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Quinns refuse to talk to SF until allegations over son withdrawn

([Irish News](#))

The family of Paul Quinn have insisted Sinn Féin must withdraw allegations that he was a victim of a dispute between criminals before they will talk to the party.

Briege and Stephen Quinn, whose son, from Cullyhanna, south Armagh, was lured over the border where he was beaten to death by a gang at a farm two months ago, said that Sinn Féin MP and MLA Conor Murphy had phoned the family home this week.

The couple, who met Secretary of State Shaun Woodward, however, said they had refused to engage with Mr Murphy until he and party colleagues withdrew allegations of criminality around their son.

Earlier this week Taoiseach Bertie Ahern and the Republic's foreign minister Dermot Ahern said publicly they accepted that Paul Quinn was not a criminal.

After their meeting with Mr Woodward, it was claimed that the British Government also shared that view.

"I spoke to him [Mr Murphy] for about half a minute or so," Mr Quinn said.

"He rang our house and was looking to speak to me but I had some conditions before I would speak – to lift the criminality thing in public and all that.

"He didn't say he'd do it. So I just left it at that.

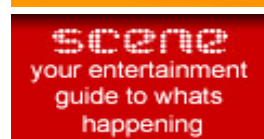
"I told him that whenever he wanted to do that sort of thing maybe we might consider speaking to him."

The Quinns and a number of people in south Armagh, including former SF members, have alleged that IRA members killed him.

The family were joined at the meeting by nationalist SDLP assembly member Dominic Bradley and councillor Geraldine Donnelly.

Mr Bradley said the meeting had been emotional for the family

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and for Mr Woodward.

"He has made it clear that neither him nor his government consider Paul to have been a criminal," the Newry and Armagh MLA said.

"He made it clear that he didn't think Paul's death was as a result of a feud and I think that he realises that the possibility of paramilitary involvement in Paul's death cannot be ruled out.

"So, I think that, from the point of view of the Quinn family, this has been a significant week.

"We have heard minister Dermot Ahern saying that Paul was not a criminal.

"We have heard the taoiseach saying on the floor of the Dáil that.

"So, at the moment, all political parties in Ireland, on the island of Ireland and the British government are saying that Paul Quinn was not a criminal.

"There is only one party which is saying otherwise – Gerry Adams has said that, Conor Murphy has said that, Martin McGuinness has said that and Arthur Morgan has said that.

"It is now the responsibility of Sinn Féin to review their attitude to this murder and to clarify their position."

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