



PRESS RELEASE

ACT NOW ON 2015, say 61 NGOs

Campaign launched today to highlight the importance of tackling global poverty, and the need for Ireland to deliver on its overseas aid promise.

(Dublin, 10 June 2010). Former Taoiseach Dr. Garret FitzGerald today launched “**Act Now on 2015**”, a campaign led by 61 anti-poverty organisations to call on Government to deliver on its promise to reach the UN target of spending 0.7% of national income on overseas aid by 2015.

Launching the campaign Dr. Garret FitzGerald, the first Taoiseach to see the strategic importance to Ireland of having a dedicated development cooperation programme, said:

“If we are to end extreme poverty, it is vital that all countries, rich and poor alike, deliver on the promises they have made. Ireland should honour its promise to raise, within a couple of years, its official aid to 0.7% of GNI.”

The launch of Act Now on 2015 comes ahead of the European Council meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which will take place in Brussels on 17-18 June. At this meeting, European heads of state will decide a common EU position for this September's MDG summit at the UN.

“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.

The campaign is calling on the government to:

- Announce binding annual targets to achieve 0.7% by 2015 at the latest;
- Enact legislation to guarantee Ireland's aid commitment.

The launch coincides with the release of the annual AidWatch report, which tracks the EU's progress towards achieving its aid quantity and quality commitments. The report is compiled by CONCORD, the European NGO confederation, and this year's report finds that EU donors, including Ireland, are falling short of the promises they made.

“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,” said Justin Kilcullen, Director of Trócaire and President of the EU-wide NGO umbrella organisation CONCORD.

ENDS

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Notes for the Editor:

- **About the aid promises:**
 - At the UN Millennium Summit, then Taoiseach Bertie Ahern committed Ireland to reaching the UN target for spending 0.7% of our GNP on overseas aid by 2007.
 - In 2005, the target date was revised to 2012. The government set interim targets “against which our progress towards the target can be measured”.
 - The Government announced in December 2009 that it had postponed the 0.7% target yet again, this time until 2015.
 - Ireland's aid budget currently stands at €671m.
- For further information about the "**Act Now on 2015**" campaign, visit www.actnow2015.ie.
- The **AidWatch** Report 2010, *Penalty Against Poverty: More and better EU aid can score Millennium Development Goals*, is available at http://www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/2/Penalty_Against_Poverty.pdf
- The "**Act Now on 2015**" campaign is coordinated by [Dóchas](http://www.dochas.ie), an umbrella group of 45 Irish Development NGOs, and supported by the following organisations:
 1. ActionAid Ireland
 2. Afri
 3. Africa Centre
 4. Age Action Ireland
 5. Amawele
 6. Amnesty International Ireland
 7. A-Z Children's Charity
 8. Bóthar
 9. Camara
 10. Centre for Global Education
 11. Childfund Ireland
 12. Children in Crossfire
 13. Christian Aid Ireland
 14. Christian Blind Mission
 15. Church Missionary Society Ireland (CMSI)
 16. Comhlámh
 17. Concern Worldwide
 18. Debt and Development Coalition

19. Development Perspectives
20. Dóchas
21. Foundation Nepal
22. Friends of Londiani
23. Frontline Defenders
24. Galway One World Centre (GOWC)
25. Gorta
26. Habitat for Humanity Ireland
27. Hope Foundation
28. Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)
29. Irish Council for International Students (ICOS)
30. Irish Development Education Association (IDEA)
31. Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA)
32. Irish League of Credit Unions Foundation (ILCUF)
33. Irish Missionary Union (IMU)
34. Irish Red Cross
35. International Service Ireland (ISI)
36. Just Forests
37. Kerry Action for Development Education (KADE)
38. Link Community Development
39. Misean Cara
40. National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCi)
41. National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)
42. Niall Mellon Township Trust
43. Oxfam Ireland
44. Plan Ireland
45. Sierra Leone Ireland Partnership
46. Sightsavers International Ireland
47. Skillshare International Ireland
48. Social Justice Ireland
49. The Society of St. Vincent De Paul, Ireland
50. Suas Educational Development
51. The SCOOP Foundation
52. Transparency International Ireland
53. Trócaire
54. Value Added in Africa
55. Vita
56. Voluntary Service International (VSI)
57. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)
58. Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM)
59. War on Want Northern Ireland
60. World Vision Ireland
61. 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World