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KELLY: CHARGE OR RELEASE WITHIN 7 DAYS

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SDLP Policing spokesperson Dolores Kelly MLA said all the suspects who have been questioned in relation to the Massareene and Craigavon murders should be charged or released within seven days.

She said: The depravity of the crime can never justify anti-democratic methods of crime fighting. We have the longest pre-charge detention period in the democratic world by a massive margin. 28-day detention, which the SDLP opposed vigorously at Westminster, means that we hold suspects four times as long as Turkey which is being refused entry to the EU on human rights grounds.

“We know from our own past how counter-productive bad emergency legislation can be, because tampering with human rights hands the enemies of democracy a victory on a plate. Northern Ireland came through 30 years of terrorism with a seven-day detention rule and even within that limit the SDLP rigorously questioned detentions.

“We are out of step with international best practice on policing and justice with these bad detention rules. We need to do everything necessary to protect the broad consensus in support of policing and particularly the enhanced consensus which has emerged in the wake of these murders. Suspects should be charged or released within seven days.”

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