

**Inaugural meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development
(IDCD)**

12th April 2007, Department of Foreign Affairs, Iveagh House

Summary Minutes

Welcome speech from Minister of State, Conor Lenihan T.D.

The Minister welcomed participants from eleven other Government Departments and highlighted the *White Paper on Irish Aid* as the road map to achieve the goals of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development. The Minister highlighted that strong development relationships already exist between Irish Aid and other Government Departments and expressed a desire to strengthen these ties so as to create more structured relationships across Government.

The Minister underscored the two main objectives of the Committee which are to:

- (1) Strengthen coherence in the Government's approach to development; and
- (2) Make best use of the expertise and skills available across the public service.

Main Issues

Participants agreed that the IDCD will provide a good opportunity to enhance the quality of Ireland's Aid programme particularly in relation to the expanding aid budget.

(1) Department of Agriculture and Food

The Department highlighted that there were significant issues of vital national interest for Ireland and that there was a positive record of coherence to build on.

(2) Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment

The Department highlighted how its agenda often intersects with the work of Irish Aid most manifestly in the trade area. Intellectual Property and Labour Standards were areas where coherence was seen as important.

(3) Department of Justice

The Department gave an account of its work in relation to Gender Equality and said it would welcome more intense relations with Irish Aid on the issue. The Department mentioned that there is a good working context for closer collaboration in relation to work on migration.

(4) Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

The Department outlined its work in relation to local community development here in Ireland and expressed the Department's openness to engage in development issues/projects where relevant and feasible.

(5) Department of Transport

The Department mentioned the possibility of channelling its expertise into development through support for UN programmes on road safety training and the provision of infrastructure.

(6) Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government

The Department mentioned how effectively it already collaborates with Irish Aid on issues of sustainability and climate change. The Department identified the need to support low carbon technology use in developing countries as their economies grow and expressed concern that developing countries will ultimately suffer most from the impact of rising global warming.

(7) Department of Communications Marine and Natural Resources

The Department outlined its involvement in the Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI) to support developing countries as they create and deliver strategies to harness ICTs for education and community growth.

Other Issues

The Minister noted the reference to constraints on capacity and resources and suggested that retired civil servants might be of assistance.

Next Steps

It was agreed that Ronan Murphy, Director General of Irish Aid, would write to Departments to follow up on discussions at the meeting and to provide details regarding the next meeting.

Kathryn Leslie
IDCD Secretariat

List of Participants at the inaugural IDCD meeting, 12th April 2007

The Minister of State, Conor Lenihan T.D.

Seamus O'Morain	Dept Enterprise Trade and Employment
Peter O'Neill	Dept. Communications, Marine and Natural Resources
Tom O'Mahony	Dept. Environment, Heritage and Local Government
Francis Rochford	Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
Kevin McCarthy	Department of Education and Science
Aidan O'Driscoll	Department of Agriculture and Food
Eoin O'Leary	Department of the Taoiseach
John Haskins	Department of Justice
Frances Fletcher	Department of Health
Brian Millane	Dept. Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
John Murphy	Department of Transport
Director General Ronan Murphy	Irish Aid
Brendan Rogers, Deputy Director General	Irish Aid
Director General Dan Mulhall	EU Division, Dept. Foreign Affairs
Rory Montgomery, Political Director	Political Division, Dept. Foreign Affairs
Pat Kelly	Political Division
Dr. Vinnie O'Neill	Technical Section, Irish Aid
Ger Considine	Technical Section, Irish Aid
Tom Sneyd	Irish Aid
Mary Barrett	Irish Aid
Kathryn Leslie	Irish Aid