

**DAY OF REFLECTION:
A SCOPING STUDY**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Healing Through Remembering (HTR) project was established in 2001 to “explore and debate ways of examining the past and remembering so as to build a better future”. Following a consultation process, a report was published in 2002 containing six recommendations to promote healing through remembering. These included a proposal for an annual Day of Reflection to serve as “a universal gesture of reconciliation, reflection, acknowledgement and recognition of the suffering of so many arising from the conflict in and about Northern Ireland”.

In April 2005, HTR decided to commission a small scoping study of views on the practical steps which could be taken to make a Day of Reflection a reality. Views were sought from 23 participants selected to bring a range of perspectives to the issue. The aim was to identify pointers about the general context within which discussion on a Day of Reflection will take place and the exploration of a range of themes and issues in some depth.

Findings

- There was broad consensus that there exist unmet needs concerning the legacy of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.
- There was a wide range of views expressed on the proposal for a Day of Reflection. Just over half of those interviewed saw a potential role for a Day of Reflection in addressing needs and just under half saw a Day of Reflection as inappropriate at this time.
- In the event of a Day of Reflection taking place, just under two thirds of those interviewed believed it should include public elements of reflection. Of those favouring the inclusion of public elements to the day, around half suggested an approach which would offer a range of events. The remainder suggested an approach which would focus on a commemorative event.
- There was a diversity of ideas on how a Day of Reflection should be taken forward. Common themes included the importance of the support of the political parties and the need for a broad-based structure to co-ordinate activity.
- There were differences in opinion on the need for, extent and depth of prior consultation and public debate.

Recommendations to HTR

Based on the findings of the study, it is proposed that HTR implement a phased approach to the issues and questions around a Day of Reflection to enable HTR, key stakeholders and interested individuals and organisations make informed decisions. It is proposed that within each phase, there is an opportunity to take stock and decide on the merits of moving to the next phase. Up to four phases are proposed including one focused on an extensive public consultation, the merits of which could usefully be the

subject of further discussion. The four phases, including key areas of activity initially to be lead by HTR, are outlined in summary below.

Stage 1 Initiating a debate on a Day of Reflection (3 months)

- HTR should consider the contents and implications of this report.
- HTR should prepare a response in the form of a discussion paper that would set out a framework for further debate, outline the core issues for consideration and develop the initial ideas set out in the original Healing Through Remembering report (Healing Through Remembering 2002).
- HTR should lead a discussion process around this report and its discussion paper with key stakeholders.
- HTR should give consideration to raising awareness of the report and discussion paper more broadly.

Stage 2 Developing core principles (3-6 months)

- HTR should play a leadership role in bringing together a broad-based group (the committee) of key stakeholders interested in working in partnership to progress the development of core principles or a charter for a Day of Reflection. The focus should be to develop the ideas in HTR's discussion paper and develop consensus among the committee.
- Consideration should also be given by the committee to how individual needs for support which may be triggered by a Day of Reflection can be met.
- The committee should engage in broader consultation with key constituencies to refine the core principles and build support for the proposals.
- The committee should give consideration to whether a broader consultation process should take place prior to planning for a Day of Reflection, how this can be taken forward and by whom.
- Activity should be directed to identifying sources of funding for future stages of activity and to support local events and consultation at local level possibly through the creation of a separately administered fund.

Stage 3 Consultation (9-12 months)

- Consultation should focus on providing opportunities for a broad-based engagement with the core principles for a Day of Reflection and informing and encouraging debate.
- The committee should focus on the design of an appropriate, constructive consultation process including resources and materials for distribution for local groups and targeted consultation with key constituencies.
- Thereafter the specific role of the committee will depend on the outcomes of discussions on how consultation should be undertaken, in particular, whether it will have a role in overseeing the consultation process or whether this will be taken forward by a third party; for example one of the members of the committee.
- The committee should review its proposals for a Day of Reflection in response to the outcome of the consultation process and prepare and disseminate a report.

Stage 4 Planning and implementation (12 months)

- Activity should be focussed on developing resources to support participation in the Day of Reflection and on building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
- Resources could include resource packs for a broad range of stakeholder groups, practical guidance on organising and publicising events, a good practice guide on consulting on Day of Reflection issues and briefing packs for the media.
- A training programme should be developed targeted at individuals in key sectors who might play a role in facilitating and supporting groups and organisations becoming involved in a Day of Reflection or those who might organise activities or events.
- Monitoring arrangements to document and evaluate the first and subsequent Days of Reflection should be developed and implemented.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Report of the Healing Through Remembering project

The Healing Through Remembering (HTR) project grew out of an initiative taken by Victim Support Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO). In 1999 the two organisations invited Dr Alex Boraine, then Deputy Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, to meet with groups and individuals to explore how the experience of dealing with the past in South Africa might inform understanding of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. A number of issues were raised and many of those who met recommended that an ongoing discussion on how to deal with the past should take place.

To forward this discussion, the HTR project was formally established in 2001 under the guidance of a diverse Board. The project aimed to “explore and debate ways of examining the past and remembering so as to build a better future” (Healing Through Remembering 2002). Following an extensive consultation process, a report was published in 2002 outlining findings based on 108 submissions from individuals and organisations (Healing Through Remembering 2002). The Report also contained six detailed recommendations by the project Board. The recommendations formed a series of mechanisms and strategies to promote healing through remembering. These included establishing a Healing Through Remembering Initiative to take forward the implementation of recommendations contained in the Report.

1.2 Recommendation for a Day of Reflection

One of the mechanisms recommended by the Report was a Day of Reflection. The Report recommends:

...an annual ‘Day of Reflection’ be established. The day will serve as a universal gesture of reconciliation, reflection, acknowledgement and recognition of the suffering of so many arising from the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

The full text on the recommendation for a Day of Reflection from the Report is set out in *Appendix 1*. However, in broad terms, the Report identified the principles which should underpin the day and some of the obstacles that might be encountered in setting up such a day. It was intended the Day of Reflection would be an inclusive and positive event that would provide an opportunity for people in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain to remember all those who have been adversely affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. It was proposed that initially the Day of Reflection would be focused on reflection and contemplation and would be a time “for organisations and individuals to reflect on their role in the conflict and look toward reconciliation for our society in the future” (Healing Through Remembering 2002: 44). Specifically, it was proposed that for the first three years the focus should be on “what has happened to individuals and how we each are somehow complicit in the conflict in and about Northern Ireland” (Healing Through Remembering 2002: 46). However, it was envisaged that over time the Day of Reflection could evolve into including more collective and public elements of remembering and

commemoration, with programmes of events at local council level suggested. While the focus of the Day of Reflection would be on remembering it was proposed that institutions could be encouraged to express their responsibility and remorse for the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

1.3 Day of Reflection Sub Group

Following publication of the HTR Report, the HTR Initiative was established. It brings diverse people together to address how to further the Report's recommendations. To do this, the Initiative formed sub groups which – like the original Board – are comprised of a wide range of individuals with different perspectives. The Day of Reflection Sub Group is one of five sub groups formed. The other four sub groups address issues relating to a Living Memorial Museum, Storytelling, a Network of Commemoration and Remembering projects, and Acknowledgement and Truth Recovery. In August 2004 a group of interested individuals met to consider forming the Day of Reflection Sub Group. In subsequent months, the membership of the group was expanded and met under an interim chair from the original HTR Board. In April 2005 a chair was appointed.

The early meetings of the Day of Reflection Sub Group centred on the ways in which the recommendation for a Day of Reflection presented in the HTR Report could be brought forward. The Sub Group has focused on key considerations and questions associated with a Day of Reflection. It has also commissioned two pieces of related research to inform its thinking. The first commissioned piece looks at days of reflection in an international context and attempts to identify lessons which might be applied to the local context (Healing Through Remembering 2006a). The second piece, on which this report is based, was intended to assess views on the proposals for a Day of Reflection outlined in the 2002 Report. Main findings from the international study are outlined below. This is followed by a detailed outline and terms of reference for this research project.

1.4 Project on international experiences of days of remembrance and reflection

Drawing on experiences from 13 countries worldwide which have put in place days of remembrance and reflection, the report highlights several common themes around key elements of such days and of the importance of getting these right at the outset. These include:

- an appropriate date for the Day of Reflection which reflects an understanding of the many different views of history held within a society;
- getting the timing right and making sure that long-term planning is incorporated into any initiative;
- content which has resonance and substance and moves beyond mere symbolism; and
- the support of civil society in encouraging public participation.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations to inform the debate around a Day of Reflection in and about Northern Ireland based on the lessons of international experience. These include that a Day of Reflection process should:

- reflect long-term planning;
- be informed by an inclusive consultation process which should address the range of different ways of commemoration and reflection;
- give careful consideration to the date on which a Day of Reflection might be held;
- be driven by community-based organisations; and
- consider ways of promoting reflection throughout the year.

1.5 Context for the scoping study

In April 2005, the Day of Reflection Sub Group took the decision to complement this international research, which was then drawing to a close, with a project focused specifically on a local Day of Reflection.

In its initial consultation, HTR found there was considerable support for the idea of a Day of Reflection to remember all those who have been affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland, and for individuals and organisations to reflect on their role in the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. However, there was an awareness too that time had elapsed since publishing the initial report and that political developments in the interim may have impacted on views on the recommendation of a Day of Reflection and the possibilities for moving the idea forward may have changed. Broadly, such developments included the impact of the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly, a shift in voter support towards Sinn Féin and the Democratic Unionist Party, the announcement of judicial inquiries into several controversial murders, continued sectarian tension and the impact of a number of controversial Days of Reflection in Sinn Féin-led councils in Derry, Strabane, Omagh, Magherafelt and Fermanagh in late 2004. (See, for example, Ballymoney & Moyle Times 2005; Boyle 2005; Breslin 2005; Co Down Outlook, 2005; Derry Journal 2004; Fermanagh Herald 2004; McCaffrey 2004; Mullan 2005; I. Starrett 2004; I. Starrett 2005; Strabane Weekly News 2005). At a policy level the publication of *A Shared Future* (Community Relations Unit 2005) by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister setting out its policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland and the appointment of an interim Victims' Commissioner were also relevant. The period also saw the development of new initiatives and increasing debate within the churches on the general question of dealing with the past and the specific question of the healing potential of reflection and remembering.

