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Press Releases

UU Man is New Chair of Healing Through Remembering

Dr Brandon Hamber of the University of Ulster is the new chair of Healing Through Remembering, the cross-community organisation that focuses on ways of dealing with the past conflict in Northern Ireland, with the aim of ensuring a peaceful future for all.

Dr Hamber first came to Northern Ireland in 1996 to work on a range of projects relating to the conflict, and he has lived here since 2001.

A clinical psychologist, he has been involved with Healing Through Remembering since the organisation was set up seven years ago. He was elected chair at the annual meeting, taking over from Professor Roy McClelland.

At the University of Ulster, where he obtained a Ph D, Dr Hamber is currently a senior lecturer and research co-ordinator of INCORE, a United Nations research centre for the study of conflict.

In his native South Africa he worked with victims testifying before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He has also worked in the areas of violence, reconciliation, transitional justice and trauma on projects in countries including the United States, the Basque Country, Brazil, Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone.

Dr Hamber says: "This is a particularly exciting time for Healing Through Remembering. The issue of dealing with the past, which has been the key focus of the organisation for the last seven years, is squarely on the agenda.



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The key question now is: how is that past actually going to be dealt with?
"The role of Healing Through Remembering will be to stimulate debate, but also to begin to offer concrete directions on the way forward. This is a difficult task, but the organisation has grown and is in a good position to tackle these difficult issues. "The membership is genuinely cross-community and the organisation represents a diverse spectrum of opinion. This diversity is the strength of Healing Through Remembering". "I look forward to working with the membership and key stakeholders to capitalise on all that has been achieved so far. International experience of conflict from Spain to Chile tells us that the past will not disappear... the question is how best can it be dealt with in a way that is inclusive and positive for society."

Dr Hamber was a visiting Tip O'Neill Fellow in Peace Studies at INCORE in 1997/1998. He was also the recipient of the Rockefeller Resident Fellowship (1996) and was a visiting fellow at the Centre for the Study of Violence in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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