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In the Finucane case, nothing short of a full, public, international, impartial and independent judicial inquiry will do

Press Statement from Amnesty International, British Irish Rights Watch, the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Human Rights Watch and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights

Tomorrow, Sir John Stevens, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, will deliver his long-awaited report on his third investigation into matters of collusion in Northern Ireland, known as "Stevens 3", to the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

In view of this, Amnesty International, British Irish Rights Watch, the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Human Rights Watch and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights renew their call on the UK authorities to establish forthwith a full, public, international, independent and impartial judicial inquiry into all the circumstances surrounding the 1989 killing of human rights lawyer Patrick Finucane.

According to credible media claims, the "Stevens 3" team had originally prepared a 45-page summary of the full report for publication. The full report, which runs to 3,000 pages, will not be made public.

However, it appears now that only a 15-page summary of the full report is to be published tomorrow. The apparent explanation for this two-thirds reduction in length is the need to prevent prejudicial material capable of undermining future potential prosecutions from being made public. Given that Sir John Stevens, one of the UK's most experienced police officers, would presumably have signed off on the original 45-page summary, this explanation beggars belief. The human rights organizations are concerned that the original summary of the full report may have been drastically cut so as to shield some of its contents from public scrutiny.

This concern underscores yet again the need for the kind of scrutiny that only a public judicial inquiry can bring to the allegations of collusion by state agents with Loyalist paramilitaries in Patrick Finucane's killing. These allegations include claims that the killing of Patrick Finucane was the result of state policy. The evidence of collusion and subsequent cover-ups in the case implicates at least three intelligence agencies: the Special Branch of the former Royal Ulster Constabulary, whose members have been assimilated into the current Police Service of Northern Ireland; the British Army's secret intelligence unit known as the Force Research Unit; and MI5, the UK's secret service.

The recent death of Brian Nelson, the British Army agent who had directly assisted Loyalist

paramilitaries in the targeting of Patrick Finucane for assassination, further underlines the need for the immediate establishment of a public inquiry. Continuing to delay such an inquiry may well result in other key testimonies eventually avoiding public scrutiny.

The five international and domestic human rights non-governmental organizations believe that only a public, international, independent and impartial judicial inquiry adequately resourced and with full powers to subpoena witnesses and compel the disclosure of documents can reveal the full truth surrounding the killing of Patrick Finucane. It will be essential to consider all the circumstances surrounding the killing of Patrick Finucane, including evidence of other killings resulting from the same policies and practices which led to his death.

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