In this context, the Day of Reflection Sub Group felt that what would be most helpful would be a scoping study that would focus on gathering current views on the concept of a Day of Reflection and on the proposals for a Day of Reflection contained in the 2002 HTR Report. The aim of the study was therefore to:

take stock of views on the idea of a Day of Reflection and undertake an initial scoping study with a range of stakeholders to consider the implications and possibilities for moving the idea forward.

However, after initial discussions and in view of the Sub Group's wish to progress a Day of Reflection, it was agreed that the project should also focus on the practical steps that could be taken to make a Day of Reflection a reality, including specific recommendations to HTR. The amended terms of reference for the project are set out in *Appendix 2*.

1.6 Method

The research was undertaken initially by desk research to review the background to the proposal for a Day of Reflection and the background to a series of reflection-related events held by local councils in late 2004.

A structured interview schedule (see *Appendix 3*) was then developed covering three main themes:

- overall views on the idea of a Day of Reflection;
- views on key elements of the HTR recommendation as outlined in the 2002 Report; and
- the practical steps needed to realise the Day.

Views were collected through 23 one-to-one interviews, most held over the period June to October 2005 and one interview conducted in January 2006. A list of those consulted is given in *Appendix 4*.

Interviewees were identified in conjunction with HTR's Day of Reflection Sub Group and were selected to represent a broad cross-section of perspectives and sectors. Interviewees brought perspectives from the four main churches, faith groups, the voluntary and community sector, victims, trade union movement, employer interests, and the Victim's Unit. The research also drew on the experience of elected representatives and the Chief Executive of Fermanagh Council, who had explored the question of holding a Day of Reflection in some depth within the council in advance of an event being held in 2004.

Most of the interviews took place over a one- to two-hour period and a broad range of views was expressed. Although some of those interviewed were not supportive of the idea of a Day of Reflection they did respond to many of the questions around the issue and were able to provide ideas on what practical steps would need to be taken to hold such an event. Some of these participants also provided other suggestions on how reflection could make a positive contribution to healing.

Detailed notes were taken of all interviews, responses analysed, and key themes identified.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to present in summary form an overview of the wide range of views expressed on the idea of a Day of Reflection. This overview is set out in three sections and broadly follows the main areas of discussion covered in the interviews. These areas were:

- overall views on the proposal for a Day of Reflection;
- views on key elements of the proposal for a Day of Reflection as set out in the Report of the HTR project; and
- ideas on the practical steps which need to be taken to make a Day of Reflection a reality.

2.2 Overall responses to proposal for a Day of Reflection

Most, but not all, of those consulted were aware of the Report of the HTR project. Six participants were also directly involved in debates around or planning for reflection events organised within councils in 2004.

Of those participants who reported being aware of or having taken part in discussions around how their organisation should respond to the legacy of the past at an institutional level, most had been involved in discussions on the idea of a Day of Reflection specifically. For some, such debates had helped to clarify and inform their views; either moving them from a position of some scepticism towards seeing the value of a Day of Reflection, or to come to the view that such an approach is not feasible or desirable at this time.

Views on the idea of a Day of Reflection varied considerably. Responses ranged from the strongly positive, with participants stating that a Day of Reflection should be taken forward immediately, to objections to a Day of Reflection as an appropriate strategy at any point in the near future.

Overall, 14 of the 23 participants (roughly 60%) taking part in the study were broadly supportive of the proposal for a Day of Reflection, albeit that for ten of these participants this support was contingent on a number of conditions being in place.

The remaining nine participants were not supportive of the proposal for a Day of Reflection. For five of these participants a Day of Reflection was seen as neither appropriate nor workable for some time to come. They expressed the view that it will be for the next generation to consider the need for a Day of Reflection. Four participants saw the need for an initiative to promote healing and at least the potential for holding a Day of Reflection when conditions become more favourable. However, their views were tempered by concerns around whether a Day of Reflection is the best way to promote healing given the specific context of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Two of this latter group indicated, however, they would consider becoming involved in a Day of Reflection initiative if it progressed.

In summary, more of those interviewed were supportive in their overall response to the idea than not supportive. That said, all were aware of the challenges and risks associated with holding a Day of Reflection.

What follows is a summary of overall views on the proposal for a Day of Reflection categorised by whether, in broad terms, those consulted were supportive or not supportive. The views of those supportive of the proposal for a Day of Reflection are outlined first. This is followed by an outline of the views of those who were not supportive.

2.2.1 Views of those supportive of a Day of Reflection

Of the 14 participants supportive of a Day of Reflection, four were strongly in support of the proposal and believed that a Day of Reflection should be held in the near future. For these participants there was a clear need for a Day of Reflection and tangible benefits to be gained. In particular, the support and healing potentially offered to those who take part. However, participants were mindful of the challenges and risks associated with holding a Day of Reflection now, including:

- not everyone will feel able to or wish to participate;
- a Day of Reflection could potentially reopen old wounds in an unhelpful way;
- a Day of Reflection could reinforce community divisions or create new divisions;
- managing the current lack of consensus around who is a victim; and
- in the context of a lack of political agreement, a Day of Reflection may come under criticism by key interest groups and become embroiled in party politics.

While the remaining ten participants in this group were supportive of the idea of a Day of Reflection this support was seen as subject to a number of conditions. For five of these participants the time was not yet right for holding a Day of Reflection. From this perspective, political progress and a clear road map for the future are critical for developing the conditions necessary for a Day of Reflection to take place. In particular, stability at both political and community levels is seen as critical to ensure that political support for the initiative is achieved and that communities have the confidence to participate fully. Without this stability, these participants feared that a Day of Reflection would fail to achieve broad-based support, be potentially derailed by criticism from the political parties, and at worst actively contribute to community destabilisation.

In this context it was stated that a Day of Reflection should await the outcome of political progress and agreement. Most of these participants felt, however, that there would be merit at this point in beginning to plan for a Day of Reflection to be launched when conditions were right, and in beginning to discuss and engage with key stakeholders. One participant put the case for a Day of Reflection as one element of a more comprehensive strategy focused on the legacy of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland, which

might include an audit of the need for victim services, increased support in response to this need, and local initiatives both within and between communities.

Even if conditions of political progress and community confidence were in place, some participants felt that the challenges associated with the possibility of a Day of Reflection becoming embroiled in party politics and lack of consensus on who is to be regarded as a victim would remain.

The remaining five participants emphasised other conditions as needing to be met before they could support a Day of Reflection process, with some participants mentioning more than one requirement. For four participants, their support would be contingent on an assurance that any process would be carefully planned over a lengthy period rather than publicly launched without warning. For one of these participants an essential prerequisite for support would be assurance that sufficient planning had been undertaken to ensure services, including support and counselling, would be available to assist those for whom a Day of Reflection might cause further hurt or reawaken old hurts. For another, reassurance would also need to be given that any initiative would not be put forward as an alternative to or in competition with the annual Remembrance Day. A Day of Reflection with a focus on private reflection only was stated as a requirement for support by two participants.

Concerns and conditions aside, overall participants believed that a Day of Reflection could make a positive contribution to dealing with the legacy of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Views on the nature of that contribution varied, but tended to focus on bringing closure to individuals and to society in general, as well as bringing comfort and recognition to those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. In particular, it was proposed that a Day of Reflection could provide recognition to those currently dealing with grief in isolation and without support. It was proposed that a Day of Reflection could also go some way to addressing the stigmatisation and alienation felt by many people because of their loss and could provide an acknowledgement that all lives lost were valued. A Day of Reflection was also perceived as providing the possibility for individual reflection and the opportunity for those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland to talk about their grief and loss. For one participant, a Day of Reflection could provide an opportunity for reflection and remembrance for those who had not felt part of or able to participate in the annual Remembrance Day.

There were differences in view among those supportive of a Day of Reflection around how one might decide that a Day of Reflection should take place. There was an awareness that full consensus on a Day of Reflection was not achievable. In this context, one view expressed was that a Day of Reflection should wait until a position was reached where there was evidence that most people were open to the idea and that no further hurt would be caused to those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. For others, the decision would need to be driven by an objective assessment of the relative benefits and costs of a Day of Reflection. This assessment was seen as requiring the establishment of clarity around what added value a Day of Reflection could bring to those most affected by the conflict, many of whom, it was pointed out, remember their loss daily. Clarity around the rationale for a Day of Reflection and

predicted outcomes and impact was seen as essential. A further view was that there was a need to accept that not everyone would be able to take part in a Day of Reflection and that this should be considered in any approach. In this context, the approach should be to provide an opportunity for reflection for all who wish it. The opportunity should also be available to those who cannot take part now but who may wish to do so in the future.

2.2.2 Views of those not supportive of a Day of Reflection

Nine participants were less supportive of the idea of a Day of Reflection. Four of these respondents did see some potential for a Day of Reflection contributing to broader society in the medium term. However, concerns were raised around whether a Day of Reflection was the best way to address the legacy of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland and to promote healing. The remaining five participants viewed a Day of Reflection as neither appropriate nor workable for many years to come and believed it would be for the next generation to address the need for a Day of Reflection. Concerns already outlined around the assumption that remembering is beneficial and will lead to healing were also raised. For some, regardless of when a Day of Reflection might be held, the focus of any initiative should be firmly on those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

Obstacles identified by those not supportive of a Day of Reflection are outlined below. The section concludes with proposals put forward by four respondents for what they perceived to be more appropriate measures to bring healing through remembering.

