

UK Government sets out way forward on the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland

- A new independent body focused on providing information to families and swift examinations of all unresolved deaths from the Troubles
- End to the cycle of reinvestigations that has failed victims and veterans for too long
- Ensuring that Northern Ireland veterans receive equal treatment to their counterparts who served overseas.

This new approach seeks to put victims first with information recovery and reconciliation as the overarching goal – with a way forward that delivers for all those affected by the legacy of the Troubles and enables all sides of the community to continue to reconcile and prosper.

Following careful consideration of all views in an extensive consultation, the proposals provide a framework for all communities in Northern Ireland to move towards a brighter future, fulfilling the Government's commitment to help victims of the Troubles in Northern Ireland towards reconciliation with the pain and trauma of the past and ending vexatious claims against veterans.

Reconciliation and information recovery for victims who suffered during the Troubles form a key part of the proposals. A new independent body will conduct swift, final examinations of all the unresolved deaths. Only those cases where there is new compelling evidence and a realistic prospect of a prosecution will be investigated. Once cases have been considered there will be a legal bar on any future investigation occurring. This will end the cycle of reinvestigations for the families of victims and veterans alike.

A central resource for people from all backgrounds – and from throughout the UK and Ireland – will also be created to share experiences and narratives related to the Troubles.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis said:

Victims who suffered unimaginable pain as a result of the Troubles are at the heart of our approach to help Northern Ireland move on from its past towards a brighter future.

I hope that by giving as many families as possible information on

how their loved ones lost their lives, we can help ease the difficult process of reconciliation.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to our Armed Forces for their service in Northern Ireland. That's why these proposals also put an end to repeated reinvestigations where there is no new compelling evidence and deliver on our promise to protect veterans from vexatious claims.

As set out in the New Decade, New Approach agreement, the UK Government will now begin an intensive period of engagement with the Northern Ireland political parties, and the Irish government, to discuss these proposals in detail.

These proposals build on our work to establish a victims' payment scheme to provide acknowledgement and a measure of financial support to those seriously injured in the Troubles.