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KELLY: VICTIMS SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR HISTORICAL ABSOLUTION

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SDLP Equality Spokesperson Dolores Kelly MLA said political groups should not be using the issue of victims to seek historical absolution for their favoured groups of victim-makers.

Speaking ahead of an Assembly debate on the Eames/Bradley report, she said: "The last week had more knee-jerk reactions than the average Riverdance performance and most of them were depressingly familiar. The very real needs of victims and survivors got lost in a proxy re-run of the troubles and attempted re-writing of our recent history.

"We in the SDLP want to put ethical treatment of victims and survivors at the heart of the process. Appropriate treatment of victims and survivors should not create any equivalence between them and those who brought about so many deaths and injuries. However, we reject attempts to protect, exclude or justify the actions of particular groups of perpetrators on purely political grounds. No matter what the flag, cause or uniform, murder is murder and must always be called by its proper name.

"The Consultative Group on the Past is a group of serious people and their report merits serious consideration to see if it offers a roadmap for the future. The Assembly motion put forward by the DUP wrongly condemns the whole report, and regrettably our attempt to amend it in a more balanced direction has been rejected."

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