Ninth Meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development (IDCD)

22 July 2009, Conference Room, Iveagh House

Summary Minutes

Opening Remarks

In his opening comments, the Chair, Minister of State for Overseas Development, Peter Power, T.D., addressed a range of current issues, focusing in particular on the financial crisis and budgetary situation. He outlined the basis for the decision in the supplementary budget in April to adjust the provision for ODA in 2009. The sole motivation was the need to stabilise the public finances, and there was a commitment to resumption of growth in the aid programme when economic circumstances permit. The Minister noted that Ireland has allocated €4 billion in overseas aid over the past six years and is expected to remain the sixth largest aid donor in the world in per capita terms this year.

The Minister referred to the effect the financial crisis is having on developing countries. He spoke of his recent trip to Tanzania and of the pressure on food security. The Minister noted that Ireland's prioritisation of the fight against hunger with the launch of the Government's Hunger Task Force Report last year contributed to hunger moving onto the global agenda as evidenced by the recent G8 Summit's focus on hunger and food security.

He reminded the Committee of two upcoming events which will be important for developing countries and for policy coherence - the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December where the Department of Environment will lead Ireland's response and the possible resumption of the WTO negotiations where it will be important to obtain an agreement favourable for developing countries.

Minister Power welcomed the IIIS report which gives a comprehensive overview on how the full range of Government policies affects developing countries. He acknowledged the cooperation extended by all Departments to the researchers and recognised that the report's range of recommendations is, and is designed to be, challenging. The report demonstrates how the decisions of a small country can have wider consequences for the developing world and the recommendations provide guidance to Government Departments and to the IDCD on how to advance policy coherence in Ireland. Minister Power also noted that Policy Coherence for Development is gaining momentum within the EU and the OECD. In assuming the Presidency of the EU Sweden has identified PCD as a priority issue while recent reports of the OECD recognise that achieving poverty reduction and the millennium development goals (MDGs) requires mutually supportive policies across a wide range of issues including environmental, agricultural, migration, security, energy and science and technology. He stated that Irish support for overseas development is owned by all Departments and to become a leader in policy coherence all Departments must work together strategically.

(1) Minutes of previous meeting
The minutes of the eighth IDCD meeting, which was held on the 21st May, 2009, were agreed by the Committee. They will be posted on the IDCD website.

(2) IIIS Report "Policy Coherence for Development: The State of Play in Ireland"
Minister Power recalled that at the last IDCD meeting the Committee had a productive meeting with Professors Alan Matthews and Frank Barry from the Institute for International Integration Studies at Trinity College Dublin. The Minister noted that the findings from their study on Policy Coherence for Development in Ireland are very timely given the current budgetary situation. The financial crisis has highlighted the urgency of aid effectiveness and coherence generally, including system wide coherence with the UN which Ireland is facilitating. Minister Power spoke of his trip to Tanzania where various NGO's and the UN have began to work together with greater effectiveness and coherence due to the pressure on budgets. The Minister told of his intention to issue a press release later that day welcoming the report's contribution to policy coherence for development dialogue.

Mr Michael Gaffey expressed the hope that all Departments would respond to and act on this report and that there were aspects of this report that all Departments could benefit from. It provided a wide range of options, for consideration by Departments as they work to improve policy coherence. It was not expected by the authors that the full range of recommendations would be implemented, or agreed by Departments. The meeting was then opened up for a discussion on the report. Mr. Gaffey asked to hear general reactions on the report and for input on whether they thought there were any gaps or areas where departments felt there was need for further research and analysis. Mr. Gerard Monks from the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment noted that the IIIS report is very useful for analysing trade and development. ET&E are currently working on this area through the EU 133 committee system and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). He noted references to the need for solid support for Aid for Trade initiatives which can expand opportunities for developing countries to develop their markets from local markets to world markets. He finally stated that ET&E are very interested in policy coherence especially where agendas connect with trade issues.

Mr. Gaffey highlighted the issue of climate change and the huge challenge it presents to developing countries and noted the good interdepartmental cooperation both in inputting into the EU position and in identifying financing for responses.

With respect to the IIIS report Mr. Gaffey stated that not everything in the report needs to be debated at this time and that the committee should select particular topics and issues for action. The report is the independent work of the IIIS and provides a menu of options for departments. Carol Hannon said that some departments may find that not enough analysis has been done on their areas of interest but noted that the report is part of a longer term research strategy and the IDCD Secretariat would appreciate departments communicating any further research work they would like undertaken.

