



Recent Press Releases

TRUTH RECOVERY. A report on possible ways forward.	31/10/2006
Truth Recovery continued	31/10/2006
Wanted: Your Ideas on a Museum to the conflict	30/08/2006
Melanie Verwoerd to Launch HTR Conference Report	19/06/2006
International Lessons for a Day of Reflection	30/03/2006
HTR Voice Concerns Over Forthcoming BBC Programme "Facing The Truth"	14/02/2006
HTR Launch Storytelling Audit and Announce Conference	18/10/2005
TALKS MUST ADDRESS THE PAST	16/09/2004

Select a item from the above list to read the full

story.



Zz TEXT
SIZE

Press Releases

TRUTH RECOVERY. A report on possible ways forward.

Healing Through Remembering (HTR) today issued a report on truth recovery. The report, the first of its kind in Northern Ireland, was prepared by a diverse range of individuals from loyalist, republican, British Army and police backgrounds, as well as from different faith backgrounds, victims and community groups and academic institutions. The group form the Healing Through Remembering Truth Recovery & Acknowledgement Sub Group.

The report, *Making Peace with the Past: Options for truth recovery regarding the conflict in and about Northern Ireland* aims to increase public debate on the important issue of truth recovery, and the wider question of dealing with the past, to ensure a better future for all.

The report was written by Kieran McEvoy, Professor of Law and Transitional Justice at Queen's University, Belfast, and HTR's Truth Recovery and Acknowledgement Sub Group.

Making Peace with the Past was written because the Sub Group felt there was a need for an open, honest and inclusive debate as to how the issue of truth recovery should be dealt with.

It offers a comprehensive overview of the issues related to truth recovery and outlines five possible options for the local situation, to take forward the discussion. These are:

1. "DRAWING A LINE UNDER THE PAST" A "do nothing else" option. This would mean that the ongoing patchwork of processes would continue,

however, no additional formal steps would be taken towards a process of truth recovery.

2. INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL INVESTIGATION

Organisations that had been involved in violence would take primary responsibility for helping, as much as possible, in providing victims with the truth about what happened to their loved ones. The organisations would become involved voluntarily, in order to meet victims' requests for information. This information and the victims' requests could be feed through a central body that may produce a report on the process and its outcomes.

3. COMMUNITY-BASED "BOTTOM-UP" TRUTH RECOVERY

There are existing models of communities devising and carrying out their own forms of truth recovery, largely through collecting testimonies and stories. The involvement of local people in collecting and documenting local truth would take advantage of this existing skills base, and would itself be a mechanism for communal healing and reconciliation. The option could give voice to victims and marginalised communities; record previously untold stories; underline the validity of different experiences between and within communities; and emphasise the importance of individual and grassroots experiences.

4. TRUTH-RECOVERY COMMISSION

Such a commission would focus on events of the past over a specified period of time. It would explore the causes, context and consequences of violence, as well as examine specific events and patterns. Set up by legislation by both the British and Irish governments, with independence from both, the Commission would have the power to compel witnesses, grant amnesty, potentially recommend prosecution, order reparations and present a report outlining the causes, context and consequences of violence. It would also make recommendations on how to prevent a reoccurrence of politically-motivated violence.

5. A COMMISSION OF HISTORICAL CLARIFICATION

The focus would be on devising an independent, authoritative, historical narrative about what occurred during the conflict and why. The aim would be to encourage a broader sense of collective (rather than individual) responsibility for what happened. An agreed narrative would limit misperceptions and disagreements about events, and thus help to prevent future cycles of violence based on grudges and manipulation. This narrative would be developed by an independent body over a period of time.

The associated practical issues, values and principles of each option are outlined in the report. The associated strengths and obstacles to each option are then considered.

The publication of the report will be accompanied by a series of public meetings and partnership seminars to help stimulate and facilitate this discussion. The first public meeting will be held in the **Indian Community Centre, Belfast on Friday 1 December at 2pm.**

continued in next item

31/10/2006

[<< back a page](#) [top of the page ^](#)



Healing Through Remembering Alexander House, 17a Ormeau Avenue, Belfast, Northern Ireland. BT2 8HD Tel: 028 9023 8844 [email us](#)



Print Page

Site designed & produced by [Three Creative Company Ltd](#)