2.2.2.1 *Obstacles to progress in the short to medium term*

Participants identified a range of obstacles to holding a Day of Reflection in the short to medium term.

For all nine participants the current lack of political progress and a clear road map for the future were viewed as significant obstacles to progressing work on a Day of Reflection in the short-term. Most saw the drawn out negotiations as contributing to a political landscape concerned with legitimising actions rather than one which openly acknowledges hurt and that wrongs were done. One participant assessed the possibilities for holding a Day of Reflection as much lower now than they were after the Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement or Belfast Agreement) when, for example, the proposals would have had more resonance with broader political events. A further participant cautioned against launching a Day of Reflection as a “bold gesture” driven by a simplistic view that if something is organised “people will come”.

It was reported that the absence to date of a final resolution about the future and continued community divisions about the past meant that currently there is no framework within which to locate a Day of Reflection. In this context the possibility of achieving the significant community consensus perceived as necessary to implement an initiative or the political leadership and approval necessary to ensure its success were assessed as low. This is seen to be reflected in the lack of consensus in the community in

general on who can and cannot be considered as a victim. In these circumstances, these participants were unclear about the focus of any reflection.

A key obstacle identified by five of the nine participants was the perceived mismatch between the reality of people's lives and the messages a Day of Reflection would convey. For these participants, holding a Day of Reflection now or in the near future ignores the reality that for many "the war" is not over. People are seen as continuing to experience violence or the threat of violence daily. They are also seen as continuing to have to manage unresolved questions around identity and rights. Three of these participants expressed deep concerns that a Day of Reflection would or could be perceived as providing legitimacy to acts of violence and paramilitary campaigns. In this context, a Day of Reflection would be unlikely to obtain support in some sections of the community and to go ahead with a Day of Reflection now would cause hurt to many who have been most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Concern was expressed that ignoring these concerns would serve to marginalise these communities.

Concern was also expressed that the hurt and pain of those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland is just too recent for a Day of Reflection to take place. One participant reflected a growing cynicism and weariness at community level around community relations and the development of an "industry" around the impact of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland, which is in danger of becoming "abusive" to those who have been most affected.

Four participants pointed to the potential for controversy around a range of issues relating to a Day of Reflection and of the negative impact this could have on those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. In particular a Day of Reflection was seen by three participants as potentially making the hurt and loss of victims harder to bear. Two respondents stated a concern that a Day of Reflection could contribute to a deterioration of community relations.

2.2.2.2 Long-term obstacles to a Day of Reflection

Besides obstacles to holding a Day of Reflection in the current context, participants identified a range of long-term obstacles. In particular, the stability and community confidence perceived as necessary for a Day of Reflection was assessed as only likely to evolve and develop over a long period of time. This was seen as needing not only political stability and confidence in the political process and institutions, but more generally the development of a less divided society.

A lack of confidence and the incapacity of individuals and political groups to engage with the issues which a Day of Reflection raises was perceived as a major long-term obstacle, as was the perception that different groups including the political parties continue to have a strong investment in particular accounts of the past. For these participants a Day of Reflection requires society to deal with the past openly and honestly, to confront the wrongs and errors of past actions. There was recognition, however, that in a divided society such an open and honest discussion is unlikely in the short or even medium-term, and it may be decades before the various competing accounts of the past can be examined and challenged.

The position was perceived as being made even more difficult by the range of conflict-related issues which remain unresolved and which are likely to remain so for some time. In summary, for these respondents “issues around the past will not go away but we as a society are not capable of dealing with them”.

2.2.2.3 Alternatives to a Day of Reflection

Four participants not supportive of the idea of a Day of Reflection suggested there would be merit in exploring other options to enable society to engage with issues around the past which might prove to be more helpful in encouraging and supporting healing through remembering. *Lost Lives* (McKittrick, Kelters, Feeney & Thornton 1999) and the BBC *Legacy* project (British Broadcasting Corporation 1999) were cited by three participants as good examples of creative and imaginative approaches. *Lost Lives* chronicles deaths arising from the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Radio Ulster’s *Legacy* series was an initiative by the BBC which aimed to give a voice to the unheard victims of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Each weekday morning throughout 1999 at 8.58 am, ordinary people told how the conflict in and about Northern Ireland had affected their lives.

Both initiatives were perceived as having made a major contribution to understandings of the tragedy of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Two participants suggested that other such creative approaches to reflection, including for example television dramas or the commissioning of a piece of music, could contribute to reflection and healing.

For two participants, the need was not for a Day of Reflection but better services and levels of support for victims. In this context, it was proposed that measures focused at an institutional level around ensuring policies and practices take account adequately of the consequences of over thirty years of conflict would be a more effective means than a Day of Reflection of promoting healing and helping society move forward. This could be supplemented by a range of ongoing, small, low-key community processes which would meet specific and identified need.

2.2.3 Overview of responses

The interviews demonstrated that there appears to be a broad consensus that there are unmet needs around the legacy of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. However, this consensus was not apparent in relation to proposals for a Day of Reflection. Just over half of those interviewed saw a potential role for a Day of Reflection in addressing these needs; just under half saw a Day of Reflection as inappropriate at this time.

Overall, the proposals elicited a broad range of views and perspectives. These ranged from those which were dismissive of the concept to those which were positive. Most of those interviewed held views falling at some point between. This was reflected in the responses given by most of those supportive of a Day of Reflection who made it clear that their support would be subject to a range of conditions being in place.

Similarly, just under half of those not supportive of a Day of Reflection could see the potential merits of such an approach in the longer term.

It is also clear that those who support a Day of Reflection and those who do not have similar concerns around the risks and challenges associated with holding a Day of Reflection. In particular, the potential of a Day of Reflection to reinforce old divisions or open up new ones was a common concern, as were concerns around managing the lack of consensus on who is and is not a victim. In addition, the timing of a Day of Reflection, and the likelihood that universal participation could not be achieved, were further issues raised. For some these risks and challenges need to be managed, for others they are insurmountable at the present time or even in the longer term.

2.3 Views on proposals for a Day of Reflection

HTR's proposals for a Day of Reflection are contained in its Report published in 2002 (Healing Through Remembering 2002) which sets out six recommendations to promote healing through remembering. The Report contains a specific recommendation for a Day of Reflection framed as a purpose statement for the initiative. While the Report does not detail what should happen on the day, it does contain a number of proposals. In particular, it is suggested that observance of the Day of Reflection should be sought in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, and suggests the possibility that an annual officially recognised holiday be explored. It is proposed that the Day of Reflection should focus on private reflection and contemplation initially, thereafter moving to more collective, public and shared reflection over time. It is also proposed the Day should provide the opportunity for organisations to reflect on their role in the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

Participants were asked for their views on these elements of the HTR proposal and to outline what they thought should happen on the day. Even most of those interviewed who were not supportive of holding a Day of Reflection in the near future, were able to provide views on these aspects of the proposal.

2.3.1 Purpose of Day of Reflection in HTR recommendation

Participants were asked to give their views on the recommendation for a Day of Reflection contained in the HTR report (Healing Through Remembering 2002) as follows “the day will serve as a universal gesture of reconciliation, reflection, acknowledgement and recognition of the suffering of so many arising from the conflict in and about Northern Ireland” (Healing Through Remembering 2002: 44).

Just over half of participants were content with the recommendation as a working statement of purpose for a Day of Reflection. However, most participants felt there would be a need for the further development of this statement.

The reference to the Day as a “universal” gesture was felt to be inappropriate by four participants. The word universal was perceived as not reflecting the reality that not everyone will or can participate in a Day

of Reflection. As such, including the term universal was perceived as claiming more than can be delivered.

Most discussion focused around the term “reconciliation” and the need for further development of the purpose statement. Concern was also expressed around some of the discussion of the proposed Day of Reflection in the 2002 Report. This suggested that besides individual reflection, the Day of Reflection could provide an opportunity for reflection at an institutional level and that organisations could be encouraged to express their responsibility and remorse for the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

An overview of these views is outlined in more detail below.

2.3.1.1 Reconciliation as part of a purpose statement

Ten participants expressed concern at including the term reconciliation as part of a purpose statement for a Day of Reflection. This concern was expressed by participants who were supportive of a Day of Reflection and by participants who were not supportive. Reasons varied, but in general terms concerns were raised that the term reconciliation would be unacceptable to those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. For some of those consulted, there were concerns around a perceived lack of common understanding of the term reconciliation. This could result in the Day of Reflection being interpreted as requiring the forgiveness of those who have caused hurt by those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. This was seen as unfair particularly on those who have not yet come to terms with their loss and grief. This perception could possibly lead them to reject the idea of a Day of Reflection. Some of those consulted felt that reference to reconciliation suggests that a line is being drawn under the past and ignores and diminishes the ongoing hurt and pain of those most affected. For others the aspiration that a Day of Reflection could lead to reconciliation is unrealistic and the focus of a Day of Reflection should be firmly on the impact of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland on individuals.

For an additional three participants, while the inclusion of the term reconciliation was viewed as appropriate in a statement of purpose, changes were suggested to the positioning of the term reconciliation. Specifically, it was felt the term reconciliation should come last in the statement to reflect the journey from reflection towards reconciliation. Two of these participants suggested that the statement should explicitly reference “movement towards” reconciliation. Without this it was suggested that a Day of Reflection could be seen to be forcing engagement at a level which would be inappropriate for many or to be promising too much, which could lead to disillusionment rather than empowerment.

