**Statement**

**14 July 2021**

**NIO’s legacy statement**

Following today’s (14 July) statement by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Right Honourable Brandon Lewis MP, ‘Addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland’s past’, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has said that key principles previously committed to by government, especially the right of victims and survivors to seek due process and justice in the courts, remain important.

Commenting on today’s announcement, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Right Reverend Dr David Bruce said, “For so many innocent people it is impossible to quantify the pain, suffering and generational hurt that they and their families have suffered as a consequence of unwarranted violence visited upon them. Many victims and survivors come from our own Presbyterian family, and as a church, we will take time to review what the Secretary of State has said. We will make fuller comment at a later stage as part of the ongoing engagement. In some of the key principles that were previously committed to, the right of victims and survivors to seek due process and justice in the courts, remains important to many.”

Dr Bruce continued, “We note that today the Secretary of State again referenced the need for reconciliation in Northern Ireland. This has to be more than a passing reference in a statement. The Christian understanding of reconciliation rests upon the coming together of both love and justice. Love sent Christ to be with us. Justice sent Christ to the cross. Both were needed to reconcile us to God. So it is in the realm of human life: Love and justice need to come together, as the foundation of reconciled relationships. Reconciliation is about the work we do now to restore relationships broken by the past, in a way that can lead to a better and shared future for us all.”