

2. The Chairman then asked the SDLP for the reason for its intervention. The SDLP stated that it wished to address the criticisms of the SDLP raised in the UUP presentation. The Chairman said that he would prefer the SDLP to desist at this point in view of the agreement not to debate the presentations until next week. The DUP also expressed a wish to comment upon certain matters in the UUP presentation. The Chairman reminded the participants that it had been agreed that the oral presentations would be completed without debate and that the schedule provided for full discussion of content starting at 13.00 on Monday. He advised that participants should stick to this plan. At 15.10 he invited the British Government to make its oral presentation which was completed at 15.30.

3 The Chairman then stated that the days schedule was now complete and again reminded parties to submit their proposals on decommissioning to the Chairmen's office by Friday. The SDLP expressed a wish to make a brief comment on an aspect which was not directly related to the decommissioning proposals. The UUP presentation had included criticism of the attendance and commitment of the SDLP at both the talks and the Forum and the attendance of particular delegates at the talks. The SDLP wished to make it clear that whilst its delegation to the talks varied from time to time - as did the delegations of other parties - the party had consistently and scrupulously fielded an adequate team and that its commitment to the talks had been 100%.

4. The DUP pointed out that its office in Castle Buildings would be closed on Thursday and inquired as to when the other parties' presentations would be made available to it. The Alliance Party inquired if the UKUP would be contributing a written presentation. The UKUP stated that it would provide a condensed version of its presentation.

5. The Chairman, in response to the DUP's inquiry, proposed that the proposals of the parties should be submitted to the Chairman's office by noon on Friday and that arrangements could be made for their collection by the parties on Friday afternoon. This was agreed. In response to a request by the DUP to explain "proposals" the Chairman defined these broadly as the submissions made in oral form by the parties on the decommissioning issue, update versions of previous written submissions, or new proposals on the handling of decommissioning.

6. The Chairman adjourned the session at 15.40.

(By agreement of the participants, the facilities of the Chairmen's office were made available for circulation of documents submitted by participants.)

**Independent Chairmen Notetakers
31 October 1996**

OIC/PS39