2.3.1.2 Further development of the purpose of a Day of Reflection

Most participants were convinced of the importance of developing clear principles to be included in any public statement of purpose for a Day of Reflection and of the importance of the language within which the purpose and the Day is framed. Common themes include the need for a statement which:

- is inclusive and is capable of finding resonance with the diversity of views and attitudes held across society and to enable this diversity of feeling to be expressed;
- provides a clear, thoughtful “liturgical” framing; and
- contains a simple, accessible and limited message.

There were differences in emphasis as to what the specific message contained in a statement of purpose should be. However, broadly those consulted suggested that a statement should reference several elements including:

- an acknowledgement and recognition of the suffering and loss of so many;
- the opportunity for people to commit to determining that such loss will never be allowed to happen again;
- a reminder of how far we have come as a society; and
- an opportunity to focus on moving forward to a better future.

2.3.1.3 Institutional reflection and acknowledgement

There was less support for the references in the HTR Report that in addition to individual reflection, a Day of Reflection could provide the opportunity for organisations to reflect on their role in the conflict in and about Northern Ireland and to express their responsibility and remorse. Of those who expressed a view, most participants saw the processes of institutional acknowledgement and personal reflection as separate and as requiring different mechanisms and strategies. Participants were doubtful that questions of institutional acknowledgement and personal responsibility could be addressed in a Day of Reflection and questioned both the appropriateness and achievability of trying to incorporate institutional acknowledgement into a Day of Reflection. For most, the question of institutional acknowledgement was a longer term issue and one requiring separate strategies to equip both institutions and individuals to deal with the issues involved.

2.3.2 Scope of initiative

The discussion around a Day of Reflection in the HTR Report (Healing Through Remembering 2002) suggests that the possibility of observance in Great Britain and in the Republic of Ireland should be explored. Of the 19 participants who expressed a view on this issue, the overwhelming response was that widespread observance of a Day of Reflection in either Great Britain or the Republic of Ireland would be unlikely and that work directed towards observance of a Day of Reflection in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland will probably not deliver success.

However, nine of those consulted did feel that it would be important to raise awareness of the Day of Reflection in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland and provide opportunities for individuals and groups in those areas who have been affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland to observe the day if they wish. One participant believed that such an approach would be welcomed by victims of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland now living outside Northern Ireland or those forced to leave Northern Ireland because of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. It would provide much needed

recognition and acknowledgement of those who feel they are forgotten victims of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. The importance of the involvement of the two governments and or British and Irish Heads of State, was also mentioned as having a powerful symbolic value and as providing the leadership to enable others to begin to engage with a Day of Reflection.

2.3.3 Annual holiday

Views were divided on the suggestion contained in the HTR Report (Healing Through Remembering 2002) that a Day of Reflection might become a public holiday. Of those expressing a view, five participants felt this would be an appropriate element of a Day of Reflection with most stating that an annual holiday would be achievable with government support.

The remaining twelve participants were not in favour of an annual holiday as an element of a Day of Reflection. The proposal that a Day of Reflection should be a public holiday was seen as simply not feasible and unlikely to achieve the support of government or private sector. Five of these participants raised more fundamental concerns about the implications of this proposal. Three participants stressed the importance of participation in a Day of Reflection being seen as a matter of individual choice; essentially individuals should be given the opportunity to choose to participate rather than be compelled to opt out. Establishing a holiday was perceived as limiting the choice of individuals to participate or not as they feel appropriate. In this context participants felt that a holiday could be seen as forcing people into something they may not wish to do which could be counter-productive. Two participants felt establishing a holiday would devalue the purpose of the initiative with the Day of Reflection quickly becoming "just another day off".

A further view was that a holiday might impact on the potential of a Day of Reflection by limiting the opportunities for holding events and activities in schools and workplaces on the day.

2.3.4 Proposals on the content of the day

The HTR Report (Healing Through Remembering 2002) does not detail what should happen on the Day of Reflection other than to propose an initial focus on private reflection and contemplation with a gradual movement towards collective, public and shared reflection as the time becomes right.

Of the 20 participants who gave a view about what should happen on a Day of Reflection, eight respondents supported the view that the focus of the day should be on personal reflection only. The majority view, however, was that while personal reflection should be a core element of any initiative, this reflection needs to be supported and framed by public elements of reflection. That said, there were significant differences in view as to what form these should take. Broadly, proposals were of two types, i.e. a Day of Reflection which is broad in scope versus a more limited commemorative event. Seven participants suggested the former and five suggested the latter approach. These approaches are set out in more detail below.

2.3.4.1 *Individual reflection*

Eight participants supported the view that the focus of a Day of Reflection should be on personal reflection with public events or commemorative activities perceived to be a long way off. For these participants, any form of organised or collective shared reflection was perceived as just too early. That said, a number mentioned that this should not preclude people coming together informally.

A key issue for these participants was the implication of a perceived lack of consensus on who is and who is not a victim. Concerns were expressed that many victims and groups would not be comfortable participating in an event attended by those they see as perpetrators of crimes against one section of the community. It was stated that from their perspective the continued legitimisation of acts of violence by the republican movement makes this particularly difficult.

One participant could not support a Day of Reflection event because such an event would in their view be likely to involve an ecumenical element. It was reported that including an ecumenical element would also exclude participation from the evangelical protestant community which would find this approach unacceptable.

2.3.4.2 *Day of Reflection which is broad in scope*

Seven of those who responded believed that a Day of Reflection should be broad in scope and include a range of national and local events, activities and initiatives. Most, but not all, participants who favoured a more wide-ranging approach held more positive views on the proposal for a Day of Reflection. For these participants, adding value and impact requires the Day of Reflection “to be more than a three-minute silence” and requires broad-based participation from all sections of the community. The range of activities proposed varied from person to person. However, in general terms, participants suggested that events need to span the range of religious and secular, public and private, traditional and creative elements. Specific suggestions included:

- a national civic commemoration event possibly led by speakers of international status with input from local figures perceived to transcend local divisions;
- a national conference;
- regional commemoration events;
- local church services;
- small-scale local events and activities within and between communities;
- storytelling initiatives;
- museum exhibitions and events;
- photographic exhibitions;
- media coverage and features;
- television dramas;
- culture and arts approaches at community level;
- projects and activities focused in workplaces and schools; and

- creative and popular approaches to engage young people who have no direct experiences or memories of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland including sporting events and pop concerts.

It was proposed that people and communities should be encouraged to reflect in their own way. This should be supported and framed by a range of events and activities which people can choose to take part in if they wish.

There were suggestions from some participants that rather than taking place on one day, these events might run over two to three days or be run alongside other events in the community, for example, Community Relations week. Several participants felt that integrating reflection into a broader set of initiatives would be more likely to engender a positive debate than one focussed on whether or not a Day of Reflection should take place.

2.3.4.3 A commemorative event

Five participants who responded believed that a Day of Reflection should centre on a commemorative event. Three participants who advocated this approach held more negative views on the proposal for a Day of Reflection while the rest were supportive of a Day of Reflection. For a number of participants moving towards a more broadly based approach would open the potential for fragmentation, controversy and division and be demeaning to those most affected by conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

In addition to a religious or civic event, two respondents indicated that a two-minute silence should be part of the Day of Reflection. A number of participants spoke of the power of a Day of Reflection which would involve public transport, government offices, businesses and schools pausing for two minutes of reflection.

2.3.5 Overview of views on HTR's proposals for a Day of Reflection

The diversity of views and attitudes around the idea of a Day of Reflection outlined in the last section is also reflected in views on what should happen on a Day of Reflection if this were to be held. Just over a third of respondents support the proposal outlined in the HTR Report that the focus should be on personal reflection only. However, for most respondents, it was critical that personal reflection is guided and supported by public elements of reflection. Thereafter, views were split between a broad-based approach which would provide a range of events and opportunities to enable people to reflect as they feel appropriate versus an approach which would focus on holding a commemorative event.

There was significant consensus, however, around the importance of the words used to frame a Day of Reflection and which will provide the context within which a Day of Reflection is discussed. Clearly those who took part did not underestimate the challenges associated with an appropriate framing which is not only clear, thoughtful and accessible but also capable of finding resonance with the diversity of views, attitudes, experiences, hurt and trauma of those who have directly and indirectly experienced the impact

of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. In this context the term reconciliation was seen as problematic to half of those participating.

There was significant consensus that any initiative around reflection should focus specifically on the individual, with institutional acknowledgement seen as a different process requiring different strategies. The proposal contained in the HTR Report that a Day of Reflection should become a holiday gained little support. While widespread observance of a Day of Reflection in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland was generally considered unlikely, just under half of those taking part saw merit in providing the opportunity for individuals living outside Northern Ireland to take part in a Day of Reflection if they wish.

2.4 Views on practical steps needed

While nine of those interviewed had strong reservations about holding a Day of Reflection at this time or in the near future, most participants gave their views on the practical steps they felt would need to be taken when appropriate. Views were also sought on whether and in what way activity around a Day of Reflection or similar initiative should be co-ordinated; how this should be managed, and who should be involved; the need for consultation and how this could be taken forward; resource implications; and realistic planning timeframes.

An overview of responses is outlined below.

2.4.1 Proposed models to progress a Day of Reflection

There was no shortage of proposals for the key steps to be taken, and the structures, tasks and organisational models for progressing activity around a Day of Reflection. There were as many models as participants.

The types of approaches put forward by respondents did not relate to overall views on the proposal for a Day of Reflection. In many cases it is possible to discern similar approaches to progressing a Day of Reflection between those who were broadly supportive and those who were not supportive of the concept. Neither did approaches correspond directly to views on the content of a Day of Reflection, with similar approaches suggested regardless of views on what should happen on the day.

