



**Dear Sir/Madam**

**NIACRO's response to Addressing The Legacy Of Northern Ireland's Past.**

NIACRO is a voluntary organisation that has been working for almost 50 years to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities. Specifically, its contributions have been to:

- Support the resettlement of adults leaving prison and those on community supervision
- Build skills, confidence and employability of people both in prison and in the community
- Build the resilience of children, young people, families and adults who are displaying behaviour that would put them at risk of engaging with the criminal justice system, supporting positive lifestyle choices
- Influence service providers in the statutory, voluntary and community sector and building their capacity to provide appropriate support and bespoke training
- Contribute to public debate and influencing others with regard to criminal justice matters, at the highest level.

At the heart of NIACRO's work is a drive to reduce (re)offending within the understanding that integrated and flexible approaches towards desistance are most effective.

NIACRO welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Northern Ireland Office's consultation, *Addressing The Legacy Of Northern Ireland's Past*.

NIACRO agrees that the current system of dealing with the past is not working, with victims issues not being addressed and meaningful reconciliation between communities delayed. As an organisation working with those affected by the criminal justice system right through the troubles we are familiar with the legacy of injury, pain and hurt suffered by many in our communities. Indeed, through our Base 2 project we continue to deal with other legacy aspects namely, individuals put under threat of exclusion or worse by paramilitary groups. We believe that in order to move our 'post conflict' society on, our local politicians need to show courage and leadership in promoting and actively demonstrating acts of reconciliation.

We welcome the NIO proposals for new institutions and having been part of a wider 3<sup>rd</sup> sector consultation we, for the most part, support recommendations contained in the response of 'The Model Bill Team' (QUB, CAJ, UU and TJ)

Yours Sincerely

**Donnie Sweeney**

**Deputy CEO**