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[Home](#) > [Debates](#) > [Dáil](#) > [2012](#)

Written Answers - Magdalene Laundries

Dáil Éireann Debate
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⏪ ⏩ Page of 512 ⏪ ⏩

494. Deputy Michael McGrath

🗨️ asked the **Minister for Justice and Equality** 🗨️ his plans to provide redress to the survivors of the Magdalene Laundries; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [29058/12]

Minister for Justice and Equality (Deputy Alan Shatter): 🗨️ I refer the Deputy to my reply to Parliamentary Question No. 422 for written answer on 13 March last. At this point, I am not in a position to pre-empt the findings of the Inter-Departmental Committee. However, the Government will decide what further action is appropriate when it has received and considered their report.

Reply to Parliamentary Question No.422 for written answer on 13 March, 2012

The Deputy will be aware that the Government considered the circumstances of women and girls who resided in the Laundries at its meeting on 14 June, 2011. As a first step, the Government decided that it was essential to fully establish the true facts and circumstances relating to the Magdalen Laundries and a number of actions were agreed. This included the setting up of an Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries, to clarify any State interaction, and to produce a narrative detailing such interaction. The Committee, under the independent chairmanship of Senator Martin McAleese, is making good progress and their final report is expected mid year. I welcome the progress that is being made and, in particular, I am pleased to tell the House that the Committee is continuing to receive full co-operation from all concerned including the religious orders and representative groups of women who were formerly resident in the laundries.

In addition Minister of State with responsibility for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People, Kathleen Lynch T.D. and I met with the religious congregations and the groups representing former residents of the Magdalene Institutions to discuss a number of issues. One of these was the question of facilitating a restorative and reconciliation process between individuals who had been in such institutions and the religious congregation responsible for the running

1472

of the institution. I am conscious of the need to progress matters as quickly as possible. However, it is also important to emphasise that we are in a process which is seeking to fully establish the facts and it is still too early at this stage to predict what the outcomes might be.

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⏪ ⏩ Page of 512 ⏪ ⏩

1473