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## KELLY: VICTIMS LEFT OUT OF PHONEY WAR DEBATE

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SDLP victims spokesperson Dolores Kelly MLA said the victims have no voice in the emerging debate on dealing with the past.

She said: “What we have at the minute is a phoney war debate. Relabelling the past is not dealing with the past, and talk of amnesties is at the very least extremely premature. A procedure for dealing with the past must be firmly victim-centred from the outset, but the victims have no voice because the First and Deputy First Ministers have failed to appoint a Victims Commissioner. They knew the Eames/Bradley process was getting under way, yet they did not take the simple step of ensuring that the victims' voice would be at the centre of that process.

“The victims were sidelined when the British government cooked up its On-the-Run amnesty plan with Sinn Fein. There are many who will see the floating of a new amnesty proposal as an attempt to revive that deal with Sinn Fein. The SDLP will resist every attempt to put the needs of perpetrators and their organisations, including all those involved in collusion.”

ENDS

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