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Press release

## Secretary of State launches public consultation on proposals to address the legacy of Northern Ireland's past

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, has today launched a public consultation on proposals to address the legacy of the Troubles.

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From: [Northern Ireland Office](#) and [The Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP](#)



The consultation - [‘Addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland’s past’](#) - includes proposals to implement the four new legacy institutions set out in the 2014 Stormont House Agreement (SHA) and the Government’s manifesto for Northern Ireland 2017.

A key element of the Stormont House Agreement is that all of these bodies will be under statutory obligations to act in ways that are balanced, proportionate, transparent, fair and equitable.

The consultation will run until 10 September and provide an opportunity for all to see the proposed way forward and contribute their views. The consultation also provides important information about the implications of leaving the current system unchanged.

**Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt. Hon. Karen Bradley MP, said:**

- “ I welcome the opportunity to launch the consultation today, seeking views on how to address the legacy of Northern Ireland’s troubled past. Since my appointment as Secretary of State I have heard deeply moving stories about the suffering that victims and survivors have lived with for decades and the profound and lasting impact on individuals, families and communities.
- “ This consultation provides the opportunity to begin a process that has the potential to provide better outcomes for victims, survivors and their families. There is broad agreement that the current complex system does not work well for anyone and we are determined to put that right.
- “ In an area as sensitive as the troubled past in Northern Ireland, it is important that we recognise and listen to all views. Any way forward will only work if it can command confidence from across the community. Now is the time for everyone with an interest in addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland’s troubled past to have their say.

The UK Government has committed £150m over five years to help establish the SHA institutions, which together would put the needs of victims and survivors first.

Feedback from victims and survivors has been taken into consideration to facilitate participation from all interested individuals and groups, especially those directly impacted by the Troubles. This includes making consultation documents available in a variety of formats - including online and in easy read format - for an extended period until 10 September to ensure that everyone with an interest in the legacy issues of the Troubles has the opportunity to take part. The Northern Ireland Office will work with advocacy groups who wish to hold information events for their members during the consultation period.

The consultation will close on 10 September 2018. To have your say, please visit :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/addressing-the-legacy-of-northern-irelands-past>

ENDS.

**Notes to editors**

1. The four institutions in the 2014 Stormont House Agreement are:
  - A Historical Investigations Unit (HIU) to take forward outstanding investigations into Troubles-related deaths. The consultation proposes that the HIU would take on the outstanding work of the Police Service of Northern Ireland’s (PSNI’s) Historical Enquiries Team and the outstanding legacy work of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. The HIU will have significant improvements over the current police process, and will be tasked to finish its work in five years. The new legislation will also prevent new inquests being opened into cases that are in the caseload of the HIU, until the HIU completes its work on that case and then an inquest can only be

reopened in exceptional circumstances.

- An Independent Commission on Information Retrieval (ICIR) established by international agreement between the UK Government and the Irish Government, that enables family members to seek and privately receive information about the Troubles-related deaths of their relatives. Engagement with the ICIR would be entirely voluntary and the ICIR would only seek information in those cases where families have submitted a request. Families from the United Kingdom and from Ireland would be able to seek information from the ICIR.
- An independent Oral History Archive (OHA) to enable people from all backgrounds to share experiences and narratives related to the Troubles. A research project would be established as part of the OHA to produce a factual historical timeline and statistical analysis of the Troubles. The archive would be the responsibility of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.
- An Implementation and Reconciliation Group (IRG) to promote reconciliation and anti-sectarianism and to review and assess the implementation of the other legacy institutions proposed in the Stormont House Agreement. After five years, the IRG would commission an independent academic report on themes using an evidence base established by the work of the other legacy institutions.

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