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The Lord Alton of Liverpool
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

18 December 2024

Dear Lord Alton,

Following my repeat of a Statement on the legacy of the Troubles made on 4 December by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, I committed to write to you with detail on your specific questions, on when we expect the Supreme Court to hear the appeal in *Dillon & Others*.

On 4 December, immediately following the oral statement made by the Secretary of State, the Government lodged its detailed grounds of appeal with the NI Court of Appeal in the *Dillon & Others* case. We are awaiting a decision from that Court as to whether or not they will grant us permission for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court. We are expecting that decision shortly, and it will determine our available next steps. For example, if the Court refuses permission to appeal, we will have a further period of time in which we can apply to the Supreme Court directly. If the Court grants permission for leave to the Supreme Court, the Court will begin the process of finding a suitable time for this case to be heard.

The timetabling of hearings is a matter for the respective Courts, but the Government is clear that it wants to seek clarity from the Supreme Court on these important matters.

On a separate but related matter, which you mentioned during your intervention in the House of Lords, that the Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) has already published its call for evidence in respect of the Remedial Order which was laid on 4 December. This is a welcome development, and we will endeavour to respond as

quickly as we can to the JCHR's report, to ensure that we can move through this process as quickly as possible.

On that point, may I congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the JCHR.

As the Secretary of State and I have set out in our statements, this Government is committed to addressing the legacy of the Troubles so that society in Northern Ireland can heal from the terrible wounds of the past and look to a better future.

The Government will continue to work with all parties to find a practical way forward to deliver on the commitments we have made.

I hope you find this letter helpful. I will also send a copy to those Peers who spoke during the statement and will place a copy in the House library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anderson', with a large, elegant flourish at the beginning.

**BARONESS ANDERSON OF STOKE-ON-TRENT
NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE LORDS SPOKESPERSON**