

NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S COALITION

STRAND 1 - PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS

Principles and Requirements for the Process

1. It must be forged by agreement
2. Acceptance of consent should mean the widest possible consent, not simple majority.
 - (a) A commitment to work to win consent inside the Talks through sufficient consent of all parties, not two trading blocks.
 - (b) A commitment to collective responsibility for the outcome, and for being honest about the compromise, so there is a shared project to put to the people.
 - (c) A commitment to collective leadership to winning the greatest possible majority among the people through education, information and promotion of the agreed outcome on a common platform not on an adversarial basis.
3. There must be a willingness to transform and radicalise our democracy at the same time as dealing with the age-old constitutional issue.
4. There should be inclusion of people as far as is possible in the dialogue in order to assist us shape the outcome and prepare for the referendum.
5. There must be a willingness to address people's fear of change and assist in the leadership and management of change, rather than exploit fears for political ends.

Principles and Requirements for the Agreement

1. Any agreement, including the institutions and arrangements which are part of it, must be based on principles of inclusion, equity and human rights.
2. It must be capable of winning the allegiance of all citizens and commanding widespread support.
3. It must demonstrate pluralism and tolerance through recognising multi-culturalising and giving expression to a variety of identities and traditions. It must respect this diversity in practice through arrangements which bond people into a shared future.
4. It must broaden and deepen democracy and draw on the best lessons of partnership, co-operation and collaboration.
5. It should address the concept of participatory democracy and find ways of engaging people with politicians, recognising them as active citizens informing, influencing and taking part in decisions which affect their lives.
6. It must offer freedom and responsibility with full protection against discrimination and absolute guarantees of equal treatment.

7. It must offer quality and even-handed justice with public institutions - political, legal, security et al - having the allegiance of all citizens.
8. It should understand the importance of inclusion in the task of creating and reforming, owning and running institutions in order to advance a sense of common citizenship.
9. It must go beyond the narrow confines of two traditions. It must specifically include measures to ensure an equal outcome for women with men.
10. It must be capable of delivering real and measurable change. Monitoring and review systems will be essential to ensure that change is made.
11. It should be characterised by openness and be capable of flexibility and development while offering people the stability of solid framework based on a shared commitment by political leaders.
12. It should be innovative, learning from other models of democracy in these islands and beyond and therefore should not be confined to replicating existing models of political structures.
13. It should acknowledge the hurt inflicted on all sides and the trauma existing throughout Northern Ireland; particularly acutely experienced by people and communities most affected.
14. It should acknowledge that social and economic rights are on a par with civil and political rights.

Principles and Requirements of Institutions and Arrangements

1. Any institutions and arrangements arising out of Strand 1 must be capable of interfacing with and developing a constructive and growing relationship with the UK regions, with the Republic of Ireland, and with the European Union.
2. They should take account of the framework of agreement and relationships and arrangements between the British and Irish Governments.
3. They should follow the lead of Scotland and Wales and forge a new, unique constitutional arrangement which will have sufficient acceptance to be stable, but also can be dynamic enough to allow for development and change.
4. They should formulate decision-making structures that are closer to people and local communities.
5. They must ensure that gender equality is secured through new electoral arrangements and appropriate support.
6. They should develop within any new democratic structure, formal arrangements for engaging the expertise of business, trade unions and the voluntary sector alongside elected representatives in setting the social and economic agenda.

Principles and Requirements for Processing the Agreements.

1. Consideration should be given to setting up a recognised transition period.
2. There should be set in place a process to ensure:
 - (a) management of immediate change arising out of the agreement
 - (b) management of further development and change.

10 OCTOBER 1997