Some participants who viewed a Day of Reflection as neither feasible nor realistic for some time to come focused on the practical steps they believed would be useful short of holding a Day of Reflection. Those more favourable to a Day of Reflection were more likely than those less favourable to detail the tasks and structures necessary to take a Day of Reflection forward.

While no one model was repeated exactly, it is possible to identify some general themes in responses, including the importance of:

- prior engagement with the political parties to establish and secure political support before setting a Day of Reflection process in motion;

- identifying and securing the support of key constituencies; and
- establishing a broadly based structure to co-ordinate and drive activity around a Day of Reflection.

There was less agreement on:

- whether broad-based consultation or public debate before implementing a Day of Reflection process is required; and
- who should initiate a Day of Reflection process or debate and what their remit should be.

These common themes and points of difference are discussed in more detail in the sections below.

2.4.2 Common themes

2.4.2.1 *Political support*

Ten respondents mentioned the importance of securing political support as a key first step in activity around a Day of Reflection or similar activity. This engagement was seen as essential both to ensure political leadership around any initiative and to ensure that a Day of Reflection does not become embroiled in cross-party politics.

For most of these participants, engagement with the parties and establishing likely support should precede any substantial activity around a Day of Reflection. Indeed, a number of participants were explicit that if “in principle” support for a Day of Reflection could not be secured and assured at the outset no further action on a Day of Reflection could or should take place. Views varied on whether it would be more helpful to engage the parties on specific proposals rather than the idea of a Day of Reflection in an abstract sense. For a number of participants, political support for a Day of Reflection was seen as more appropriate than involving the parties in planning and organising a Day of Reflection.

2.4.2.2 *Key constituency support*

In addition to the support of political parties, 16 respondents identified a number of key institutions and bodies critical to the success of any initiative. Participants saw these bodies as needing to be engaged and encouraged to provide support and/or be actively involved in co-ordinating activity.

The support of the churches was identified as key by most respondents. Thereafter, views varied but consistent patterns developed of key constituencies needed. These included the Irish and/or British governments; victims groups; the trade union movement; employer organisations, including the Confederation of Business Industry, the Federation of Small Businesses and local chambers of commerce; the Community Relations Council; ex-prisoner groups; Ulster Farmers Union; local councils, trauma advisory panels; community groups; sporting organisations; museums; schools and other education establishment; the media; the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland; the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action; and other umbrella organisations representing community groups.

2.4.2.3 *Planning and co-ordination of a Day of Reflection*

High-level co-ordination of activity around a Day of Reflection was seen as important by most participants who indicated a view. Fifteen of those who responded indicated that a Day of Reflection needs to be taken forward by a broad-based structure or committee that is seen to be representative of society. That said, there were various opinions on who should be involved. Representation from the main churches, the voluntary and community sector, employer organisations, victims groups and the trade union movement were the most commonly mentioned groups.

2.4.3 Points of difference

2.4.3.1 *Consultation and public debate*

As previously outlined, participants identified the need to consult political parties and government. There was recognition too of the importance of taking soundings from key constituencies, in particular from the victim sector in advance of progressing a Day of Reflection. For some, discussions should be based around solid proposals; for others, soundings should be taken on the concept of a Day of Reflection. However, views were more wide ranging on the requirement for extensive consultation or public debate in advance of progressing a Day of Reflection or similar initiative.

Of the 20 participants who expressed a view on the need for consultation, eight participants perceived the design of an extensive consultation process as a critical first step in realising a Day of Reflection. For these participants, consultation was seen as adding distinct value to what could be achieved in a Day of Reflection itself. A Day of Reflection was perceived as requiring a long lead-in period, particularly in view of the fact that for many people a Day of Reflection would be a new concept and one which they would need time to question, consider and form a view on. In this context, an extensive consultation process was seen as providing an opportunity:

- for open and honest debate;
- for everyone to express views and concerns about a Day of Reflection and to reflect on what they have heard;
- to counter misconceptions about a Day of Reflection;
- to raise awareness of the key issues and messages around a Day of Reflection;
- to enable people to identify with the concept;
- to build involvement and ownership of the idea;
- to build momentum and an eventual state of readiness for a Day of Reflection;
- to identify content that most people are comfortable with; and
- to identify and assess levels of public and institutional support to inform decisions on whether a Day of Reflection should be pursued.

Some of these participants highlighted the need for careful planning around an extensive consultation process and of the resources necessary to ensure that the process was constructive. In particular, one participant highlighted the challenges and risks associated with developing a process that would engage

people and encourage them to think about the issues around a Day of Reflection. One participant suggested that developing partnership approaches with regional community organisations and associations could be helpful in maximising public participation. Another participant highlighted the need for the consultation process to be underpinned by integrity and openness, with any subsequent decisions around a Day of Reflection seen as taking into account the outcome of that process.

Rather than suggesting an extensive process, four participants felt that a more limited approach would be more appropriate, concentrating on key constituencies and stakeholders such as victims groups or more focused consultations aimed at raising public debate around a Day of Reflection. Underpinning these responses was a concern that consultation should be managed sensitively and in a low-key way.

Two participants, who believed a Day of Reflection was not appropriate or feasible for a significant period of time, indicated there was merit in periodically encouraging and supporting public debate around a Day of Reflection. From this perspective, rather than a focus on how an initiative should be taken forward, the debate should centre on key questions or issues around the purpose of a Day of Reflection, who should participate, what precisely should be reflected upon, and what contribution could be made by a Day of Reflection.

For the remaining six respondents who expressed a view, an extensive consultation process or process of public debate on a Day of Reflection was seen as either unnecessary or incapable of achieving consensus. These respondents felt that a Day of Reflection would be unlikely to result from such a process.

2.4.3.2 Beginning a Day of Reflection process or debate

There were a range of views on how a Day of Reflection process should begin and who should drive this process.

Drivers of a Day of Reflection process

Overall, responses suggest that a Day of Reflection could be led by different organisations or drivers at different stages in the process. Thus, for example, the initiator or catalyst for discussions or general soundings around a Day of Reflection may not necessarily be the driver of later stages of the process such as consultation, co-ordinating a Day of Reflection, or holding an event.

Public perceptions of who initiates and drives discussion around a Day of Reflection and who subsequently calls or announces the Day of Reflection were mentioned by a number of participants as key to the success of any activity around a Day of Reflection. Three participants explicitly emphasised the importance of all organisations in leadership roles around a Day of Reflection being perceived to be credible in all sections of society and as transcending community divisions.

In terms of key first steps, of the 18 participants expressing a view on who should drive the process forward, seven stated that HTR was the appropriate organisation to take a leadership role in this.

Five participants believed that a broad-based committee would be preferable, with three of these participants indicating that HTR could take the lead in establishing this committee. For these participants, the composition of a representative core committee would be a key factor in the success of a Day of Reflection. It was proposed that the committee should comprise a membership of influential figures who could play a key role in building momentum and support by engaging key institutions and other influential individuals in their sectors of influence. Such a committee was seen as also playing a role in developing leadership around a Day of Reflection in key institutions and at community level.

Four respondents viewed government or a government agency as the most appropriate driver. A possible role for the Victim's Commissioner, the Victim's Unit, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) or the two governments was mentioned. One of these participants could see the merits of a "top down" approach but also the merits of a "bottom up" approach and was unclear about which process would be better. Two participants suggested that after the initial planning stages, establishing a charitable trust to run events or support a Day of Reflection could be considered.

Role of the driver of a Day of Reflection process

There were also diverging views as to the first steps that should be taken to progress a Day of Reflection and the specific role of any co-ordinating body. Of the 18 participants expressing a view, six saw the principal role as setting the framework or parameters of a Day of Reflection. The role of this body would be around establishing core values, developing the rationale and purpose of reflection activities, and providing specific written guidance on how people might participate if they chose to do so. This written guidance could cover both individual reflection and collective reflection.

Six respondents saw a role for a body that would consult key stakeholders and possibly carry out an extensive consultation process. This body would then discuss and agree on the content of a Day of Reflection or similar initiative, plan what would happen on the day and be responsible for identifying and implementing the practical steps necessary to make this happen through organising events and/or co-ordinating a wide range of community-based activity. Two participants, who suggested more broad-based initiatives, saw the need for additional structures involving, for example, regional committees reporting on local plans and arrangements to a central core co-ordinating committee. One participant highlighted what he saw as the need for one organisation to take the lead albeit within a broad-based committee.

For four respondents the role should be to take soundings as appropriate, but to focus primarily on organising a Day of Reflection event.

One respondent stated that the role should be focused on initiating debate around the concept only, with a further respondent indicating that the role should be to lobby government to hold a Day of Reflection. A further respondent suggested that there was a need for a long period of planning and preparatory work in advance of a Day of Reflection being taken forward at some point in the future, possibly by the reconstituted councils.

2.4.4 Resource implications

There were fewer responses to the precise resource requirements for proposals. The level and type of resourcing varied according to participants' views on how the Day of Reflection should be progressed and what specific role any co-ordinating committee should play. However, in general terms, resources were perceived to be required for planning, consultation, public relations, publicity and marketing and staffing. Depending on the precise proposals for a Day of Reflection, resources for the support of community level events, events management, training and the development and publication of resource packs were also mentioned. Those who expressed a view believed that significant resource implications would be associated with holding a Day of Reflection and that a high level of organisation would be required.

As regards the level and type of staffing required, in general terms, in the early stages of the process, the main staffing need was seen to be sufficient resources to engage and persuade others to pledge support and involvement and/or develop documentation. For those recommending a centrally co-ordinated event or series of events, there would be a need for additional staff resources to co-ordinate the administrative and organisational arrangements. For those recommending an approach focusing on the production of materials and support, the main staffing needs were in terms of training and development staff.