(3) Departmental Statements on PCD
At this point Mr. Gaffey took over chairing the meeting from Minister Power and spoke of the recommendation in the first IDCD annual report that Departments would prepare a statement on policy coherence based on the recommendations of the IIIS scoping report. Following the last meeting the secretariat had been in touch with departments to identify a focal point for the development of the statement. These statements may reveal areas of potential synergies between departments such as technology transfers. Mr. Gaffey also suggested that these one page statements could be used when departments are doing business planning. A time frame was suggested for the completion of the statements with submission of drafts to the IDCD by mid-September 2009 and finalisation by mid-October.

There followed a discussion on how the statements would be approved within departments and integrated into business planning and the PMDS. Questions were also raised about the level of approval needed within Departments.

The chair reminded the committee that the commitment to policy coherence for development was included in the Programme for Government and hence the statements would allow departments to elaborate this commitment into strategic actions and formalise the work of the IDCD. PCD issues also cut across departments and the statements will allow opportunities for coordination and synergies to be identified. It was agreed that the draft statements would be prepared before the next IDCD meeting and the committee can then discuss means of approval and dissemination.

(4) Policy Coherence at the OECD
The secretariat circulated a note (annex A) on PCD developments at OECD level including OECD analytical work and policy guidance on PCD. She also reported on the meeting of the OECD PDC Focal Points where Dambisa Moyo, author of Dead Aid, was guest speaker. Ms Moyo's book is highly critical of international aid but the rest of the conference panel presented a more balanced picture concluding that development should not depend on aid alone, and that policies to promote other sources of financing such as investment, trade, prevention of illegal fiscal transfers, etc were also important. Aid should play a catalytic role in promoting other public and private fiscal transfers. Technology, policy advice and financing for "green growth", in particular sustainable and renewable energy production are also of great importance. The means of assessing PCD was also discussed at the meeting based on two background documents identifying indicators for assessing PCD.

(5) Reports from Sub Group
Mr. Austin Gormley, Chairman of the Skills Sets Sub Group provided a report from that skills set subgroup. He spoke of the next steps needed to take the work of this sub group forward. While there are resources constraints there is a need to take an incremental approach.

Mr. Gormley also reported the International Development Awareness Raising Lunchtime Seminars held in the department of Finance and Communications Energy and Natural Resources. Staff members from both departments that had attended

proved to be very engaged in development issues. The participating Departments were thanked for their work in hosting and inputting at the Seminars. The next seminar was planned for September in the Department of Education and Science.

(6) Index of Policy Coherence Indicators
The chair informed the committee that the IIIS, as part of the next stage of their research on policy coherence, are undertaking work on developing a PCD Scorecard to monitor progress on policy coherence. The primary objective of the research project is to develop an agreed list of PCD indicators for Ireland. The Chair proposed that a sub-group of the IDCD should liaise with the IIIS on this work on indicators and produce a draft index for the IDCD. The scorecard will also include indicators of the performance of Ireland's aid programme.

Ms. Siobhan Carey from the Central Statistics Office questioned the need to develop specific Irish indicators when the OECD is developing comparable measures. It was noted that the OECD work is at an early stage and that identifying monitoring indicators would bring a degree of realism to the concept of PCD as well as demonstrate results and provide accountability. It was agreed that the index should be based on existing information where possible and not create an additional bureaucratic layer. It was also suggested to draw on the indicators identified by other countries such as Sweden and the Netherlands. In order to develop a better understanding of the work being undertaken by the IIIS, it was decided to invite them to present to the committee at the next meeting.

(7) Second IDCD Report
The secretariat circulated an outline of the second IDCD report. A first draft of the Annual Report would be ready by mid-August. It would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting. Departments were invited to submit any relevant information for the Annual Report.

Next meeting
It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at the end of September 2009 / early October 2009.

Attendance at Inter-Departmental Committee on Development Meetings

Department	9th meeting
Department	
Department of Social and Family Affairs	Philip Melville
Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment	Gerard Monks
	Orla Maher
Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources	Apologies
Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Ríona Ni Fhlanghaile
Department of Finance	Brendan P. Ryan
	Marianne Nolan
Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism,	Caitriona Hennessey
Department of the Taoiseach	Richard Holland
Department of Defence	Margaret O'Leary
Department of Education and Science	Brian O'Meara
Department of Agriculture and Food,	Lynn Broderick
Central Statistics Office	Siobhan Carey
Department of Health and Children,	Apologies
Department of Transport	Dick Davis
Department of Foreign Affairs	Michael Gaffey
	David Donoghue
	Tom Sneyd
	Carol Hannon
	Liz Higgins
	Austin Gormley
	Ann Marie Daly
	Fionnuala Quinlan
	Nicole McHugh

