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## Renewed calls for full inquiry

(Barry McCaffrey, [Irish News](#))

A Police Ombudsman's report that the NIO and RUC failed to properly investigate loyalist death threats against Rosemary Nelson last night (Wednesday) led to increased calls for the British government to allow for a fully independent public inquiry into her murder.

The Nelson Inquiry team is due to meet in Belfast next month when they are expected to fix a date for the first public hearings on the case, expected to begin next year.

The inquiry has already been delayed three times and has been restricted by the British government into what evidence will be heard.

SDLP assembly member Alban Maginness described Nuala O'Loan's findings as "damning".

"Her report is quite specific: the RUC did not properly investigate or even acknowledge the threats, including those allegedly made by its own officers," he said.

"It is important to note that where the ombudsman could not uphold certain complaints, this does not in any way suggest that the policing was perfect.

"It means that no particular individual could be held responsible.

"That is why the Nelson Inquiry, which resumes shortly, is so important."

Sinn Féin assembly member Daithi McKay said that allegations of collusion in the solicitor's murder reinforced the need for a public inquiry without restrictions.

"There is a widely held belief that British state agents were directly involved in Rosemary Nelson's murder," he said.

"The police ombudsman's report clearly highlights why there should be a full independent inquiry into Rosemary Nelson's murder."

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However, DUP assembly member Jeffrey Donaldson questioned the impartiality of the ombudsman's office.

"The murder of Rosemary Nelson will be condemned by all right-thinking people," he said.

"It was a murder and murder is wrong but former RUC officers have concerns that attempts are being made by the ombudsman to lay the full blame for the murder at the door of the RUC.

"This murder was the work of paramilitaries and we must be careful not to offend the sterling work of the RUC in combating paramilitaries during the Troubles."

Responding to Mrs O'Loan's findings a PSNI spokeswoman said: "The police service note the report of the Police Ombudsman and its findings that three of the four complaints were not substantiated.

"We continue to cooperate with the Rosemary Nelson Public Inquiry and await its report in due course."

Ulster Unionist assembly member Basil McCrea also criticised the O'Loan report.

"Yet again the Police Ombudsman has clumsily and simplistically waded into our society's painful past," he said.

"The murder of Rosemary Nelson was a heinous act, one of many heinous acts that occurred during the Troubles.

"Mrs O'Loan is very well aware that her actions are contributing to a highly politicised attempt to re-write the history of 30 years of violence."

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