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Simon Hoare MP
Chair
Northern Ireland Affairs Committee
Committee Office
House of Commons
London
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Dear Simon,

Thank you once again for the opportunity to address the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee on 27 October in relation to the Government's proposals for addressing the legacy of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. I found it to be a valuable session, and I hope that members of the Committee feel the same.

As part of the evidence session, I committed to write to you directly to provide further information regarding the engagement that has taken place on legacy over the course of the summer.

Following the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 24 June, the UK and Irish Governments committed to a process of engagement on how to effectively address legacy issues. Since then, and particularly since the Government published its Command Paper on 14 July, we have engaged with individuals and organisations across Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Ireland.

This has included a number of sessions with a range of stakeholders to discuss legacy issues with the two governments and representatives from the Northern Ireland parties.

To date, these sessions have been attended by; representatives from across the victims sector in Northern Ireland, including The Commission for Victims and Survivors

and the Victims and Survivors Forum; the Veterans Commissioner for Northern Ireland; the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Legacy Investigation Branch; the Public Prosecution Service Northern Ireland; the Police Federation of Northern Ireland; Operation Kenova; the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission; the Irish Council of Churches Legacy Working Group; the Truth Recovery Process Group; academics from Queen's University Belfast's Model Bill Team; National Museums Northern Ireland; Healing Through Remembering; and The Junction.

As I also explained during the evidence session, the Government has of course also been conducting its own bilateral engagement regarding legacy issues. As I am sure you will understand, it would not be appropriate to divulge the details of all the bilateral engagements that have taken place. However, it has included discussions with representatives from the victims sector in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, operational partners and legal professionals (including for example the Department of Justice, the Department for Communities, the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland, the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, the Lord Chief Justice's Office, and the Law Society of Northern Ireland); organisations representing veterans and former service personnel (including the Northern Ireland Retired Police Officers Association, the Northern Ireland Veterans Movement); academic and research bodies (including the Arts and Humanities Research Council); and individuals and organisations from across civil society.

As I noted during the evidence session, the Government has also received feedback in writing from various individuals and organisations from the sectors noted.

I trust that you find this information useful, and I look forward to discussing legacy issues with the Committee again in future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Brandon Lewis', written in a cursive style.

THE RT HON BRANDON LEWIS CBE MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND