

# THE WORLD WE WANT

The Opportunity of Ireland's Presidency of the EU  
A Dóchas Position Paper

**Dóchas**

The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations

**THE  
WORLD  
WE  
WANT**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

On 1 January 2013, Ireland assumes the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for six months. For that period, Ireland will be at the centre of decision-making in Europe, with a chance to ensure that the values and international solidarity emblematic of the bloc are not lost, even in a period of economic crisis and political flux.

Dóchas urges the Irish Presidency to ensure that development and humanitarian objectives maintain prominence and are progressed expeditiously in line with EU treaty obligations and political commitments.

Ireland is expecting to host some 180 meetings during the Presidency, including up to 11 Informal Ministerial Meetings. The Government can use this ambitious schedule to ensure genuine progress on a range of pressing development issues, as described later in this paper. These include the post-2015 global development framework; the global hunger crisis; tackling climate change and building poor communities' resilience to increasing shocks; financial regulation and transparency to boost developing countries' tax revenues; and ensuring sufficient funding for principled, well-targeted development and humanitarian work.

The UN Review Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2013 will be looking at ways to accelerate progress on achieving the Goals up to their 2015 deadline, and crucially, at shaping the form of a successor to the current MDGs global development framework. The timing of the Summit places significant responsibility on Ireland to ensure that its Presidency is central to articulating a common European vision for this process.

Ireland has made a key priority of its EU Presidency the preparation of a strong European position (with the inclusion of civil society voices, especially those of poor and marginalised people) to shape an ambitious, coherent and rights-based framework for global development after 2015. Dóchas affirms this approach; the post-2015 framework must involve all parties, not just developing countries, being held accountable on their separate but complementary responsibilities.

Dóchas urges the Irish Presidency to ensure that development and humanitarian objectives maintain prominence, and are progressed expeditiously in line with EU treaty obligations and political commitments.

As Ireland's Foreign Affairs Strategy (2011-2014) clearly states, the Irish Presidency is an opportunity "to demonstrate to the world that our current difficulties will not undermine our unwavering commitment to multilateralism and our determination to work for a better future for all".

Ireland can also ensure timely and principled policy progress. In this paper the 49 member organisations of Dóchas set out their proposals and recommendations, taking due heed of policy coherence for development commitments, on EU agenda items that relate to fundamentally important issues for sustainable human development, including *inter alia*: poverty and hunger, climate change policy and funding, regulation to tackle tax avoidance and excessive financial speculation, the EU's trading relationship with developing countries and building poor people's resilience to increasingly regular shocks and high-impact disasters.

Dóchas urges Ireland to ensure that the politics of crisis or any insular, short-term view of European interests do not trump the EU's global interests, or weaken its existing policy commitments in the European Consensus on Development, the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and (through the Lisbon Treaty) to policy coherence for development.

As Ireland's Foreign Affairs Strategy (2011-2014) clearly states, the Irish Presidency is an opportunity "to demonstrate to the world that our current difficulties will not undermine our unwavering commitment to multilateralism and our determination to work for a better future for all". This 'better future' must include sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

In this document, Dóchas members highlight a number of areas where the Irish EU Presidency can make a real difference in this context. We do so in the knowledge that Ireland's Presidency coincides with the 40th anniversary of Ireland's accession to the European Union, as well as with the European Year of the Citizen.

Ireland's recent history has clearly shown that our fate as a nation is inextricably linked to that of the international community. For Ireland to prosper, we need the global community to flourish, and for people in Ireland to benefit from globalisation, they need the knowledge and skills to thrive in an increasingly inter-dependent world. The EU Presidency is an opportunity to highlight these interdependencies, and to raise awareness and understanding of global issues. The Presidency will have been a success if it has increased people's understanding of the role of the EU, and of the EU's citizens, in tackling global challenges. As such, the Presidency is a unique opportunity to influence EU decision-making, but also to support active global citizenship across the 27 EU Member States.

# IN SUMMARY, DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

01

**Ensure the full achievement of the MDGs, in particular those that are lagging behind.**

Negotiate an EU position for the September 2013 United Nations' MDG Review Summit that supports the creation of an ambitious, rights-based global development framework- through the active participation of people living in poverty and featuring stronger accountability measures- to succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

Ensure that participation is central to the post-2015 framework by empowering individuals and vulnerable groups of people to engage meaningfully as right-holders at all stages of the process of developing of the new framework.

02

**Deliver tangible progress on the EU's response to global hunger and malnutrition, through:**

- Agreement on an Implementation Plan for the EU Food Security policy framework, and strong Conclusions from the Foreign Affairs Council in May 2013 on putting that plan into action;
- Prioritising consideration of the European Commission's Communication on Nutrition, and mobilising support through the Council Conclusions in May 2013 for concrete actions under a joint EU approach to tackle global food and nutrition insecurity;
- Ensuring that the EU steps up action against climate change through: stronger commitments on emissions reductions, pursuing the scaling up of climate finance that is new and additional to existing ODA commitments, and unlocking the potential of innovative sources of finance;
- Addressing EU energy policy to make it sustainable and coherent with hunger and food security priorities, by putting an end to the biofuels mandate and ensuring that the post-2020 Renewable Energy Strategy aligns with policy coherence for development.

