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Troubles group to hold public meetings

The independent group set up to find ways for Northern Ireland to deal with its troubled past is to hold a series of public meetings in the New Year.

The Consultative Group on the Past - chaired by retired Church of Ireland Primate, Lord Eames and former Policing Board vice chairman Denis Bradley - announced today it will hold meetings at seven locations in January.

The evening meetings will be in Belfast, Derry, Bangor, Ballymena, Enniskillen, Armagh and Omagh.

The group also launched a new website to make it easier for people to give them views on dealing with the past through an online submission form and discussion forum.

Mr Bradley said said since beginning their consultation in September they had met with a range of

groups and individuals to listen to their views.

"The public meetings are an important part of our consultation and I would strongly urge everyone to take this opportunity to give us their views so we can all look forward," he said,

Lord Eames added: "We are confident that we have heard from all the organisations with an interest in dealing with the past but we want to give everyone the opportunity to tell us their views."

Only after the public sessions would they get down to the difficult task of writing their report for government, he said. The report, and its recommendations, would be based on what they had heard throughout the public consultation he promised.

The closing date for submissions to the group is January 25th, 2008.

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