

## Press Release

27 April 2006

### **ROOKER LAUNCHES GOOD RELATIONS ACTION PLAN**

Jeff Rooker today unveiled two new action plans aimed at creating not only a shared future for all the people of Northern Ireland but a future free from racial inequalities and hate crime.

Speaking at the launch of the first 'A Shared Future' action plan and the first Racial Equality Implementation Action Plan, the Minister reinforced Government's full and total commitment to the policy on 'A Shared Future':

**“Segregation, racism and division are no longer options in Northern Ireland. There is no alternative to a shared future.”**

**“Today's publications set out the step by step actions required to achieve a shared, prosperous and democratic future for all the people of Northern Ireland.**

**“Sustained, long term progress can only be achieved through leadership at a local, political, civic and community level. Local politicians need to take up this mantle and make the policy a reality and a new common sense.”**

The key elements in the Government's drive for a modern Northern Ireland economy are underpinned by an inclusive, shared society. The plans aim to create social and political stability in a shared and peaceful society. One which is capable of attracting

increased inward investment and growing a competitive economy that can take its place on the global stage.

Both plans focus firmly on the work of Government Departments and their agencies within a clear legal and statutory framework, underpinned by Section 75. All commitments have been agreed by departments and signed off by their respective ministers.

The Minister continued: **“By creating a culture that is both generous and co-operative, Northern Ireland will attract new investment, tourism and newcomers. The growing diversity of Northern Ireland is to be welcomed, not feared. Only by learning about and accommodating each others traditions can we begin to build for tomorrow.**

**“This plan is only the beginning of what will be a challenging but achievable process that must take place. If we are to create a truly world class Northern Ireland there is no alternative to ‘A Shared Future’.**

### **Notes to Editors**

- A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland was published by Written Ministerial Statement on 21 March 2005
- A Shared Future sets out Governments aim of establishing over time a shared society, defined by a culture of tolerance.
- A Shared Future and the Triennial Action Plan can be accessed on the website: [www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk](http://www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk).

- The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland was published by written Ministerial Statement on 19 July 2005.
- The Racial Equality Strategy sets out six strategic aims that Government will pursue in eradicating racism and tackling racial inequalities.
- The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland and the First Annual Implementation Action Plan can be accessed on the website” [www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/raceequality](http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/raceequality)
- Media Enquiries to 028 9052 8648