03

**Promote and support the delivery of a principled, needs-based and effective humanitarian response that responds to immediate needs but also supports longer term recovery and reduction of vulnerability. In particular, the Irish Presidency should focus on:**

- Ensuring concrete progress in conducting a participatory review of the Action Plan on Implementing the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid that lays solid foundations for the development of a new Action Plan;
- Practically developing more resilience programming (in both humanitarian and development contexts) on the basis of crisis forecasts; allowing for more innovative and flexible programme approaches and funding, including more unallocated funds; and supporting local (not just state) mechanisms to prevent and mitigate crises, as well as to respond, cope, recover and adapt to changed circumstances.

04

**Facilitate measured, even-handed reflection within the EU on its funding for development, based on the EU's considerable role and responsibilities in the world, despite the countervailing pressures:**

- Increase or at least protect the EU's External Action Budget (Heading 4) in the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF);
- Pursue progress towards the EU commitment to spending 0.7% of GNI on ODA, mapping out how the EU as a whole will meet the 0.7% international target by 2015, taking into account the individual responsibilities of Member States;
- Facilitate a smooth discussion on a Financial Transactions Tax within interested countries (which Ireland should join) to reach the conclusion of the enhanced cooperation process during its Presidency;
- Facilitate discussions which give serious consideration to the case that part of the revenues from new and innovative sources of finance agreed in or by the EU should be ring-fenced for development and climate finance.

05

**Ensure that EU, in line with its Millennium Declaration commitment to the global partnership for development, as well as its Lisbon Treaty commitment to policy coherence for development, articulates a vision beyond aid which:**

- Addresses the structural causes of global poverty and includes the ability of developing countries to collect the correct amount of tax from individuals and multinational companies and;
- Supports the rights of those countries to make their own economic, trade and finance decisions.

## 2. THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK POST-2015

In September 2000, world leaders adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, through which they committed themselves to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty. They also set out a series of targets, with a deadline for their achievement of 2015, which became known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs have limitations, particularly in failing to address the root causes of poverty, but have been successful in focusing attention on the need to address global poverty and inequality.

Dóchas members hold that the world's leaders must make accelerated efforts towards achieving the MDGs to the greatest extent possible by 2015, even while shaping a more ambitious and rights-based framework to succeed them, which will better address the structural causes of poverty and inequality, and consider the enabling factors to ensure economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development.

With the next MDG Review Summit scheduled for September 2013, and increasingly urgent work underway on devising a framework to replace the MDGs in 2015, Ireland will have a key role in facilitating the development of a common EU position.

Dóchas members urge that the post-2015 framework should be constructed on the basis of human rights principles. It should also focus on the well-being and democratic participation of people, paying particular attention to people currently marginalised or excluded, on the basis of gender, age (children or the elderly), disability, HIV status, ethnic or minority status, sexual orientation, or other reasons, rather than focusing on aggregate figures of economic growth which can conceal huge poverty and inequality.

The post-2015 framework should clearly establish the accountability of high-income countries and blocs, as well as low-income countries, for delivering against the framework in specific, measurable and time-bound ways. This needs to include changing policies (in areas like trade, agriculture, taxation, security, debt) that undermine progress to sustainable human development.

### ADDRESSING INEQUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IS VITAL TO THE POST-MDG DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The framework must focus on inequality (including the systems and dynamics at play between high-, middle- and low-income countries, as well as inequality within regions and countries) to address the challenge of reducing relative poverty, as well as focusing on the eradication of extreme poverty.

Addressing inequity and inequality requires bringing a special focus in the post-2015 global development framework on people and groups who are and have been living in poverty, marginalised or excluded. Targets and indicators should be equity-focused with priority given to reaching the poorest and most vulnerable first. The framework should include equity tracker measures and indicators for progress that allow for data disaggregated by at least age, gender, disability, social or minority status, legal citizenship and wealth quintile.

Work is a key element of social and economic development. Through job creation and better working conditions, people, communities and countries can lift themselves out of poverty and improve livelihoods, thereby reducing inequalities. This happens only when work is decent, productive and provides fair wages, underpinned by rights. A decent work goal must include concrete targets for full employment, investment in green job promotion,



reducing precarious work and ensuring a living wage as well as complying with international labour rights for all workers and ensuring gender equality in the workplace.

Ensuring universal access to basic guarantees of social protection is also a human right and a direct and efficient way of reducing inequalities. The new agenda should include a goal on the implementation of social protection. Targets must be set and realised on income security for the unemployed, the sick, the disabled, pregnant women, children and the elderly as well as on access to health care, education, housing and sanitation.

Addressing inequality also means promoting and fulfilling human rights and freedoms, particularly prioritising the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. This should be achieved through support for equal rights, access to and control over resources, access to maternal healthcare, eradication of gender-based violence, and the development of more gender balanced political and economic decision-making processes where women's voices and interests have equal importance with those of men.

Different actors (states, multilateral bodies, private companies, civil society groups and regional blocs such as the EU) have different roles to play in development: as duty bearers, rights holders, legislators, policy-makers and shapers, regulators, investors, technical advisers, watchdogs, aid donors, and more besides.

The post-2015 framework for global development needs to establish the complementary but differentiated responsibilities among these different actors, and effectively establish accountability for meeting those responsibilities, to properly address the inter-connections between extremes of wealth and consumption on the one hand, and related poverty, food, energy and climate crises on the other. Dóchas members consider that changes must happen in rich countries as well as poor if we are to address global inequality.

In order to achieve climate justice, those countries that have produced, or are producing, high levels of carbon dioxide need to be held responsible for

reducing emissions and contributing their fair share to adaptation and mitigation costs.

## PARTICIPATION: CRUCIAL AS A RIGHT, CRITICAL TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Lack of broad consultation and participation was a significant weakness in the development of the MDGs, and those devising the successor framework must genuinely open the process to people directly affected by poverty and inequality, including marginalised people, excluded and minority groups such as women, young people/ children, people living with HIV and AIDS and people with disabilities, with regard to both development processes and accountability structures. To improve outcomes and foster sustainability and efficiency, it is paramount for these groups to be perceived as active rights-holders, and not mere beneficiaries, to be meaningfully involved at all the stages of the future development framework, from its design, to its implementation and its monitoring and evaluation.

It is vitally important that Ireland should make the achievement of a strong and progressive EU position on the global development framework – with human rights, equity and sustainable development at its heart – a cornerstone of its Presidency of the EU. Ireland should use all the opportunities available, including within and on the margins the Informal Development Ministerial meeting to be held in February and the major hunger and climate justice Presidency event in April, to make progress on the inclusive development of an ambitious and principled EU position.

## DÓCHAS URGES THAT THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY:

- I. Ensures, at a minimum, that the EU position at the MDG Review Summit in September 2013 calls for the integration of human rights, equity, and sustainable development as overarching principles in a future development framework, and in goals, targets, indicators and monitoring mechanisms;
- II. Promotes a robust reporting and accountability mechanism for the post-2015 framework, with equity focused goals and indicators that provide for data disaggregation by, at least, gender, age, rural/urban location, disability, living situation, and legal citizenship. This reporting and accountability mechanism should apply to developed countries and other powerful actors as well as developing countries;
- III. Advances EU realisation of the public's right to participate in development, civil society's role as a vital and independent development actor (recognised in the Busan Declaration and separately reaffirmed by the EU), and the need for an enabling environment for popular participation in both development processes and accountability structures.
- IV. Ensures that participation and inclusion are central at all stages of the post-2015 framework, from its design, to its implementation and monitoring and evaluation. In particular, people living in poverty and marginalisation – and civil society initiatives directly engaging poor men, women and children – should contribute meaningfully to EU deliberations on the post-2015 framework, including during the Informal Development Ministerial meeting in Dublin in February 2013 and in the run up to the UN Summit on the Post 2015 Framework.
- V. Ensures strong coordination in the development of an EU position with regard to the 'Sustainable Development Goals' proposed during the Rio+20 process and the post-2015 global development framework. At a minimum, Ireland should ensure that the EU respects its policy coherence for development commitments in relation to both processes, so that EU development goals are not undermined by priorities and practices in other policy areas, such as agricultural subsidies, energy policy (relating to biofuels, for example), trade or taxation policy, approaches to tackling climate change, etc.

### 3. HUNGER AND THE DRIVERS OF HUNGER

The world's deep and abiding hunger crisis, despite a world of plenty, is a terrible indictment of our global system and priorities in the 21st Century. It is estimated that around 870 million people experience chronic hunger in 2012 – even as another billion are overweight. The effects of climate change (such as less predictable rainfall, more severe weather events, crop damage and loss), along with other factors such as population growth and pressure on natural resources, are expected to increase the scale and intensity of hunger, with many countries that are currently hunger-affected likely to suffer the greatest effects.

Having contributed least to the causes of climate change, food insecure people living in poverty in developing countries are being affected first and most profoundly by the impacts of climate change, and have the least capacity to cope with its consequences. Among these, particular vulnerable groups such as children may be most affected: many of the killers of children, including under-nutrition, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, malaria and other vector-borne diseases are highly sensitive to climatic conditions.

As the main small-scale producers of food in developing countries, women are also disproportionately affected due to their greater dependence on natural resources, while their capacities to respond are undermined by social, economic and political barriers that limit their access to resources and decision-making power. A significant increase in both ambition and action is urgently needed to address climate change if global hunger is to be addressed.

Ireland has an important role to play in ensuring that the EU, as the world's largest economy (collectively) and the world's biggest aid donor, steps up the fight to end the global hunger and malnutrition crises in a rapidly changing world which is increasingly resource-constrained and prone to shocks – including by mobilising aid for agriculture and nutrition and addressing and reducing its own overconsumption of the planet's resources.

An important challenge in tackling hunger is to protect the environment and livelihoods while increasing productivity and tackling food waste and over-consumption in rich countries. The EU can help by supporting agro-ecological approaches and smallholder farmers (especially women, and small scale livestock keepers), including with regard to land tenure, and improving access to natural resources, markets and an enabling environment. The EU and EU Member States should also promote development policies that recognise, promote and support pastoralism as a sustainable and viable livelihood system.

A rights-based approach is key to ensuring both a focus on those people whose right to food is currently being violated or at risk (particularly including marginalised, excluded and otherwise vulnerable population groups), and that policy responses are developed with the participation of those who are being affected. The EU should also strengthen its policy coherence across areas

such as trade, debt, agricultural policies and others which affect hunger and developing countries' capacities to pursue policies which strengthen food security. In particular the EU should ensure its trade agreements with developing countries, especially the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, respect the right to food and do not undermine developing countries' policy space or scope to adopt economic policies to address development concerns.

## MOVING FORWARD IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR THE EU FOOD SECURITY FRAMEWORK

A number of important processes are underway within the EU, which Ireland can expedite. In 2010, the EU Foreign Affairs Council adopted a new EU Policy Framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges, which recognised the right to food. The implementation plan to accompany this is overdue and should be a priority for the EU in its efforts to tackle global hunger.

The European Commission is also set to report on the sustainability impacts of biofuels on developing countries (with policy implications for Energy, Environment and Development Councils), and the Energy Council is likely to adopt Conclusions on the European Commission's communication on the post-2020 Renewable Energy Strategy. These must recognise the damaging impact of biofuels production on food security and land rights and appropriate corrective actions must be expedited.

## PUSHING THE EU FORWARD ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

The EU will be considering important positions with regard to action on climate change and finance for adaptation and low carbon development in developing countries. It will consider Commission proposals to strengthen the Emissions Trading System, and engage in deliberations on budgetary and innovative sources of financing for climate action in developing countries, including what constitutes new and additional climate finance under the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation, to be developed under Ireland's Presidency.

In addition to 'putting its own house in order' with regard to climate change (notably by moving quickly to introduce a strong Climate Bill with binding carbon targets), Ireland can, through its Presidency, facilitate greater ambition at EU level and begin closing the gap between the EU's political commitment to limiting global warming to 2°C and its current commitments to reduce emissions. It can also push for consensus on how the EU will contribute to the substantial scale-up of public funding required for adaptation and mitigation. This should be new and additional to existing ODA commitments and include the harnessing of new and innovative sources of financing.

The Irish EU Presidency can play a vital role in ensuring that EU approaches to agriculture and food – whether in the reform of its own Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), European aid, or policies on biofuels, trade, financial or investment instruments – support and do not undermine the right to food, land tenure and building the resilience of sustainable smallholder agriculture, in line with the EU's commitment to policy coherence for development. This is crucial for livelihoods and rural communities across many developing countries.

## **DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:**

- I. Deliver progress on the EU Food Security policy framework, including through:**
  - a. Ensuring publication of the EU's proposed Food Security Implementation Plan, and strong Council Conclusions on putting that into action from the Foreign Affairs Council in May;
  - b. Promoting that EU support to food security and agriculture in developing countries supports small-holder farmers, particularly women, and builds their resilience;
  - c. Promoting that EU support to food security and agriculture integrates nutrition into programme and policy design, implementation and monitoring.
  
- II. Ensure that the EU steps up action on climate change, by:**
  - a. Pursuing consensus on an increase in the EU's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target to more than 40 percent, improving its energy policies so that the EU does its fair share of the global mitigation effort and addresses its own contribution to climate change through overconsumption of the planet's natural resources;
  - b. Contributing its fair share to, and leveraging additional support within the EU for, the scaling up of new and additional climate finance required by developing countries for action, particularly adaptation which remains underfunded;
  - c. Unlocking the potential of innovative sources of funding, such as a financial transactions tax or air and shipping transport levies.
  
- III. Ensure, as a matter of EU policy coherence for development in line with its Lisbon Treaty commitment, that the EU urgently and effectively addresses the negative effects of biofuels and fuel quality policies on developing countries, as well as reviewing its policies in areas such as trade, debt, taxation etc, and their negative impact on hunger and food security.**

## 4. TACKLING MALNUTRITION

In parallel to the issue of hunger, malnutrition is a major problem for sustainable human development – disproportionately affecting women and children. Estimates are that under-nutrition is responsible for the deaths of more than 2.7 million children each year and the loss of billions of dollars in foregone productivity and avoidable health care spending. Globally, an estimated 170 million children suffer from chronic malnutrition and one in four children in the developing world has stunted growth (short stature) as a result.

International research shows that if a child does not have adequate nutrition during the mother's pregnancy and until the child reaches two years old, the damaging effects can last a lifetime: the brain may not fully develop and the child does not reach its potential height (stunting). Such stunted growth is irreversible after two years of age, and can negatively affect a person's health through their whole life. Malnutrition also increases the incidence and impact of disease on children in developing countries, while the effects go beyond health in childhood, and also increase the risk of non-communicable diseases in adulthood. This ultimately affects communities, generations and societies: malnutrition can lead to poor performance in school while education is a key route out of poverty for children, households and societies.

### USING THE EU TOOLS AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

The European Union has the tools at hand to respond positively to this challenge, since it has a strategic approach for reducing poverty, with a major focus on food security including The Agenda for Change (2011), the EU Food Security Policy Framework (2010), a new approach to building resilience, and a Communication on Nutrition expected in spring 2013. These tools offer the possibility of a much greater focus on improving food security, enhancing nutrition outcomes and building resilient communities, including their resilience to shocks such as food price volatility and severe weather events.

The Irish EU Presidency has the chance to make a real difference in the coming six months by mobilising support across EU Member States for a strong commitment at the Foreign Affairs Council in May to implementing a joint approach to tackle global food and nutrition insecurity.

It is important that the Irish Presidency prioritises actions arising from the European Commission's Communication on Nutrition, which proposes a framework for EU food security interventions linked to both humanitarian and development objectives, and principles for populations affected by food and nutrition insecurity, including in emergency contexts. This relates closely to the Commission's Communication on Food Security, an EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges that relate more to development objectives. Ireland should ensure during its Presidency that the two policy frameworks complement each other in practice, as intended.

The Irish Presidency can advance progress in these matters through strong, carefully considered Council Conclusions on Nutrition (anticipated in May 2013) and on 'resilience' (an approach through which the EU is aiming to link humanitarian relief, recovery and development imperatives more closely). Ireland can also help mobilise EU-wide support to reach a target of US \$5 billion needed from OECD-DAC donors to fund direct nutrition interventions (especially for mothers and children), focusing on 36 countries that carry 90 percent of the burden of under-nutrition, which could collectively save one million or more lives each year.

The Irish Government has indicated its intention to have its EU Presidency address issues at the nexus of hunger, nutrition and climate change. This offers Ireland another opportunity to mobilise EU support for tackling the global hunger and nutrition crises in an urgent, holistic and coherent manner.

Ireland can also provide for progress at Commission and Council levels on addressing the sustainability and policy coherence for development implications of the European Union's biofuels policy, which is undermining food-crop production, increasing food price volatility and increasing competition for land (with women especially vulnerable to displacement) in developing countries. The Commission is expected to publish a research report on which the EU should quickly act to reform its policies and practice.

## DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Prioritise consideration of the Communication on Nutrition from the European Commission, and bring forward strong Council Conclusions at the Development and Foreign Affairs Council in May 2013, which are: consistent with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the Agenda for Change, and the Food Security Policy Framework; mobilise support for a joint approach by all EU Member States to tackle global food and nutrition insecurity; and, pave the way for timely implementation through a joint action plan.
- II. As mentioned with regard to hunger, ensure progress on the Implementation Plan for the EU's Food Security Policy Framework, on which there were Council Conclusions in May 2010.
- III. Have leaders reaffirm the EU's commitment to support small-scale food producers, particularly women, and their access to productive resources as a key component of building nutrition security through resilient food systems.
- IV. Ensure that the EU urgently and effectively addresses the negative effects of biofuels and fuel quality policies, and other policy areas such as trade, agriculture (CAP), debt and tax, on the food security of developing countries, in line with its Lisbon Treaty commitment to policy coherence for development.

## 5. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND INCREASED COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

As the frequency and intensity of disasters increase and humanitarian crises become more complex, the humanitarian community, including the EU as a key donor, must continue to strive for an effective, principled needs-based response that meets immediate life-saving needs but also supports longer term recovery and reduction of vulnerability. The importance of building nations' and communities' resilience emerges from a convergence of critical reflection on, and learning from, the delivery of humanitarian assistance, programming for Disaster Risk Reduction, efforts to link relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD), and the particular vulnerability of many people (including especially marginalised and excluded groups) living in poor countries to climate-related disasters.

In its Communication on the EU Approach to Resilience (October 2012), the European Commission stressed the importance of helping nations, communities, households and individuals “to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks.” The Commission called for more structured linkages between relief, rehabilitation and development through: better assessing risks, focusing more on prevention and preparedness, and enhancing humanitarian crisis response in the face of new hunger, food security and climate change challenges.

However, critical analysis suggests the need to rebalance what the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) has characterised as a state-focused and top-down approach outlined in the Commission's Communication to emphasise community-level resilience, and to learn the lessons of years of 'capacity-building' efforts by building on local knowledge, capacities, risk mitigation strategies and sources of resilience, rather than imposing externally-devised 'solutions'.

The EU should give more serious thought to its policy coherence for development – including the impact on the resilience of countries, communities and marginalised groups of EU policies in areas such as agriculture, trade, energy (biofuels), natural resource management, and disaster preparedness – to ensure that its efforts in relation to resilience amount to more than rhetoric.

### PRINCIPLED HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The Irish Government, during the course of this Presidency, should place emphasis on the delivery of principled, needs-based, humanitarian assistance.

Under the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the EU (including its Member States) has made strong commitments to humanitarian principles in the delivery of aid. This Consensus, and its associated work plan, adopted by all EU Member States in 2007, set out a common vision for humanitarian aid. It clearly distinguishes between civil and military action in humanitarian crises, affirms the primacy of humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law, and confirms that humanitarian aid is not a crisis management tool.

While the Consensus is a strong guiding framework, the degree to which individual Member States are upholding these agreements is inconsistent, and civil society contends that bodies such as the EU Council Committee on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) could do more to ensure that Member States fulfil their obligations.



A review of the Consensus Action Plan will take place during the Irish Presidency in 2013. This provides the Irish Government with an opportunity to ensure that the Humanitarian Consensus and the commitments made therein, remain on the agenda at the highest levels. The Government should strive to support an open and inclusive review so that the EU is strongly positioned to develop and deliver a new and meaningful Action Plan in due course.

## A COHERENT APPROACH TO BUILDING RESILIENCE – DOWN TO COMMUNITY LEVEL

At the same time, advancing progress on resilience means mainstreaming a systems approach, under which regional institutions and international partners work collectively in support of national efforts to prevent crises and support communities' own efforts to thrive.

Humanitarian and development actors should work with national governments where possible – *as well as local communities*, through civil society groups or directly – to develop a system and funding arrangements that support long-term local resilience, includes crisis prevention, and is flexible enough to deal with needs as they change from season to season. Such a system should promote participatory capacity and vulnerability analysis, with a strong focus on gender and inclusion of vulnerable and marginal groups.

The EU can also promote a global approach to resilience through linking the post-2015 development framework with a strong successor plan to the Hyogo Framework for Action on disaster reduction, built on lessons learned to date.

## WITH REGARD TO PRINCIPLED HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Make concrete progress in conducting a participatory review of the Action Plan on Implementing the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, that lays solid foundations for the development of a new Action Plan;
- II. Review its own Humanitarian Strategy through initiating a consultation process with key stakeholders, including NGOs, to address the commitments in the European Consensus, particularly in relation to humanitarian principles in the delivery of humanitarian aid.

## WITH REGARD TO RESILIENCE, DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Steer a genuine step forward by the EU towards programmes that improve the resilience of poor communities by incorporating people centred humanitarian and development approaches on the basis of crisis forecasts, investment in adaptive capacities, and the provision of more flexible funding based on needs;
- II. Advance EU partnership with other regional organisations, national governments and civil society organisations that commit to building community resilience, in order to determine how existing aid architecture and processes need to change to better support their work;
- III. Further develop the EU's provision of social protection or 'safety nets' that help households and communities cope with crises, as well as reducing, preventing or overcoming risks in the longer term;
- IV. Address and take action on policy coherence for development issues which could undermine poor communities' resilience.

## 6. EUROPEAN UNION BUDGET DISCUSSIONS AND FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The EU is currently striving to address severe and much-reported economic and financial crises, which means that negotiations over its multi-year budget and allocation to budget lines will continue throughout the Irish EU Presidency. The EU Commission has repeatedly called for an increase in the EU's development budget, and in its roughly one-third share of the 'Global Europe' budget, in order for the EU to meet its commitment to the UN target of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income on aid.

### PROTECTING THE EU'S DEVELOPMENT BUDGET AND FOCUS

Ireland can make its mark for development by steering negotiations on development funding, based on the EU's commitment to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. The recent proposal to cut disproportionately the aid budget is inconsistent with those commitments and Ireland must ensure that those proposals are reversed. Ireland should ensure that external action and development spending is consistent with the Lisbon Treaty, including a Rights Based Approach at its core, promoting social justice and protection, and tackling discrimination. The EU should also provide sufficient financial resources to strengthen the EU commitment to promote women's and girls' rights and gender equality in all internal and external policies.

The European Consensus on Development states "the promotion of gender equality and women's rights is not only crucial in itself but is a fundamental human right and a question of social justice." The Irish EU Presidency should ensure that EU statements and positions at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the UN Commission on Population and Development and the Rio+20 follow-up processes, as well in thematic negotiations on the EU budget and post-2015 development framework, align with the agreed language of the European Consensus on Development, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Cairo Declaration and

Programme of Action on human rights, health and gender equality and women's empowerment.

In assuring the poverty focus of its development efforts, the EU should increase its emphasis on Least Developed Countries (while recognising and responding to the fact that 75 percent of the world's poor live in Middle Income Countries).

The EU also needs to deliver better on its commitment to civil society as a vital and independent actor in development – reaffirmed in the EU Structured Dialogue and subsequent Communication on civil society – by promoting an enabling environment for civil society organisations (CSOs), and ensuring that development processes (including EU programmes and instruments) encourage and support broad civil society participation. CSOs, as tangible expressions of the active engagement by European citizens with global issues, should also be supported in their efforts to inform the European public of the challenges and opportunities associated with globalisation.

Ireland and other EU Member States continue to improve the reach and impact of global education and awareness raising initiatives. The European Parliament recently adopted a Written Declaration on Development Education which calls for a comprehensive European Development Education strategy, while the Commission is engaged in a structured dialogue exercise on the role of CSOs in development. In light of the Parliament and

Commission support for development education, and given that 2013 is the European Year of the Citizen, Dóchas encourages the Irish Government to consider initiating an EU Council statement on Development Education during the Presidency.

## INCREASED AND IMPROVED FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

With increasing pressure on budgets for ODA, the EU has an important role to play in encouraging the use of new and innovative sources of finance for development and for climate action – such as financial transaction taxes and air or shipping transport levies.

In 2012, the European Council gave the green light for some countries to move ahead, through enhanced cooperation, with the implementation of a Financial Transactions Tax. The scope and rate are still under discussion by countries supporting the initiative, and negotiations on implementation and legislation are likely to continue under the EU Presidency. While Ireland has said it will not join the initiative (a position Dóchas would urge it to reconsider), Ireland can still play a vital role by facilitating good progress during its Presidency, and supporting efforts to have a proportion of the revenues ring-fenced for development and climate finance, in line with Ireland's and the EU's stated commitment to policy coherence for development.

As the existing debt cancellation scheme – the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) - draws to a close, many Southern countries still require increased debt cancellation. Dóchas supports the UN call for action for countries with continued debt distress; for debt cancellation for all low income countries and those excluded from HIPC or the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI); and for binding responsible lending and borrowing standards; and shared responsibilities between lenders and borrowers in dealing with debt cancellation.

## BEYOND AID

Cuts to Member States' development budgets also underline the need to look at initiatives that move countries away from a reliance on ODA. Taxes represent the most important, sustainable and predictable source of finance for developing country governments. The EU has recognised this, while also acknowledging that significant obstacles prevent countries from collecting the revenue to which they are entitled.

As a consequence of various forms of capital flight (with tax dodging a major component), developing countries fail to collect sufficient revenue to fund essential public services. Tax as a percentage of GDP in developing countries is around 15% compared to an OECD average of closer to 35%. Since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008, there have been numerous statements from the UN, the G20, the OECD and EU that more needs to be done to enable developing countries to collect the revenue to which they are entitled.

Continuing discussions on the revision of the EU Accounting and Transparency Directives, designed to help citizens of resource-rich countries hold mining, oil and forestry companies to account, are likely to conclude midway through the Irish Presidency. Ireland has a role to play to ensure that the compromise agreement reached between Council and Parliament includes a review clause that is sufficiently robust, and that it includes a commitment to explore the possibility of broadening the scope of the information required by the Directives, and to include additional sectors in the future.

Commission proposals to tackle tax avoidance, released in December 2012, will also be presented to EU Finance Ministers during the Irish Presidency. These could go some way to addressing the revenue loss to EU Member States, estimated at € .3 trillion per year, easing pressure on domestic budgets and reducing the need for damaging budget cuts. Importantly, measures to tackle tax avoidance also have the potential to work to the advantage of developing countries, many of which do not have the capacity to adequately police the activities of multinationals operating in their jurisdictions. The EU, having acknowledged that unilateral action

itself cannot tackle tax evasion and avoidance, should identify and implement further ways to help developing countries increase their revenues and reduce aid dependency. This should include ending tax haven secrecy. Developing countries also raise significant revenues through tariffs on imports, and are moving towards ensuring they gain more value from their raw materials through the use of export taxes. The EU should bear such development concerns in mind when it is negotiating free trade agreements with developing countries, and not ask them to forego these important sources of government revenue unfairly or prematurely due to its own economic interests.

## THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND DEVELOPMENT

The EU is also keen to open up a larger share of its aid spending to the private sector through the use of 'blended finance' (complementary grant and loans) to drive economic growth. Dóchas urges the Irish Presidency to ensure that EU development aid is primarily focused on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality rather than on stimulating economic growth, for which the EU has other tools and mechanisms and which does not automatically lead to a reduction in poverty. Development aid should not be directed or motivated by private sector interest in profit-generation.

NGOs also urge that private sector organisations commit and adhere to environmental, human rights and labour laws, regulations and best practice standards in the interest of sustainable development, and that the EU implements binding corporate accountability standards, including in the trade agreements it negotiates with developing countries.

Furthermore, the EU, in its trade and investment negotiations with developing countries, especially the Economic Partnership Agreements, should ensure that it applies special and differentiated treatment, and prioritises and substantially addresses the development interest and concerns of poor countries, rather than the commercial interest of European private sector actors. Europe's trade policy should respect developing countries' right to policy

space, and to forge their own economic path to development and poverty eradication, and not lock developing countries into a trade role which prevents them from being anything but exporters of raw materials.

## WITH REGARD TO THE EU BUDGET, DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Increase or at least protect the EU's External Action Budget (Heading 4) in the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF);
- II. Pursue progress towards the EU commitment to spending 0.7% of GNI on ODA, mapping out how the EU as a whole will meet the 0.7% international target by 2015, taking into account the individual responsibilities of Member States;
- III. Do its utmost to ensure a fair hearing for development cooperation and humanitarian funding in EU budget negotiations, including especially funding for the Development Cooperation Instrument;
- IV. Ensure EU development spending prioritises poverty eradication, by focusing on areas such as health, education and agriculture in order to benefit vulnerable and marginalised groups, including women and children;
- V. Support debt cancellation for developing countries with continuing high debt distress levels and support the establishment of internationally binding lending and borrowing standards to break the cycle of reckless borrowing and lending;
- VI. Ensure that the Instruments and mechanisms used for development programming are sufficient to cement the EU's recently reinforced commitment to civil society's role in development. Promote Instruments that support continued EU investment in global education and awareness raising, based on a comprehensive European Development Education strategy as called for by the European Parliament in its Written Declaration on Development Education (2012).

## WITH REGARD TO WIDER FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT, DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Ensure good progress in the enhanced cooperation negotiations on the Financial Transactions Tax, such that they reach a conclusion during its six-month term;
- II. Ensure that part of the revenues from such innovative sources of finance raised within the EU are ring-fenced for development and climate finance.

## WITH REGARD TO TAXATION, DOCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Play a constructive role in bringing to a conclusion discussions on the EU Transparency and Accounting Directives, ensuring that the agreement works for the benefit of citizens in resource-rich countries;
- II. In particular, ensure that the review clause is sufficiently robust to allow for the inclusion of additional sectors, and a widening of the scope of the Directives in the future. This should include the possibility of the introduction of full country by country reporting for all multinational companies;
- III. Use its Presidency to build on the EC proposals of December 2012, in particular looking for ways that could assist developing countries in increasing their revenue take;
- IV. Ensure that the EU takes a lead in challenging the insidious secrecy of tax havens, by requiring them to share critical information with developing countries on hidden wealth and assets, and to assist those countries to recover due taxes on that hidden wealth. An important step would be getting tax havens to sign up to the OECD/ Council of Europe Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters.

## WITH REGARD TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND DEVELOPMENT, DÓCHAS URGES THE IRISH EU PRESIDENCY TO:

- I. Ensure that any EU use of 'blended finance' using development funding is preceded by, and responds to, detailed analysis of the impact of existing instruments on poverty eradication, include clear criteria and safeguards, and adhere to EU commitments on policy coherence for development;
- II. Promote urgent and meaningful discussion of EU backing for improved regulatory frameworks in areas that have a significant impact on development, setting out a timeline for improved corporate reporting and prioritising country-by-country reporting, which will greatly increase tax transparency;
- III. Promote the strengthening of mechanisms that allow regulators and citizens in the global North and South to hold to account Transnational Corporations for their conduct *vis-à-vis* international laws, social and environmental standards and best practice guidelines.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Ireland's EU Presidency comes at an important time for the European Union, which needs to retain a progressive vision of itself in a global context rather than retreating inwards at a time of crisis. The Presidency also presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Ireland to influence the shape of the new development framework that will succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

The aim of that framework must be to steer progress towards a more just, equitable and sustainable world, in which every human being can realise their rights, within a political economy that shows greater respect for future generations and the planet.

The EU Presidency offers Ireland the chance to build a consensus that will see the EU champion a post-2015 framework that addresses the root causes of poverty, tackles inequality, fulfils human rights and promotes justice, and holds all parties involved in development (including wealthy countries, emerging actors and private corporations) accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities.

Dóchas members urge Ireland to use its Presidency to ensure progress on other EU agenda areas that align with key Irish foreign policy priorities (tackling global poverty and hunger; promoting peace, security and human rights), as set out in this paper.

This EU Presidency, the country's seventh, offers Ireland a timely opportunity to demonstrate its abiding strengths and abilities. It is an opportunity to convey important messages about the continuing potential of this country and of Europe. At another level, though, in the words of Minister for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton, Ireland's EU Presidency is *"about reflecting our values in the rest of the world and showing that the EU can provide leadership and support for the poorest regions of the world."*



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