



## **Summary of ICRIR Board meeting – 15-16 February 2024**

The Board met over two days and considered a wide range of matters relating to governance, strategy and people.

The Chair updated Board members on the Commission's constructive visit to Strasbourg earlier that week, during which they had met a number of key stakeholders, including from the Council of Europe. Meetings had focused on the Commission's commitment to compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights, and on providing an update on the Commission's readiness to commence operations. Positive feedback had been received about the Commission's proposals regarding its investigations and involvement of victims, survivors and families.

The Board discussed its strategic objectives. The Board recognised that the Board's focus would change over time, following commencement of operations from the summer, and agreed that its current approach should prioritise obtaining clarity on ECHR compliance; building the public's understanding of the Commission's approach; and beginning, and improving through learning and feedback, the Commission's investigative work.

The Board noted that judgment in the domestic legal challenge to the Legacy Act was still awaited, and that details of the interstate case brought by Ireland were also now in the public domain. The Commission would need to be cognisant of both processes and, in particular, would need to understand the detail of the High Court judgment and amend its approach accordingly depending on the Court's findings. The Board discussed the Legacy Act's requirements in respect of offering a scheme for conditional immunity. It noted that roles had recently been advertised in order to deliver this. The Board noted that this aspect of the Act was subject to specific challenge domestically and in Strasbourg and the Commission would need to consider its approach carefully to reflect an evolving legal position.

The Board agreed proposals to launch a public consultation regarding the design of the Commission's investigative processes. They agreed that in spite of the tight timeframes for consulting, it was important for the Commission to make all efforts to engage meaningfully with the widest possible range of stakeholders and reflect on any feedback received. This would include feedback on proposals about whether to establish an Advisory Group on Reconciliation, which would be the greatest area of forward-looking focus for the Commission.

The Board reflected on the ongoing work being undertaken to prepare the Commission to commence operations, and the respective roles of the Commission and the Secretary of

State for NI in making that a reality. On governance, they discussed the current financial position and the first meeting of the Commission's Audit and Risk Committee.

Progress on the ongoing recruitment campaign for the new CEO was noted by the Board.

The Board received a presentation about the Commission's approach to building a positive culture for the new organisation. Board members agreed that promoting psychological safety would be a key driver for creating an environment in which learning was prioritised.

Knowledge sharing and feedback at all levels would be important in supporting this, in addition to regular internal communications and strong visibility of senior leaders.