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Memorial planned for Omagh victims

Representatives of Irish and Spanish victims of the Omagh bomb are meeting in the town today to discuss a memorial to victims.

Their involvement followed a dispute between Omagh District Council and relatives of those killed in the Real IRA massacre.

A total of 31 people, among them two unborn children, died in the 1998 blast.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Foreign Affairs said: "There will be a member of staff from the Anglo-Irish section in Dublin attending a meeting of the Working Group in Omagh.

"She is Sarah Mangan from the panel which is advising the Working Group.

"The meeting is to discuss an appropriate development of an appropriate permanent memorial to the victims of the bomb."

Relatives claimed an inscription they want on the monument at the blast site was being resisted by the town's republican councillors.

Michael Gallagher, whose son Aidan was among those who died, has claimed the reason why Omagh District Council would not accept the wording on the memorial was because it stated the facts of what happened during the blast.

Sinn Fein has rejected the suggestion.

The words proposed were to read: "To honour and remember 31 people murdered and hundreds injured from three nations by a dissident republican terrorist car bomb."

They will also discuss detailed plans to put the construction and design out to private tender.

The group is made up of council officers, community representatives and victims and is aiming to install the monument by the tenth anniversary of the blast on August 15 next year.

PA

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