

## **MANDATE AND ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP**

Brian Currin the initiator of the Brussels Declaration has attempted to consult with all major stakeholders in the Basque Country with the view to seeking a mandate for the International Contact Group. He succeeded in engaging constructively with the majority of the stakeholders. Emerging from those engagements, the broad mandate for the ICG has been identified as follows:

### **To expedite, facilitate and enable the achievement of political normalization In the Basque Country**

"Political Normalization" according to the ICG would be *an inclusive and transparent political dispensation based on exclusively democratic means in the total absence of violence or threats of violence from whatever source, where a broadly shared legal and political frame would be agreed upon which would guarantee a scenario of stability where all democratic projects could be both defended and materialized. All of this would be based upon the principle of respect for the Basque society's democratic will, political plurality, democratic principles and rules and procedures in force.*

The endorsers of the Brussels Declaration have addressed in unequivocal terms the demands of the international community which the Brussels Declaration represents.

As is required by the Brussels Declaration, when ETA declares a unilateral, permanent and verifiable ceasefire, the ICG will commence its work.

Flowing from the above, the ICG's specific mandate will include the following:

- **To promote facilitate and enable the legalization of Abertzale Left;**
- **To encourage confidence building measures such as:**
  - **overcoming special measures of restrictions on political activity and;**
  - **adapting the penitentiary policy to the new transformed political situation;**
- **To encourage and assist the parties, for as long as required, with the preparation and development of an agenda for political dialogue;**
- **To encourage, facilitate and enable, for as long as required by the parties, all-inclusive multi-party talks and negotiations, which would be subject to the Mitchell Principles, without conditions and with no pre-determined outcome. The objective of the multi-party talks and negotiations would be the achievement of an all-Inclusive agreement to overcome the political conflict;**
- **To mediate, if called upon by the parties, In the event of deadlocks;**
- **To generally build confidence In the minds of the public that a successful peace process is indeed possible.**