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BRADLEY WELCOMES AHERN REMOVAL OF QUINN CRIME SLUR

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SDLP Newry and Armagh MLA Dominic Bradley has warmly welcomed the statement by Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern that it is not the view of the Irish government that Paul Quinn was involved in criminality.

Mr Bradley and Cllr Geraldine Donnelly accompanied Briege and Stephen Quinn to a meeting with Dermot Ahern at his constituency office in Dundalk. Speaking after the meeting Mr Bradley said:

"Second only to the brutal murder of their son, nothing has caused the Quinn family as much distress as the allegations pedalled by Conor Murphy of Sinn Fein that their dead son was a criminal. The rumour mill started while his body was still on the operating table in Drogheda. The seemingly ambiguous stance of the Taoiseach made things worse, but today's clarification has been a great relief and they are very grateful to the Foreign Minister.

"These false allegations were a total red herring at the heart of a cynical spin strategy which has been crumbling for weeks and has now finally collapsed. Even the bussed-in Provo gang that tried to hijack the meeting in Crossmaglen last Thursday did not have the nerve to repeat them in front of a local audience which knows the truth about this murder. Conor Murphy stands alone.

"The Quinn family have acted with dignity in the face of these lies, but they are quite properly forceful in demanding the truth. Other meetings scheduled for later this week will completely nail the criminality lie and expose the reality of the Provo murder machine which still functions in South Armagh. Now that we have made such an important step towards truth, the way is open towards achieving justice through the courts of law. But beyond justice in this case is the need to dismantle the killing machine and expose those who try to conceal and protect it."

ENDS
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