OECD and Policy Coherence for Development - Update

In June the OECD Secretary-General presented a progress report on the OECD's Coherence Approach to Development and Policy Coherence for Development to the annual meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level. The main points were:
o The financial and economic crisis demands collective action on a wide range of policies.
o There are a growing number of examples where development is being linked to existing OECD work streams (e.g. environment and climate change, trade, agriculture, science and technology, employment, migration, investment, tax policy and corruption).
o The OECD is uniquely placed to make links between different areas of public policy.
o The OECD needs to draw on its comparative advantage and focus on:
   ▪ setting and prioritising strategic goals for development which reflect the new global environment;
   ▪ improving co-ordination and the mainstreaming of the development dimension and impact analysis in a way which will maximise delivery and performance;
   ▪ better monitoring and reporting – exploiting the potential for Council to play a clearer and more active role in supporting development in general and policy coherence in particular;
   ▪ greater effort on global relations, including through our enhanced engagement with major developing countries, building stronger partnership with counterpart institutions based in different regions, and making a step change in publishing a flagship publication on development

To this end the Secretary-General has launched an exercise to create a strategy and more effective collaboration, performance and delivery of development messages

The aim of OECD's work on policy coherence for development is to exploit the potential for positive synergies; to avoid policies that undermine each other; and to avoid OECD-country policies that adversely affect the development in developing countries focusing on member countries' policies in trade, investment, migration, agriculture, health, the environment.

The contributions that the OECD can make to PCD include analytical work and policy guidance. The OECD provides tools to guide policy makers in their institutional approaches to enhance PCD or to assess the impact of sectoral policies on development. Sectoral studies (trade, agriculture, fisheries, environment, anti-corruption) have been initiated for members' use. Publications include:
   ▪ Internet Access for Development
   ▪ Coherence for Health: Innovation for New Medicines for Infectious Diseases
   ▪ Reconciling Development and Environmental Goals: Measuring the Impact of Policies
   ▪ Policy Coherence in the Fisheries Sector in Seven West African Countries
   ▪ Policy Coherence for Development: Promoting Institutional Good Practice
   ▪ Fostering Development in a Global Economy: A Whole of Government Perspective
   ▪ Agriculture and Development: The Case for Policy Coherence
   ▪ Migration, Remittances and Development
   ▪ Cotton in West Africa: The Economic and Social Stakes
   ▪ Miracle, Crisis and Beyond. A Synthesis of Policy Coherence Towards East Asia
   ▪ Fishing for Coherence: Fisheries and Development Policies
   ▪ Trade, Agriculture and Development: Policies Working Together
   ▪ The Development Effectiveness of Food Aid: Does Tying Matter?
   ▪ Coherence of Agricultural and Rural Development Policies

- Integrating Human Rights into Development: Donor Approaches, Experiences and Challenges
- Aid for Trade: Making it Effective
- Trade Related Assistance: What do Recent Evaluations Tell Us?

These can be found at: www.oecd.org/development/policycoherence

Meeting of National PCD Focal Points

In June the OECD hosted a meeting of National Focal Points for Policy Coherence for Development. This meeting focussed on two themes: a high level panel discussion on mobilising efforts for development - looking beyond aid and a session on assessing policy coherence for development

Mobilising efforts for development
The key note speaker Dambisa Moyo, author of Dead Aid, suggested that African governments need to look beyond aid for the provision of services to their populations. She highlighted the dangers of open ended aid relationships which generate dependency; aid interventions should be "short, sharp and finite". Other panellists agreed that development should not depend on aid alone, and that policies to promote other sources of financing such as investment, trade, prevention of illegal fiscal transfers, etc were also important. Aid should play a catalytic role in promoting other public and private fiscal transfers. Technology, policy advice and financing for "green growth", in particular sustainable and renewable energy production

Assessing Policy Coherence for Development
Assessing progress towards more coherent policies can help enhance policy coherence for development. Two background documents had been prepared: (i) Approaches to Assessing Policy Coherence for Development: a summary of national and expert views and (ii) Developing a methodology to Assess Policy Coherence for Development. It was suggested that the focus could initially be on ex-ante processes to assess the implications for developing countries of OECD country policies before they are launched, using, for example, a best practice checklist which could evolve into a PCD scorecard for measuring progress over time or comparing countries performance.

It was noted that PCD is a very political issue but that systematic monitoring and benchmarking focused on relevant sectors and founded on solid evidence-based analysis could be the way forward.

Ongoing work on PCD and Upcoming Events
o "Policy Coherence in the Application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Development", workshop to take place in Paris on 10-11 September (www.oecd.org/ict/4d).
o Work on Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) by the Division of Policies and Trade in Agriculture, OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate (http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_36251006_1_1_1_1_1,00.html).

Carol Hannon
IDCD Secretariat
22nd July 2009