

## Victims of Violence and Reconciliation

10. The participants believe it is essential to acknowledge and address the suffering of the victims of violence both as of right and as a necessary element of reconciliation. It is recognised that victims have a right to remember as well as to contribute to a changed society. The achievement of a peaceful and just society will be the true memorial to the victims of violence.

11. Statutory Health and Social Services must be provided with retraining and additional resources were appropriate to ensure that those bereaved and injured receive services that are appropriate and sensitive to their needs and situations. However, statutory provision can only form a part of the major task of rebuilding the social fabric which has been damaged by years of continuous violence. Local communities (and communities of interest, such as ex-members of the security forces) must be supported to audit the effects of the troubles on their area or community of interest. These groups must be supported both financially and with capacity building measures, to create and maintain their own local support and self-help networks for those worst effected by the troubles.

12. Participants recognise that young people from areas affected by the Troubles face particular difficulties. Special initiatives should be developed to address this issue which should draw both on international examples of good practice and should encourage young peoples positive participation in rebuilding society.

13. Recognising that the victims of violence are drawn from all communities in Northern Ireland, as well as from communities in Britain and the Republic of Ireland, it is recommended that a Special Fund be established as an independent source of financial support to community-based and self-help projects that seek to address the needs of victims.

14. Reconciliation - The participants recognise and value the work being done by many organisation to develop reconciliation, mutual understanding and respect between, and within, communities and traditions in Northern Ireland; and between North and South. Such work has a vital role in developing the strength of inter-personal relationships and community which will lead to true reconciliation and a new sense of belonging for all citizens. Accordingly they pledge their continuing support to such organisations and will positively examine the cash for enhanced financial assistance.