

Twelfth Meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development
10th November 2010, Iveagh House,

Summary Minutes

(1) Opening Comments by Mr Peter Power, T.D. Minister of State for Overseas Development

Minister of State Peter Power welcomed the group and thanked members for giving their time to the Committee. He noted, given the current difficult circumstances, the importance of maintaining a strong focus on aid effectiveness and coherence. He briefed the Committee on major developments since the last meeting, which included the Millennium Development Goals Review Summit in New York in September, the high-level political event on nutrition hosted by the United States and Ireland, and the Special Envoy for Hunger, Mr Kevin Farrell's report to Government.

The Minister noted that the MDG Summit's outcome document highlighted the need to enhance efforts across the whole of government policy and identify areas beyond ODA that can help with achieving the MDGs. These include a successful outcome to the WTO Doha round negotiations, reform of global governance of the financing and backing sectors, responding to illicit financing flows noting that developing countries lose more in illicit money flows than they receive in ODA, taxation reform and mobilising domestic resources. Other areas include strengthening international coordination and governance of food security, and research and innovations in agriculture and medicine.

The Minister described the Summit as an important success for Ireland with our key priorities reflected in statements and in the Summit resolution which was adopted unanimously. Ireland's leadership role on hunger was evident in preparations for and during the summit especially during the Joint Irish - US high level event on nutrition co-hosted by Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and Minister Martin which was one of the biggest events of the Summit.

This event was a huge success for Ireland, attracting high-level participation including the United Nations Secretary General and provided a platform to highlight work in addressing undernutrition and to launch the UN's roadmap for Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN). Ireland's strong leadership in this area has enhanced our international reputation. The event underlined Ireland's partnership with the US on hunger, nutrition and food security and the Minister noted that this partnership has wider implications for the strategic relationship between Ireland and the United States, in terms of foreign policy, trade and investments which is significant for all Government departments.

The Minister also informed the committee of the launch of Ireland's Special Envoy for Hunger Mr Kevin Farrell's report on Ireland's progress in implementing the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force. The report acknowledged the work undertaken in tackling hunger across the Irish Aid programme and other areas of government and encouraged continued efforts including by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development promoting collaboration between research institutions, the farming and food sector in Ireland and our partner countries.

The Minister concluded by thanking members for their interest and for the efforts with the PCD statements.

(2) Minutes of the 11th meeting of the IDCD

The minutes of the eleventh IDCD meeting of the 3rd June, 2010, were agreed with some amendments.

(3) Ireland's response to Global Hunger

Ms Barbara Cullinane, Director Thematic Sectors and Special Programmes, Irish Aid, gave a brief presentation on Ireland's response to global hunger. She recalled that the Hunger Task Force report identified three priority areas for Ireland – agriculture productivity of small farmers, maternal and infant nutrition, and advocacy. She noted that undernutrition is a significant problem affecting large numbers of children, (e.g. in the 36 countries with the highest level of undernutrition over 40% of children are stunted); investment in addressing undernutrition has been shown to have the greatest return of any development investment and that Ireland has been identified as a leader in this area.

The high level meeting, which focused on the *1,000 Days: Change a Life, Change the Future* initiative, was attended by an impressive range of representatives of Government, civil society, the private sector and the UN including the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are also expected to come on stream in relation to the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) roadmap. The *1,000 Days: Change a Life, Change the Future* initiative highlights the importance of nutrition pre and post natal (i.e. the first 1000 days, from pregnancy to second birthday) and Ireland is seen as having an important and significant role in this internationally. Ireland is working closely with the US and the UN to roll out this programme noting that Ireland and the US have also committed to report back on progress after 1000 days and in 2013 will report to the UN General Assembly. There have already been follow up meetings with Secretary of State Clinton's staff in Ireland and concrete action plans are being agreed. These will include the fortification of food and supply of micronutrients which are cheap but extremely effective interventions.

Ms. Cullinane also reported on Mr Kevin Farrell's report on Ireland's progress in implementing the recommendations of the Hunger Task Force which she noted was particularly complimentary to the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Finance and Foreign Affairs as was Mr Farrell when briefing the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs. The report recommends ring-fencing spending on hunger, maintaining the three broad themes, including adaptation to climate change, prioritisation of agricultural research, and a stronger focus on undernutrition. As a small country Ireland can have the greatest impact as an advocate providing leadership and acting as a catalyst for change.

In relation to the IDCD, important areas are the work of the skill set group in facilitating cooperation between the DAFF and Irish Aid, scaling up efforts to support communities to adapt to climate change including agroforestry and crop diversification, and research especially in the areas of biofuels and GM crops. NGOs and civil society groups had also raised concerns about the impact of trade on food security and Mr Farrell highlighted the need for more evidence-based research in this area.

The discussion that followed highlighted a number of themes including Ireland's role in advocating on nutrition and food security and opportunities for influencing decisions at an international level, looking beyond ODA and the role of the private sector, and the need for evidence based decisions.

