



CHURCH of IRELAND GENERAL SYNOD  
CHURCH in SOCIETY COMMITTEE  
Social Justice & Theology Sub-Committee (NI)

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**The Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006**

*This response was prepared by the Revd Canon Trevor R Williams,  
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We welcome The Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

Some comments:

**The appointment of the Commissioner**

The appointment of The Commissioner for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland must be made in a manner which will command the greatest possible public support. The provision that the appointment be made by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister jointly is welcomed in this respect.

It must be noted that should the Assembly not function, an appointment by the Secretary of State, while it may be necessary, is not a satisfactory arrangement. However this provision ensures that the Commissioner can be appointed and the work can be done. This is to be welcomed.

**The term of the appointment**

Four years is a reasonable period of appointment in the first instance. Clearly a review and evaluation of the work and the needs of victims at this stage would be appropriate. We welcome the fact that a further four years is considered. However the concerns and needs of Victims and Survivors may not be fully addressed within this period. For instance the recovery from trauma can be prolonged, and to suddenly cut off services before an effective recovery has been achieved may do great harm.

Similarly, due to the effects of trauma, the needs of a victim may not be able to be articulated within this given time span. We therefore would see the role of the Commissioner as working during their term of office to secure long term services which will be available to Victims and Survivors to assist their full recovery.

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