

## Written questions, answers and statements

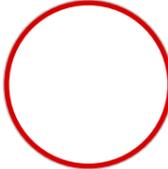
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# Patrick Finucane Inquiry

## Statement made on 9 March 2026

Statement UIN HCWS1387

### Statement made by

|   |  |
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|  | <b>Hilary Benn</b> >                                   |
|   | Secretary of State for Northern Ireland                |
|   | Labour   |
|   | Leeds South <span style="float: right;">Commons</span> |

### Statement from

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| <b>Northern Ireland Office</b>  |
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### Statement

On 11 September 2024, I announced the establishment of an independent statutory inquiry into the murder of Patrick Finucane in February 1989, under the Inquiries Act 2005. This decision was in response to the 2019 judgment of the Supreme Court, which found that the previous investigations into the murder had been insufficient to enable the State to discharge its obligations under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Today, the Government has published the Terms of Reference for the Patrick Finucane Inquiry. This follows the appointment of The Rt. Honourable Sir Gary Hickinbottom as Chair of the Patrick Finucane Inquiry and The Baroness O’Loan and Francesca Del Mese as Assessors to the Inquiry, which I announced on 13 June 2025.

The Terms of Reference have been developed following formal consultation with Sir Gary, as required by the Inquiries Act. Sir Gary, in turn, consulted the family of Patrick Finucane who provided very helpful feedback and observations. I would like to thank Sir Gary and the Finucane family for their engagement and feedback throughout the process.

Patrick Finucane was brutally murdered in his home in Belfast in front of his wife, Geraldine (who was also wounded), and his three children. This was a barbaric and heinous crime. I commend the tireless campaign of Mrs Finucane and her family over the course of 37 years in seeking answers about the brutal murder of their loved one, and I am pleased that the Inquiry will now finally be able to get underway.

I am satisfied that the Terms of Reference, as set out below, will enable the State to discharge its obligations under Article 2 of the ECHR.

I have placed a copy of the Terms of Reference in the Library of the House.

The Patrick Finucane Inquiry is now formally established. Its Terms of Reference are attached.

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## Attachments

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|---|---|
|  | <b>ToR for the Patrick Finucane Inquiry</b>  |
| Word document (1.6 MB)  |   |