2.4.5 Meeting resource requirements

A number of respondents thought that there would be merit in exploring whether some or all of the funding requirements for a Day of Reflection could be met by government. Government commitment to the Shared Future Strategy (Community Relations Unit 2005) was suggested as one policy mechanism through which support might be achieved. For example, it was proposed that there would be merit in discussing with the Community Relations Council whether the support of a Day of Reflection might be part of its resourcing to Local Councils under Shared Future commitments. It was also suggested that seed funding might be sought from a range of sources to support the early stages of a Day of Reflection and also for local events. One participant suggested the establishment of a fund administered separately from the Day of Reflection committee to support local events to which community groups and others could apply for support for smaller-scale activities.

2.4.6 Time scales

On the assumption that concerns and conditions around a Day of Reflection outlined in earlier sections would be met, most of those respondents who expressed a view on time scales for implementation thought that 18 months to two years would be required to implement a successful initiative.

2.4.7 Overview of views on practical steps needed

There was a range of ideas and models around how a Day of Reflection should be taken forward. Common themes include the importance of the support of the political parties and other key constituencies, and the need for a broad-based structure to co-ordinate activity. There were significant differences of view on the extent and depth of prior consultation or public debate in advance of a Day of Reflection and different views on who should initiate a Day of Reflection process or debate.

What was clear was that participants viewed activity around a Day of Reflection as requiring a careful and sensitive approach and a high level of co-ordination supported by specific resources over a period of 18 months to two years.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Introduction

This study has attempted to explore in some depth views on proposals for a Day of Reflection as a means to support healing. Views were sought and key issues explored with 23 participants drawn from a range of sectors, key constituencies and interests. It is of course difficult and unwise to draw any definite conclusions from this small sample of interviews. It is unclear, for example, as to what extent the views expressed here are likely to be replicated across society, and how widely held these might be or the balance of views in support of a Day of Reflection. However, the interviews provide useful pointers about the general context within which discussions and decisions on a Day of Reflection will take place. They have enabled the identification of a range of themes and issues which are likely to be reflected to some extent more generally and have allowed for a deep exploration of these themes.

Themes emerging from this study echo key themes that have emerged from international experience. These include the importance of the timing of an initiative, of careful planning, of content which has resonance and substance, of the role of civil society, and of consultation. Importantly, also, the interviews have gone some way to reveal the difficulty and complexity of issues related to a Day of Reflection for the individual and for society more generally, and of the need for a sensitive and careful approach to these issues.

What follows is a discussion around the implications of some of the themes emerging from the consultation process on how further discussion and activity on a Day of Reflection might be taken forward. This is followed by a final section containing some specific proposals for HTR on how it might progress the recommendation for a Day of Reflection.

3.2 What is achievable in the context of a diversity of views

The interviews have illustrated a range of views around a Day of Reflection, from those that are supportive to those that reject the idea. The range of obstacles, barriers, concerns and challenges to holding a Day of Reflection, even among those who are broadly supportive of the idea, and the diversity of views about what is and what is not appropriate, suggests that building universal consensus on a Day of Reflection as an appropriate response to the conflict in and about Northern Ireland is not achievable at this time or in the near future.

Rather, the information gathered in this exercise suggests that progressing a Day of Reflection will require an approach that is informed by an awareness and acceptance of the differing perspectives on and state of readiness to engage in a Day of Reflection. From this perspective, accepting and acknowledging diversity points to a Day of Reflection which:

- provides a multiplicity of opportunities for reflection for all who wish to avail themselves of them in the way that is most appropriate to them (including opportunities for supported personal reflection and opportunities for more collective participation for those who wish it);
- recognises and accepts that not everyone can or will feel able to participate at this time;
- ensures that people do not feel they are being forced or being pressured to engage but provides opportunities for reflection as and when they are felt appropriate; and
- develops and evolves over a lengthy time span.

At the core of this approach is a recognition that readiness and capacity to engage with the issues surrounding a Day of Reflection will vary considerably from person to person, from organisation to organisation, and both within and between communities.

3.3 Leadership of a Day of Reflection

The views of participants to this study echo international experience around the importance of leadership from civil society around a Day of Reflection. The majority view appears to be that a Day of Reflection should be driven by civil society rather than by a “top down” approach, i.e. by government or political parties. There is recognition that a Day of Reflection could be led by different drivers at different stages of the process. However, the involvement and support of government around calling a Day of Reflection and what should happen on the day will clearly be a key and critical element in the success of a Day of Reflection.

3.4 Building stakeholder support

Progressing and building support for a Day of Reflection will require debate and the development of a common understanding and consensus around core principles among the political parties and key stakeholders. Key stakeholders identified in this exercise include the churches, government, victims groups, and a range of civil society groupings and interests. The wide range of views expressed by those drawn from many of these sectors suggests there is a need for discussion and debate around key concepts and the key elements of any initiative. While some of these stakeholders may have considered the idea of a Day of Reflection to some extent, the interviews suggest that this is more likely to have taken place within organisations rather than between organisations.

The findings from this study suggest that, as a first step, activity might be most usefully directed at providing opportunities for stakeholders to discuss and debate concepts and issues around a Day of Reflection, with a view to building consensus around draft principles to underpin the day. It is suggested that these principles should be based on the approach outlined above; i.e. one which respects and acknowledges the diversity of views around this issue. This would provide the scope for constructive discussion and the possibility of consensus around a rationale for a Day of Reflection that would address in more detail its specific contribution to healing and a redrafted and more substantial statement of purpose.

3.5 Co-ordination

The interviews illustrate that issues around a Day of Reflection are difficult, complex and sensitive. This needs to be reflected in careful planning and co-ordination of any activity concerned with progressing a Day of Reflection and what happens on the day. Co-ordination will be required at a strategic level around the development of principles, rationale, purpose and a framework for possible options for the day. Co-ordination will also be required at a local level around the delivery of specific events or elements of the day. An important issue for consideration will be how individual needs for support which may be triggered by a Day of Reflection can be met.

The interviews have pointed to the importance of co-ordination and high level support for and leadership of a Day of Reflection. This suggests that a broad-based committee or working group focused on developing these principles and concepts would be a useful way forward. The overall purpose of this group would be to develop a framework for a Day of Reflection providing clarity on purpose, rationale and how these ideas should be incorporated into what happens on the day.

One option would be to develop a core principles document or charter. The interviews have highlighted the care with which any documentation or statement around a Day of Reflection will need to be prepared. The language used to frame a Day of Reflection will provide the context within which the day is discussed and will be critical to the success of any activity around this issue. The interviews suggest that it would be important for government, including the local political parties, to endorse these principles.

3.6 Resources to support a Day of Reflection

Within the approach outlined above, core principles for a Day of Reflection will need to be incorporated into a wide range of events and activities. In this regard, practical guidance could be helpful in providing support to individuals, groups and organisations who wish to participate in the day in private reflection or in more collective public events and activities.

It is proposed that there would be merit in supporting both private and more public reflection through the development and dissemination of practical guidance and templates. Templates could usefully be tailored for key stakeholders whose support for, leadership, active involvement and participation in, and co-ordination of activities at a local level will be critical to the success of the Day of Reflection. Thus, for example, guidelines might be produced tailored for local councils which would contain the core principles and detail how these might be translated into events and initiatives at local council level. These could include guidance on points to consider in relation to co-ordinating activities and who should be involved, local consultation and participation, together with sources of practical support and guidance. Similar guidelines might be produced for schools, museums, local community groups, voluntary organisations, churches and so forth. Practical guidelines might also be produced containing pointers on how to organise specific kinds of events.

These guidelines could be usefully supported by providing practical advice and support to groups considering holding Days of Reflection events or activities. This might be achieved through the provision of targeted training - through training Community Relations Officers working in local councils, for example.

3.7 Public debate and awareness around a Day of Reflection

While most of those interviewed had previously considered the idea of a Day of Reflection or related issues, the interviews have highlighted that participants believe that for most people a Day of Reflection is likely to be a new concept and one that they may not have previously considered. For some of those interviewed, this pointed to the need for an extensive consultation process around the idea of a Day of Reflection and what should happen on the day.

Issues around how consultation is managed and whether a centrally driven process or locally based approaches might be more appropriate will need careful consideration. There are clearly benefits associated with an extensive consultation approach. In particular, it could provide a means of assessing levels of public support for a Day of Reflection and provide an opportunity for all to contribute their views and concerns. Consultation could also provide a valuable means of informing and raising awareness around a Day of Reflection, address any misunderstandings, and build involvement and ownership around the idea.

There are also clear challenges around an extensive process, not least the challenge of a sensitive approach, which could engage people and encourage them to think about the issues around a Day of Reflection and the considerable resources required. An alternative might be more locally based consultation supported by core guidance, which enables people to engage at a local level on their own terms.

4. PROPOSALS TO HEALING THROUGH REMEMBERING

4.1 Introduction

The previous section has discussed the implications of some of the themes emerging from the consultation process on how further discussion and activity on a Day of Reflection might be taken forward. Holding a Day of Reflection will clearly require involving many stakeholders, including the two governments and the political parties. In this context HTR is one of many players. What follows are proposals for HTR on the specific contribution it might make to realising a Day of Reflection. Drawing on the discussion set out in the previous section, proposals are set out which are considered as being consistent with its remit and role to date in seeking to identify and document possible mechanisms and realisable options for healing through remembering.

What is outlined below are proposals for a phased approach to the issues and questions around a Day of Reflection, which would enable HTR, key stakeholders and interested organisations and individuals to make informed decisions on this issue. Up to four phases are proposed. In each case, goals, indicative time lines, suggested activities, target groups, outcomes and resource implications are outlined.

