



**An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála**
Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade

Tánaiste Simon Harris announces The Legacy of the Troubles: A Joint Framework between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland

Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Harris TD, and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn, have published The Legacy of the Troubles: A Joint Framework, today in Hillsborough Castle.

The Joint Framework is the conclusion of months of intensive engagement between the Tánaiste and the Secretary of State.

Speaking following publication of the Joint Framework, the Tánaiste said: “The Joint Framework provides for sweeping reforms of the mechanisms designed to address the legacy of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and across this island.

“Agreement on the framework represents a welcome return to a partnership approach on Northern Ireland by the two governments. As co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement, that partnership is essential to progress peace and reconciliation on this island.

“The 2023 UK Legacy Act was unilaterally conceived, unilaterally drafted, and unilaterally implemented. Today is a step-change from that.

“The Joint Framework will bring about root and branch reform of the UK Legacy Act and the commission it established.

“Among other elements, it will:

- Lift the prohibition on civil cases
- Restore inquests halted by the Legacy Act
- Completely overhaul the independence and governance of ICIR, renaming it the Legacy Commission and putting in place a statutory Independent Oversight Board, robust conflict of interest provisions, a Victims and Survivors Advisory Group and an independent appointments panel advising on senior appointments
- Ensure the Legacy Commission can carry out investigations, to UK-wide standards, capable of leading to prosecution
- Establish a new, judge-led inquisitorial mechanism, with public hearings and effective next-of-kin participation
- Reforms provisions on disclosure of sensitive information, removing the power of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to give guidance to the Legacy Commission about the identification of sensitive information

“In summary, the Joint Framework provides routes to truth and accountability for those most affected by the violence of the Troubles.

“The Irish Government made clear from the outset that any agreed joint approach to legacy by the two governments would need to meet two tests; compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights, and capable of securing the support of those most affected, especially the families of those killed.

“I believe that this framework, faithfully implemented, can deliver on those two goals.

“I am fully aware that winning the confidence of families will take time.

“Since the beginning of the year, I have listened to victims’ families and those working to support and represent them. For them, delivery is the real, and only, test.

“I believe that what we have agreed can deliver for families.

“The Joint Framework also places responsibilities on the Irish Government, in line with our commitments in the Programme for Government.

“We commit to facilitating the fullest possible cooperation with the reformed Legacy Commission. This includes the creation of a new dedicated Legacy Unit within An Garda Síochána. In the same spirit, and with the aim of ensuring the voices of victims and families remain central to legacy processes, we will make ring-fenced funding of €25 million available to support their participation and representation.

“Reciprocity is at the heart of this framework: the Irish Government will cooperate with the reformed Legacy Commission and we will receive similar cooperation from the British government on troubles-related inquiries, inquests and investigations in this jurisdiction.

“The next step is implementation and delivery for families. Too many families have waited for too long for truth and accountability”

The full text of the Joint Framework is available at ([hyperlink](#)).

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Press Office

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