

Reaction to annual NGO "AidWatch" Report

Irish NGOs welcome EU Commissioner's urgent call on EU Members to deliver on their aid promises

11 June 2010

European NGOs published the annual AidWatch Report yesterday. (See www.dochas.ie) The report, entitled "More and Better EU aid can score Millennium Development Goals", features an EU-wide assessment of progress on aid quantity and quality, and a country-by-country report on how each EU Member State is progressing towards their 2010 individual intermediate targets.

Commenting on this report, Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner for Development said:

*"This report comes at a right time as EU Ministers of Development will meet on Monday during the Foreign Affairs Council. **The European Commission has been calling for Member States to keep their promises on aid. Europe's credibility rests in sticking to our commitments.***

As we prepare for the UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals this September, we need a renewed commitment towards our partners and a common position so that Europe speaks with one voice in New York. We need to scale up aid, make it more effective and make other EU policies work for development.

We have just five years for the Millennium Development Goals to become the Millennium Development Achievements. This is doable and MDGs are just too big to fail.

On the amount of aid, I am determined to achieve that Member States agree to prepare concrete and credible yearly action plans to meet our 2015 target of 0.7% of GNI. This will be key if we are to call upon our international partners to match EU's level of ambition.

On the day of the launch of the AidWatch 2010 report, 61 Irish NGOs launched a campaign to ensure Ireland delivers on its aid promises. At the launch, Trócaire Director Justin Kilcullen said:

"Europe's leaders made - and reiterated - a promise to the world's poorest people, that they will not stand idly by when so many people die needlessly of preventable diseases and hunger. Now is the time to deliver on those promises."

The "Act Now on 2015" (www.ActNow2015.ie) campaign launched on 10 June, highlights Ireland's responsibilities in this regard, and points out that sustained investment in development cooperation presents an opportunity for Ireland to work toward a better future.

"Ireland has an opportunity in the coming weeks to push for an ambitious action plan by the European Union to deliver the Millennium Development Goals to tackle global poverty. The

government should publish its own action plan showing how it will deliver on its aid promise over the next five years,” said Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas and Chairperson of the campaign.

“As a small, open economy, Ireland depends on its global reputation as a reliable partner and as a people that keeps its promises. This year is our opportunity to cement that reputation” said Mr. Zomer on behalf of the campaign.

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Commissioner Piebalgs comments can be verified with Wojtek Talko, Press Officer, European Commission: +32 2 297 85 51 or +32 498 978 551 – wojtek.talko@ec.europa.eu

NOTES

- Irish NGOs set out their position on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in their submission published in April this year. The submission is available at http://www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/2/Dochas_MDG_paper_April2010.pdf
- On 10 June, 61 NGOs launched a campaign aimed at ensuring Ireland delivers on its aid promise. More details on the campaign are available from www.dochas.ie and from www.ActNow2015.ie
- The European Commission adopted its 12 point EU action plan in support of the Millennium Development Goals on 21 April 2010 – see [IP/10/451](http://ec.europa.eu/press/2010/04/21_ip10451_en.htm)
- Commissioner Piebalgs' website showcases development in action: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/index_en.htm
- An EU funded monitor of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals can be found at: <http://esl.jrc.it/dc/>
- The Aidwatch report 2010 is available from Dóchas (http://www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/2/Penalty_Against_Poverty%5B1%5D.pdf) and from the CONCORD Website (<http://www.concordeurope.org>)