For completeness, the phases begin with the initiation of a process through to a final implementation phase for the first Day of Reflection. However, there will clearly be a requirement within each phase to take stock and decide whether there is merit in moving to the next phase, whether in light of experience there is a need to refocus activity and whether some or all future activity might be more appropriately driven by another agency or group. In particular, there will be a need to give consideration to the need for an extensive public consultation exercise which is the focus of Phase 3.

4.2 Stage 1 Initiating debate on a Day of Reflection (3 months)

It is proposed that a first step for HTR should be to consider the contents and implications of this report. Thereafter HTR should set out its thoughts and response in a discussion paper. This discussion paper should set the parameters or framework for debate around a Day of Reflection and outline the core issues for consideration. The material and proposals contained in this report should provide a starting point for the discussion paper. The discussion paper might respond to or build on the proposals made in this report around the proposed shape of a Day of Reflection and how this might be progressed. It might also include some preliminary development of the ideas set out in the HTR Report on the issue of a Day of Reflection, drawing on the material and discussion within this report. In particular:

- the rationale for a Day of Reflection including its specific contribution to healing;
- the specific outcomes which will be achieved;
- a revised statement of purpose;
- a statement of core principles underpinning the initiative;
- the specific value of an initiative to those most affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland and the broader society; and

- how HTR proposes to take forward work around a Day of Reflection, including a detailed plan.

A key element of this phase of activity should also be engagement with key constituencies and stakeholders including the political parties, two governments and victims groups on the contents of this report and HTR's discussion paper. Activity should focus on encouraging debate on the proposals in the discussion paper and the potential of and challenges for an initiative in this area. It should also focus on identifying interested partners prepared to become actively involved in co-ordinating a deeper and longer-term process of discussion and development.

Engagement with key constituencies should involve one-to-one meetings initially. Consideration should also be given to raising awareness of this report and HTR's discussion paper more broadly through the media and events around publication; for example, through seminars or workshops.

Target groups

It is recommended that representatives of the main churches, the two governments, political parties and victims groups are engaged at this stage.

Outcomes

A key outcome from this phase will be the identification of issues for resolution around a Day of Reflection as identified by key stakeholders. A further output of this phase will be the identification of possible partners to take forward further activity.

Resource implications

It is assumed that HTR can develop a discussion paper, arrange for dissemination of the report and discussion paper and undertake consultations from within its own resources or with limited consultancy support, on the assumption the Day of Reflection Sub Group would take a leadership role in consultations. It is recommended that HTR review the current membership of this group to ensure that all key constituencies are adequately represented.

4.3 Stage 2 Developing core principles (3-6 months)

The purpose of this phase should be to develop core principles or a charter for a Day of Reflection which has the support of key constituencies. Drawing on its consultations in phase one, HTR should play a leadership role in bringing together a broad-based group of key stakeholders interested in working in partnership to progress the development of core principles for a Day of Reflection. The focus of this phase should be to develop the concepts and ideas in HTR's discussion paper and to develop consensus around these among the group. Consideration should also be given to incorporating proposals on how individual needs for support that may be triggered by a Day of Reflection could be met. Thereafter, activity should focus on a broader consultation with key constituencies with a view to refining the core principles and building support for a Day of Reflection.

A key issue for consideration at this phase will be the question of consultation, the scale and type of consultation required, how this can be managed and designed, and whether the committee should take this forward or whether this should be managed by one of the membership organisations. Activity should also be directed to identifying sources of funding for future stages of activity to support an extensive consultation process, if this is deemed appropriate and/or for the support of a Day of Reflection on an annual basis. Activity should also be focused on identifying sources of funding to create a separately administered fund to support local events and consultation and on identifying who could administer such a fund.

This group could remain a working group serviced and supported by HTR, become an additional project Sub Group of HTR or join the existing members of HTR's Day of Reflection Sub Group. Its role would be to oversee the production of a core principles document and be responsible for consulting key constituencies and identifying and accessing sources of funding.

Target groups

It is recommended that representatives of the main churches, victims' groups, the trade union movement, CRC, the voluntary and community sectors, and the business organisations are consulted at this stage and that the political parties and two governments are kept informed of progress.

Outcomes

The aim of this phase will be the achievement of a set of core principles or a charter for a Day of Reflection which has the support of key constituencies and a committed broad-based grouping to take forward activity around these principles. A further output will be an agreed and costed plan for future stages of activity, including consultation and/or the support of the first and subsequent Days of Reflection.

Resource implications

The main resource requirement for HTR initially would be in the recruitment of members to the project committee. Thereafter, it is assumed that HTR would require additional resources to co-ordinate and support the work of the committee, develop a consultation schedule, arrange and participate in consultations, prepare discussion and option papers, and identify and access funding as appropriate. It is recommended that consideration should be given to appointing a project co-ordinator, possibly on a consultancy basis. The post holder would report to the committee but on a day-to-day basis there should be line management responsibility in either HTR or in one of the other committee organisations.

4.4 Stage 3 Consultation (9-12 months)

If extensive consultation is deemed appropriate, implementation would await the outcome and review of the consultation. If extensive consultation is deemed as not appropriate, activity should move to Stage 4 which is focused on developing resources, including practical guidance and resource packs to support reflection, developing targeted training programmes around these resource packs, and continuing work to build support for a Day of Reflection.

An extensive consultation process should focus on providing opportunities for a broad-based engagement with the core principles for a Day of Reflection. The process should also focus on both informing and encouraging debate around the issue, including how individual needs for support can be met. Activity should be focused on the design of an appropriate and constructive process, including the structures required to oversee a significant consultation exercise. The specific activity to be undertaken by the committee would depend on the outcomes of discussions on how the consultation should be undertaken. In particular, whether the committee would have a role in overseeing consultation or whether this would be taken forward by a third party (for example by one of the members of the committee). However, it would be likely to include:

- accessing sources of funding for the consultation process;
- developing a consultation process including a communications plan;
- developing resources and materials for distribution or use by local groups;
- raising awareness of the process through the print and broadcast media;
- developing partnerships with sectoral organisations to assist in the consultation process;
- promoting debate through a process of community events, media coverage and features, focused workshops at community level and in key sectors facilitated by partnership organisations;
- targeted consultation with key constituencies including political parties, government and victims' groups; and
- preparing and disseminating a summary consultation report reflecting the views of participants.

Target groups

These will include the public, civil society, including community groups and voluntary organisations, victims' groups, ex-prisoner groups, faith-based organisations, voluntary and community sectors, trade unions, business organisations, and community groups.

Outcomes

This phase would produce a range of outcomes including:

- widespread public awareness of proposals for a Day of Reflection;
- a detailed understanding of likely public and institutional support for a Day of Reflection;
- final proposals which would respond to and take account of public views on a Day of Reflection; and
- the possibility of building momentum and support for the concept.

Resource implications

The resource implications of an extensive consultation process would be significant and likely to require a staff team and operational budget. While the precise requirements would depend on the consultation plan, it is proposed that a dedicated staff team would be required to co-ordinate activity and to ensure a process of sufficient depth and range. This would be likely to require appointing a project co-ordinator together with at least one education officer/outreach officer with administration support. The scale of the

operational budget would depend on the consultation plan but is likely to be significant, with line items required for events, publications, advertising and communications.

4.5 Stage 4 Planning and implementation (12 months)

Activity should be focused on establishing a date for a Day of Reflection, developing resources to support reflection, developing and providing a targeted training programme, building support and awareness in advance of a Day of Reflection, guidance on planning local initiatives and consultation and developing monitoring arrangements to document, assess and evaluate the Day of Reflection on an ongoing basis. Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders and constituencies including the media, political parties and the two governments would continue to be undertaken.

Resources could include:

- a publication containing the core principles to support private reflection;
- resource packs for a broad range of stakeholder groups detailing how the core principles or charter for a Day of Reflection can be incorporated into events and activities;
- raising awareness and encouraging engagement on issues around a the Day of Reflection at a local level;
- practical guidance on organising and publicising events;
- a good practice guide on consulting on Day of Reflection issues; and
- briefing packs for the media detailing the core principles and providing details of a range of events and activities planned for the Day of Reflection.

This phase would also incorporate developing and delivering training programmes targeted at individuals in key sectors who might play a role in facilitating and supporting groups and organisations becoming involved in participating in a Day or Reflection, or those who might play a role in organising activities or events.

Target groups

Key constituencies and stakeholders should continue to be target groups. Focused engagement with the media should also be undertaken.

Resource implications

The main resource implications would be the core costs associated with staffing and an operational budget to support publications, communications and training. In terms of core staffing costs, this would include the costs associated with employing a project co-ordinator, an education officer to develop materials and a training officer with appropriate administrative support. Specific professional consultancy advice on communications would also be required.

The most significant resource would be the establishment of a fund to support small, more localised community events. It is proposed that this fund should be administered by an appropriate body. Such a

body could be the OFMDFM or the Community Relations Council, which would also carry resource implications for the organisation concerned.

Outcomes

The outcome is a well planned and executed Day of Reflection which achieves public participation within and across local communities perceived to have contributed to healing.

Appendix I Extract on a Day of Reflection from the Report of the Healing Through Remembering Project 2002

5.4 Day of Reflection

5.4.1 Recommendation

We recommend an annual 'Day of Reflection' be established. The day will serve as a universal gesture of reconciliation, reflection, acknowledgement and recognition of the suffering of so many arising from the conflict in and about Northern Ireland.

5.4.2 Purpose

The Day of Reflection would be promoted as an inclusive, positive event that would emphasise a commitment to a peaceful new society. As one of the submissions to the project commented: "Remember the tragic events of our past so that we can stop them from recurring, remember but change" [13].

