

# NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S COALITION

## STRAND 2 - 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 consensus 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 of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
  - (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 an acceptance of change in the Republic of Ireland, as well as in Northern Ireland.
4. There must be a willingness to examine the need for change and the radicalisation of democracy at all levels of society as well as in the course of dealing with the constitutional issue.
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.
6. There should be inclusion of people as far as is possible in the dialogue in order to assist us to shape the outcome and prepare for the referenda.

## 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 strive to weave a web of relationships - North/South, East/West and between regions in these islands - that will be capable of winning the allegiance of all citizens, and commanding widespread support.
3. It must demonstrate pluralism and tolerance and be capable of 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 go beyond the narrow confines of two traditions, and preserve and enhance multi-culturalism. It must specifically include measures to secure an equal outcome for women with men.
5. It must broaden and deepen democracy and draw on the best lessons of partnership, co-operation and collaboration.
6. It should address the economic and social synergy of the geographical island entity, while accepting the diversity of identities and traditions.
7. It must be capable of delivering real and measurable benefits in terms of economic and social development, as well as deepening co-operation and mutual understanding.
8. It should be innovative learning from other models of intra-regional and cross-border co-operation, and should not be confined to replicating either existing, or previously proposed models, or structures.
9. It should be characterised by openness and be capable of flexibility, change and development while at the same time offering people the guarantee of their chosen national identity.

10. It must be capable of delivering real and measurable change. Monitoring and review systems will be essential to ensure that change is made.

### **Principles and Requirements of Institutions and Arrangements**

1. Any institutions and arrangements arising out of Strand 2 must be capable of interfacing with, and developing a constructive and developmental relationship with the regions of the United Kingdom, Ireland and the European Union.
2. They should take account of the framework of agreements, relationships and arrangements between the British and Irish Governments.
3. They should allow for structures and arrangements that will facilitate strategic economic planning, growth and industrial investment across the island of Ireland.
4. They should facilitate Northern Ireland being designated as a special region of the European Union, with the ability to select a range of policy options drawn from either the terms negotiated by the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland, best suited to the regional interest of the North.
5. They should facilitate closer relationships between people and local communities throughout the island of Ireland and with the regions of the United Kingdom.
6. The agreed institutions and arrangements must be vested with appropriate functions and powers that will enable them to operate in an effective and efficient manner, to progress the interests of all the parties involved.
7. The agreed institutions and arrangements should be inclusive in nature, ensuring the representation of all traditions on the island.
8. They must be rooted in the principle of gender equity, with provisions to ensure that gender equality is secured.

9. The agreed institutions and arrangements should build on the expertise of civil society and facilitate the contribution of business, trade union and voluntary organisations into appropriate agreed mechanisms to enhance the process of participative democracy.
10. North-South institutional arrangements should specifically address the need to establish common principles of civil, religious and human rights, rooted in the concepts of equity and pluralism.
11. In recognition of the divided nature of society within Northern Ireland, and the divisions within these islands, relationships should be fostered with other societies that have faced similar challenges on an international basis.

#### **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.

13 October, 1997