Africa has the potential to develop like the BRICs and the Minister of State noted that it is in Ireland's strategic interest to support that development, a role the Irish private sector is already playing. He informed the committee that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is working on an African business strategy with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation (DETI). The increasing focus within the EU on the private sector and trade was also noted

The discussion highlighted Ireland's potential for influence at international level including through our constituency at the World Bank and other IFIs. Ms. Niamh Campbell, Department of Finance (DoF) spoke about Ireland's role in the reform of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) including the recently announced reforms at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which will shift voting shares toward emerging market and developing countries. Membership of IFIs provides opportunities for influence, such as highlighting Ireland's priority of hunger as well as for promoting opportunities for Irish businesses and the DoF is working with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation (DETI) in this regard. The upcoming Trio presidency of the EU was identified by Mr. Dominick O'Brien, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) as an opportunity to advocate for a focus on food security and nutrition.

Mr. Michael Gaffey, DFA, following a recent visit to Zambia, reminded the Committee of Ireland's consistent analysis that food security was a long-term problem and not just related to sudden spikes in world food prices and that we need to look beyond DFA to other Departments for solutions. Ms. Carol Hannon, DFA, highlighted the Hunger Envoy's identification of the need for more evidence based analysis and identification of the impact of trade and other policies on food security and hunger in the developing world especially in relation to the CAP post 2013 and the EU's new trade policy.

It was agreed that hunger, as a national priority issue, should remain on the agenda of the IDCD.

(4) Departmental Statements on PCD

Four Departments reported on progress, DAFF and DEHLG have finalised drafts statements, the Department of Defence (DoD) has finalised a draft but are waiting on the work on indicators. The Department of Justice and Law Reform (DJLR) is at a preliminary stage. DFA provided some input on PCD to DJLR in relation to their new Department Statement of Strategy. While Mr. Gaffey welcomed the work to date all agreed that the process may be overtaken by political events.

(5) Indicators for Policy Coherence for Development

Mr. Gaffey reported that the Institute for International Integration Studies (IIIS) is in the final stages of the PCD indicators project, a final draft of the index of indicators was circulated just before the meeting and the draft report should be ready in the coming weeks. Departments can then draw on the study to identify indicators to monitor their progress on PCD.

Ms. Hannon noted the study will provide a baseline for independent monitoring of Ireland's progress on PCD. The IDCD will report annually on Ireland's progress and should thus identify relevant and appropriate indicators which could form the basis of such a report.

There were a number of concerns raised about the quality of the indicators in the IIIS' draft index and it was felt that comments already submitted to the IIIS had not been fully considered. A number of indicators related to EU level decisions and are not measurable at

national level. The final report will have a narrative explaining the indicators and it was thought that while all of the indicators might be included in the report the narrative should distinguish those which accurately reflect a measurement of Ireland's policy coherence for development. The draft report will be circulated to the Committee for further consideration.

(6) Policy Coherence for Development at EU and OECD

Ms. Hannon reported that she attended meetings at the EU and OECD on policy coherence for development in September and October and thanked members of the Committee for their comments on the EU PCD work programme in advance of that meeting. Brief notes on developments at the EU and OECD relating to PCD including progress on the EU PCD work programme were circulated.

Ms. Hannon explained that the request for names of Department's representative in committees and working groups in the EU and OECD was to ensure a common Irish position in relation to work on PCD at the EU and OECD, for example in relation to the OECD DevGoal's pilot initiatives in green growth, taxation, investment and food security.

(7) IDCD 2011 Workplan

Michael Gaffey outlined areas for work in 2011, these included PCD indicators, building a national profile on Global Hunger, preparations for the climate change conference in Cancun. Hunger, trade and taxation are already a priority for the EU and OECD.

In terms of events coming up in 2011 Ms. Aileen Shanahan, Department of the Taoiseach, raised the possibility of the Taoiseach travelling to Africa in 2011, Mr. Gaffey noted that there will be an international high level political event on aid effectiveness in Korea and Ms. Campbell noted there would be an IDA replenishment and a midterm review of ADB funding.

(8) A.O.B.

Mr Gaffey noted that in the last round of parliamentary questions the Minister had replied to a priority question on PCD¹.

Ms. Hannon informed the Committee that Comhlámh will host a seminar on PCD on 29th November focusing on three areas – trade, debt, and taxation – and that she would be presenting on what Irish Aid's work on policy coherence for development.

¹ <http://debates.oireachtas.ie/DDebate.aspx?F=DAL20101012.xml&Node=H4-1#H4-1>

Inter-Departmental Committee on Development Meeting

12th Meeting, 10th November 2010

| Department: | Name: |
|--|---|
| Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food | Colm Hayes |
| Central Statistics Office | Apologies |
| Department of Defence | Ciaran Murphy |
| Defence Forces | Lt. Col. Eamon Caulfield |
| Department of Education and Skills | Mícheál Ó Fiannachta |
| Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation | Apologies |
| Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government | Dominick O'Brien |
| Department of Finance | Niall Cassidy, Niamh Campbell Dermot Quigley |
| Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform | Gerald O'Regan |
| Department of Social Protection | Apologies |
| Department of the Taoiseach | Aileen Shanahan |
| Department of Transport | Apologies |
| Department of Foreign Affairs | MoS Peter Power Michael Gaffey Finbar O'Brien David Donoghue Barbara Cullinane Carol Hannon Catherine Brennan |