It would be a source of strength and support to those who have been adversely affected by the conflict, especially those who have felt forgotten within the progression towards a peaceful society. People would be free to reflect and remember what they want on the day in a non-confrontational manner.

It is envisioned that initially the Day of Reflection would be focused on reflection and contemplation. People would be encouraged to remember and reflect on the causes and effects of the conflict in about Northern Ireland in a peaceful, tolerant, respectful and introspective way. Initially it would not focus on public commemoration and remembrance.

The Day of Reflection would be a time for organisations and individuals to reflect upon their role in the conflict and look toward reconciliation for our society in the future. The day would not only primarily focus on remembering but groups, institutions, churches, political parties and other organisations would be encouraged to express their responsibility and remorse for the conflict, moving forward to a new society characterised by non-violence.

The purpose of the Day of Reflection could develop over the years, moving from personal and organisational reflection to becoming more collective, public and shared among communities, groups, churches and organisations. Public commemorative activities could be undertaken as the time becomes right.

The specific purposes of the Day of Reflection would be to:

- Allow the people of Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain an opportunity to remember all those who have been adversely affected by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland;
- Learn lessons arising from that conflict;

- Provide an opportunity for people to remember the events of the past in a non-confrontational, dignified and respectful manner;
- Provide society with an occasion to acknowledge and recognise the suffering of so many arising from the conflict in and about Northern Ireland;
- Initially be a day for private individual reflection, but develop towards ensuring a collective and public dimension whereupon many—sometimes from opposing perspectives—would be remembered and commemorated on the same day, and
- Undertake peace building, contemplative reflection and community relations’ activities and events. Respectful and collective commemorative projects could be co-ordinated in every Local Council area throughout the islands.

5.4.3 Principles and values

The following principles and values should underpin this initiative:

- Commitment to a totally inclusive and positive day, emphasising a commitment to a new peaceful society and non-triumphal forms of commemoration and remembering;
- Commitment to involve and work with groups and organisations at all community levels;
- Commitment to positive ways of reflecting on our past, to promote change in our society so as to enrich all communities affected by or part of the conflict;
- Obligation to provide space for reflection and commemoration and be tolerant of people with different views, political aspirations and perspectives of the conflict;
- Responsibility to incorporate those from different ethnic backgrounds into all activities;
- Commitment to remember and reflect with dignity, respect and sensitivity, and
- Commitment to using reflection and commemoration as a means of easing the pain rather than incitement to further conflict.

5.4.4 Obstacles

It is important to be sensitive to the feelings and experiences of those who have been adversely affected by what they have experienced as a result of the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. For some, it might be too early to participate in a Day of Reflection because they may still be in the process of coming to terms with how the conflict has impacted on their lives. Some may not wish their loved ones to be remembered on the same day as others. Others may feel that it is premature to promote such an event given that they feel the conflict is still ongoing.

A further concern may be that the Day of Reflection would be taken over by local and national politicians, paramilitaries, or the State, to get their own particular viewpoint across, thus reducing the impact of the central themes of reconciliation and the awareness-raising of the need for healing. There will also be a cost factor.

That said, the idea of the Day focusing—at least initially—on reflection might set aside some of these concerns. The initial reconciliation and reflective dimension of the day will need to be emphasised. The day should not be a string of exclusivist community activities and potentially offensive commemorations.

Rather, people and communities should be encouraged to personally reflect, thus allowing people to use the day in their own way, in peace, and without others if they so choose. The privacy dimension is central to the success of the day. There would need to be support services for those who may feel isolated as a result of the day.

In terms of cost, although it is recognised that there will be costs associated with the day, these will need to be weighed against the cumulative value of establishing a more tolerant, stable and reconciled society. In addition, corporate funding should be encouraged as a way of getting large businesses to engage in reflection on their role in the past and future.

5.4.5 Proposed activities

In the initial one to three years of the Day of Reflection it is suggested that the day be a day of genuine reflection on the past; i.e. what has happened to individuals and how we each are somewhere complicit in the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. Initially, the day would be one for private reflection and people would be free to reflect (religiously or otherwise) in an appropriate manner of their choosing. In the initial years of holding the Day of Reflection public events would not be encouraged.

Beyond the first one to three years, it may evolve towards more inclusive and collective forms of remembering and commemoration. Programmes of events may be organised. It is suggested, for example, that Community Relations Departments of Local Councils throughout the islands engage in the process of organising local events in keeping with the theme of reflection and the particular focus of the day itself. A co-ordinating body could assist with the provision of resource material and suggestions.

Given the success in recent years of special fund-raising days, it is proposed that the gorse bush—an impartial and native symbol—be promoted as an emblem for the day. People would be encouraged to buy a lapel-pin or buttonhole of the gorse to symbolise the day. The proceeds from sales of the pin would go towards defraying the expenses of public relations. The private sector should also be encouraged to support the day financially.

5.4.6 Next steps

To realise the above recommendation we suggest the following course of action be considered:

- 1) Promote debate at all levels on the value of a Day of Reflection;
- 2) Lobby and discuss with the relevant legislative assemblies, trade unions, and employer organisations the feasibility of a Day of Reflection as conceptualised in this proposal;

- 3) Encourage political and community leaders to take responsibility for obtaining an annual officially recognised public holiday for Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. The preference would be that a Monday would be chosen.
- 4) Hold a debate in relevant government bodies, the Assembly and the Civic Forum on the principle of a Day of Reflection;
- 5) Legislate for the establishment of a Day of Reflection;
- 6) Establish an inclusive working group to help ensure the central message of reflection for the day is adequately put forward in the initial period of the observing the day;
- 7) Formalise and commemorate the first Day of Reflection;
- 8) The inclusive working group established under (6) could help expand, over the years, the Day from private reflection to shared reflection and reconciliation. The working group could undertake community consultation to develop an acceptable programme of events, and
- 9) Hold subsequent Days of Reflection.

Appendix II Terms of Reference

Aims

- 1 **Assess views on practical steps which need to be taken to make the Day of Reflection a reality**
- 2 **Draft an action plan for implementation including timeline, resources and necessary relationships**

Including:

- views on key interest groups who need to be engaged;
- views and perspectives on the Day of Reflection recommendation;
- views on purpose of the day, scope (e.g. NI or all islands basis), approach (national versus small scale initiative initially), content;
- assessment of obstacles and opportunity factors for implementing recommendation;
- views on most appropriate vehicle for driving the recommendation forward;
- key elements of approach e.g. suggestions for engagement with key interest groups, developing partnerships, overcoming obstacles and building on opportunity factors, messaging;
- financial and other resource needs; and
- timelines for implementation.

Outcomes

- report setting out views on Day of Reflection recommendation highlighting points of consensus and difference;
- an analysis of the potential for implementing Day of Reflection recommendation now or at a future point; and
- an action plan setting out options to progress the recommendation and key steps including timelines, resources and necessary relationships.

Approach

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Phase 1 | Desk research to assess context and international good practice. |
| Phase 2 | Interviews to assess views and identify practical steps;
Interim report-provide opportunity for discussion with Sub Group. |
| Phase 3 | Focus groups to test and validate proposals;
Draft report and action plan followed by consultation and discussion with Sub Group and HTR. |
| Phase 4 | Final Report. |

Appendix III Interview themes

Overall views on the general idea of a Day of Reflection

Have you previously been involved in days of reflection/remembrance? What have you learned from your involvement? How could the event have been improved?

To what extent has a debate on the idea of a Day of Reflection/remembrance taken place within your own organisation?

Do you think a Day of Reflection can make a contribution or is of value in the broader community relations and political contexts?

What would be the disadvantages/risks of a single event for all?

Do you think it is possible to progress the idea of a Day of Reflection in the current context? What obstacles would need to be overcome?

Views on key elements of HTR recommendation

What do you know about the work of HTR? Were you aware of HTR's recommendation for a Day of Reflection?

What are your views on HTR's thoughts on the purpose of Day of Reflection?

What are your views on the proposed scope of the Day of Reflection? Is an annual officially recognised holiday in NI/ROI/GB appropriate and how could this be achieved?

What do you think should happen on the day?

Who should be involved?

Do you agree that the day should focus on personal reflection initially and move to collective remembrance over time? Is a process of moving towards collective remembrance possible/ desirable?

Do you have any concerns about the proposal for a Day of Reflection?

Practical steps

What do you think are the key steps which need to be taken to make a Day of Reflection a reality?

How should personal and organisational reflection be co-ordinated? Which are the key groups which need to be involved?

Is there a need for consultation and who could take this forward?

Which key interest groups/institutions need to be engaged and how should these be approached?

Do you see a role for you/your organisation?

What would be the main resource implications around achieving a Day of Reflection? How could these be met?

What would be a realistic timescale for implementing this initiative?

Appendix IV List of those consulted

John Clarke	Victims Unit, OFMDFM
David Bolton	Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma & Transformation
Tom Gillan	NIC-ICTU
Glyn Roberts	Federation of Small Business
May Blood	Greater Shankill Early Years Project
Duncan Morrow	Community Relations Council
Avila Kilmurray	Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
David Porter	Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland
David Stephens	Corrymeela
Ann Hope	Personal capacity
Maureen Hetherington	The Junction
Seamus McAleavey	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
Niall Fitzduff	Rural Community Network
David McConaghie	Caleb Foundation
David Gallagher	Methodist Church
Alan Harper	Church of Ireland
Doug Baker	Presbyterian Church
Tim Bartlett	Catholic Church
Rodney Connor	Fermanagh Council
Gerry McHugh	Fermanagh Council
Arlene Foster	Fermanagh Council
Tom Elliott	Fermanagh Council
John O’Kane	Fermanagh Council

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NOTES