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## RITCHIE WELCOMES PROGRESS ON LOUGHINISLAND INVESTIGATION

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The Minister for Social Development and SDLP South Down MLA Margaret Ritchie has commented on the news that the police may be making some progress on the 1994 Loughinisland atrocity. Margaret Ritchie stated:

"I welcome any progress that is being made by the police in relation to the Loughinisland atrocity. The families of the victims have lived without justice for over 14 years – far too long, and we must never forget their ongoing pain. If Northern Ireland is to make real progress in the years ahead there needs to be progress on major unresolved, indiscriminate murders such as Loughinisland. I cannot say at this stage if the police have a significant lead or not – but what is vital is that if they press charges and bring a case to court, that it is a robust case.

Nothing discredits our society or disappoints victim's relatives more than cases which fall apart in court or where investigations are frustrated by a lack of cooperation.

I would prefer not to engage in party politics but I must condemn the selective comments of some politicians who call for justice and complain about the police in one instance, yet are silent on atrocities carried out by republicans. Just as the families yearn for justice in relation to Loughinisland we must not forget about the Robert McCartney and Paul Quinn murders. Their families are entitled to justice as well."

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