

UN Human Rights Council 48th session September 2021

ID with SR on truth, justice, and reparation

Video statement given by Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
Chief Commissioner Les Allamby.

Text:

Mr President,

In July, the UK Government issued a paper on addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past. The paper proposes a new information recovery body to investigate deaths and serious injuries, in order to recover information rather than any file for prosecution.

Judicial activity including current and future inquests and civil claims are also likely to cease. While a commitment to full disclosure within legislation is made, it remains subject to limits based on national security with no further details provided.

Our view is that the statute of limitations proposed will not meet the requirements of an effective investigation under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights and also fails to address the recommendations and concerns of the Special Rapporteur.

The UK Government is engaging with the Government of Ireland, local political parties and others on these proposals. All of the Northern Ireland political parties and almost all victims groups have condemned the proposals. The Lord Chief Justice has also expressed concerns. If the UK Government proceeds with its proposals they are likely to be subject to further legal challenge and delays in implementing an effective, victim-centred, human rights compliant approach to addressing the legacy of the conflict. Such an outcome would not serve the best interests of those affected by the violence of Northern Ireland's past.