

## West MLAs sign racism pledge

NEWLY elected MLAs for West Belfast have signed an anti-racism pledge of office in one of their first acts of the new session at Stormont.

Five Sinn Fein MLAs joined forces with the SDLP's Alex Attwood MLA on Monday to send a united message that as elected representatives they represent the interests of all their constituents, regardless of race, ethnicity, colour, reli-

gion or language, and will work actively to challenge racism in all its forms.

The anti-racism pledge, developed by the West Against Racism Network (WARIN), has been adapted from the Charter of European Political Parties for a non-racist society and tailored to the context of West Belfast.

It is designed to enable politicians to send out a strong message upon taking political office that they recognise the special responsibility they bear to actively challenge racism wherever it occurs.



NO TO RACISM: West Belfast MLAs, members of WARIN and Junior Minister Martina Anderson with the charter

## West Belfast MLAs lead the way in tackling racism

THE West Against Racism Network (Warn) would like to take this opportunity to commend all the recently elected MLAs for West Belfast for the strong stand they have taken against racism.

On May 24 Alex Attwood SDLP MLA and the five Sinn Fein MLAs were joined by Martina Anderson junior first minister in OFMDFM to sign an anti-racism pledge of office, sending out a clear message that racism will not be tolerated in west Belfast. The anti-racism pledge, developed by Warn, has been adapted from the Charter of European Political Parties for a

Non-Racist Society and tailored to the context of west Belfast. It recognises the special responsibility that elected representatives bear to actively challenge racism wherever it occurs and to promote an anti-racist culture.

On endorsing the anti-racism pledge of office Paul Maskey (Sinn Fein) highlighted the importance of all individuals being able to go about their daily business free from fear or intimidation and the positive role which this initiative can play in that regard, noting that Warn "has made west Belfast a safer place for all who live in, work in or visit it".

Alex Attwood also praised this project. "I urge people to support Warn so that the message is sent out clear and loud that racism is not only wrong but unacceptable and will not be tolerated in west Belfast." The West Against Racism Network congratulates all of the MLAs for West Belfast for jointly supporting this important initiative and would encourage other elected representatives to take their lead from them on this important issue.

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