

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

16th April 2008, Conference Room, Iveagh House

Summary Minutes

Welcome from Ronan Murphy, Director General, Irish Aid

Mr Murphy welcomed Committee Members and noted that Michael Kitt, Minister of State for Overseas Development was not available to chair the Committee meeting on this occasion due to attendance at the State Funeral of the late Dr. Patrick Hillery, former President of Ireland.

(1) Presentation by Michael King, Senior Research Officer with the Institute of International Integration Studies, Trinity College

Mr King updated the Committee on the latest development in the Institute of International Integration Studies' (IIS) Framework Research Project on Policy Coherence for the Advisory Board for Irish Aid - the IIS's planned Seminar on *Ireland and Policy Coherence for Development* taking place on the 8th May in Trinity College. The Seminar would provide an opportunity for the IIS team to present its preliminary findings to representatives of Government Departments (as many as possible from the Inter-Departmental Committee for Development as well as support staff in Departments involved in completing the IIS questionnaire on policy coherence) and representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations. A one page outline of the Seminar was distributed to Committee Members at the meeting. Mr King indicated that the full report should be available in the summer.

(2) Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the fourth IDCD meeting were agreed by the Committee.

(3) Reports from Sub-Groups

Mr McLaughlin, Irish Aid, updated the Committee on the work of the Multilateral Organisations Sub Group, which planned to circulate a paper regarding a strategy for placing Irish personnel in such organisations, concentrating on the five main UN bodies, in advance of the next meeting of the group to be held in late May/early June.

DG Murphy informed the Committee that Minister of State Kitt had agreed to the holding of a brainstorming event on careers in the development sector to be held in the Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre on Upper O'Connell Street in the Autumn. Key players such as universities would be involved.

Mr Gormley, Irish Aid, reported on the Skills Sets Sub Group meeting which had been held in early April. The Sub Group planned to pilot a series of awareness raising lunchtime seminars 'An Introduction to Global Development and Ireland's role' in the six Government Departments represented on the Sub Group. Part of each Seminar could be tailored to the work of individual government departments. Other Departments interested in participating were invited to contact the IDCD Secretariat. A consultant had been retained to conduct an audit of existing technical cooperation with a view to developing criteria/guidelines in this regard, drawing from international best practice, and identifying gaps in the area of technical co-operation.

This work was scheduled to continue until October next and the Sub Group would report back to the Committee at that stage.

(4) Presentation by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government on Environment issues in the context of development policy.

Mr Matthew Collins from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government gave a presentation on *Development, Climate Change and Adaptation* (copy circulated separately). Mr Collins highlighted the adverse affects of Climate Change, in particular on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and the likely need for enhanced coherence between a range of policy areas. Aidan Fitzpatrick, Irish Aid described how the effects of climate change were already being felt in developing countries and Mr McLaughlin noted that climate proofing was being incorporated into poverty reduction policies in multilateral organisations. Mr Smith, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food said that, according to the World Bank, 15% of land and 20% of yields in developing countries will be lost by 2020. He also described the inherent difficulties in reducing emissions while having to double food production by 2050 in order to match world food needs. Mr O' Mahony, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government outlined the complexities of the issues involved, highlighting the current concern about the production of bio-fuels reducing the land available for food production. DG Murphy commented that demands for increased Official Development Assistance in the form of food aid and agricultural support could be expected to continue as a result of climate change.

(5) Submission from Dóchas

As a follow up to their presentation to the previous meeting of the Committee, correspondence was received from Dóchas making recommendations on how they felt the Committee could ensure greatest impact. This was circulated to Committee members in advance of the meeting. Members were invited to submit comments in writing ahead of the sixth meeting of the Committee, where the Dóchas correspondence would be given further consideration.

(6) Draft outline of IDCD Annual report to Minister of Foreign Affairs

DG Murphy outlined the IDCD's commitment to present an Annual Report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dermot Ahern by end June. A draft outline for the Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Committee agreed that the IDCD Secretariat would produce a draft based on the outline and circulate to Members for comments with a view to finalising at the Committee's June meeting. Members with any suggestions or thoughts on the Annual Report were invited to contact Mary Barrett in the IDCD Secretariat.

(7) Update on EU developments on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD)

Ms Barrett outlined that the IDCD Secretariat had been in touch with the Departments of Agriculture, Communications, Defence, Enterprise, Environment, Health, Justice and Transport on the Presidency Paper on an EU PCD Rolling Work Programme for 2008 – 2009. Written comments were conveyed to the Council Secretariat on 26th March. The Presidency was to produce a final draft for agreement taking the comments of Member States on board. This would then be presented to the Committee of Permanent Representatives for information. The IDCD Secretariat

undertook to circulate the agreed Work Programme to relevant Departments once available.

Ms Barrett informed the Committee that the previous week the Commission had issued a Staff Working Paper on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) focusing on three areas (1) Climate Change/Energy/Biofuels, (2) Migration and (3) Research. The Working Paper provided suggestions for strengthening the development potential of climate change/energy/biofuels, migration, in particular brain drain, and research policies with development objectives. The Working Paper was one of 5 accompanying a Commission Communication on Speeding up progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. The plan was to adopt Council Conclusions at the Development General Affairs and External Relations Council on 28th May. The IDCD Secretariat was in touch with relevant departments and Sections in Irish Aid on the Working Paper.

Next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in June. The Committee would receive a presentation on Debt issues in the context of development policy and the IDCD Secretariat, World Bank and UN Section and the Dept. of Finance would liaise on this in advance of the meeting.

Amal Kaoua,
IDCD Secretariat,
Irish Aid,
16th April 2008.

List of Attendees

Director General Irish Aid, Ronan Murphy

Michael Gaffey	Political Division, Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Philip Doran	Dept. Defence
William Dwyer	Defence Forces
Tom O'Mahony Matthew Collins Catherine Bannon	Dept. Environment, Heritage and Local Government
Anne Webster	Dept. Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Seamus McLoughlin	Dept. of Education
Brian Millane	Dept. of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht
Roger O'Connor	Dept. Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
Marianne Nolan Dermot Quigley Dermot Keane	Dept. Finance
Kevin Smyth	Dept. Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Brendan Ingoldsby	Dept. Health and Children
Ciarán Ó Cuinn	Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Richard Holland	Dept. Taoiseach
Austin Gormley	Irish Aid
Mary Barrett	Irish Aid
Tom Sneyd	Irish Aid
Feilim McLaughlin	Irish Aid
Robert Meade	Irish Aid
Liz Higgins	Irish Aid
Orlagh Condron	Irish Aid
Ger Considine	Irish Aid
Tara Shine	Irish Aid
Aidan Fitzpatrick	Irish Aid
Amal Kaoua	Irish Aid

Apologies

John Murphy, Dept. of Transport

Seamus O' Morain, Dept. of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Philip Melville, Dept. of Social and Family Affairs