



THERE'S POWER IN THE PARLIAMENT

10 ways Irish MEPs
can make a difference for development
in the next Parliamentary term

poverty
eradication

policy
coherence

tackling
hunger

effective
institutions

climate
change

humanitarian
aid

trade
justice

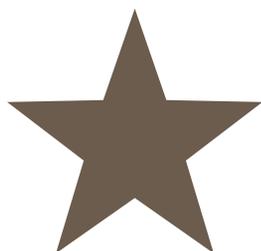
human
security

more and
better aid

financing for
development

**Dochas**

The Irish Association of Non-Governmental
Development Organisations



Foreword

This document sets out Irish development NGOs' agenda for Ireland's representatives in the European Parliament in the next term, 2009 to 2014.

It was produced by Dóchas, the network representing Irish development NGOs – supported by some 850,000 people on the island of Ireland – in recognition of the enormous importance the European Parliament can have for sustainable human development.

The European Union is a key global player, with significant political and economic weight in decisions that affect the world's entire population, including the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people.

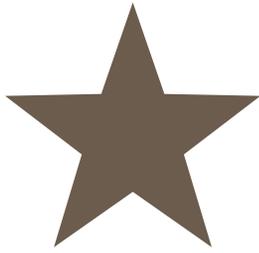
The European Parliament is the only EU institution directly elected by citizens and is therefore a crucial element in having European policy reflect people's concerns, as well as providing democratic oversight and control on the exercise of power.

This document aims to help influence and guide all prospective Irish MEPs – Ireland's voice in Europe – on vital issues for development during the next term of the Parliament.

It sets out the key elements that development NGOs consider should guide the EU's external and development cooperation policies, and outlines 10 particular ways in which Irish MEPs can help the EU make a positive contribution to sustainable human development.

There's Power in the Parliament – increasingly so. We urge Irish MEPs to use it for the benefit of the world's poor, marginalised and vulnerable by taking some of the following actions:

-  Protect poor countries and the most vulnerable within them.
-  Urge Europe to get to grips with the world's hunger crisis.
-  Make sure the EU is a global leader in tackling climate change.
-  Push for European progress on trade justice.
-  Hold the EU to its promises on aid quantity and quality.
-  Bring creative thinking to financing for development.
-  Focus on rights and human security.
-  Protect independent, impartial humanitarian action.
-  Get the EU institutions and structures working for development.
-  Tackle wider European actions undermining the world's poor.



Introduction

The EU is a key actor on the international stage and the largest donor of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in the world. Since the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC), development cooperation has been a central pillar of Europe's relations with the global community – an external expression of internal values and principles including equality, solidarity, human rights and multilateralism.

Europe's role also clearly extends beyond being an aid donor. Through its wider external relations, it has a much broader role and responsibility in bringing about a fairer world.

In this context, the European Parliament has a crucial role to play in galvanising the European Union's commitment to development.

Effective development cooperation and humanitarian assistance - together with policy coherence for development in other areas that is needed to complement and sustain them - are a tangible expression of Europe using its wealth and influence responsibly as part of the global community. Indeed, EU commitment to international justice and human rights, together with principled and effective development cooperation, is a key element of the 'social and responsible Europe' that many Irish people want to see.

Development is also one area around which citizens unite, where ambition and action have the clear support of Irish citizens and our European friends. It is recognised as one of the elements that have contributed to the success of the EU itself. In the words of former Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern:

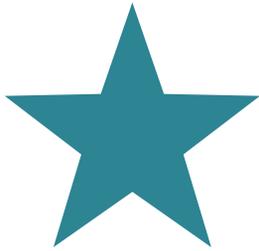
*"... The Union has crafted a common approach to the rest of the world. This approach has been built very much on what one could call soft power – development aid, strong support for multilateral engagement and an increasing commitment to peace-keeping and support for humanitarian tasks. This presence of Europe in the world, has I believe, acted as a stabilising force in many regions and created awareness in other parts of the world of the usefulness of the European model."*¹

Dóchas members and their 850,000 supporters are a passionate and committed constituency which recognises the crucial role Irish MEPs can play in ensuring that the EU keeps development cooperation and independent humanitarian aid at its heart.

Irish people are known for their commitment to global justice and overseas development, and political leadership at national and European levels should reflect that commitment. Dóchas members encourage all candidates for the European Parliament elections, including sitting MEPs, to commit to a strong and progressive approach to overseas development, international justice and human rights.

As Dóchas calls on Irish MEPs to hold Europe to its international responsibilities, similar messages are being conveyed to politicians across Europe through CONCORD (the European confederation of agencies working in international development, emergency relief and development education), which represents more than 1,600 civil society organisations supported by millions of European citizens.

¹ Former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern speaking at The Future of Europe – Uniting Vision, Values and Citizens CFJ Conference, Croke Park, 27 September 2005



Protect poor countries and the most vulnerable within them

With the growing global economic crisis, we are all being forced to re-examine how best to spend our resources as individuals, nations and as part of the EU. Yet, for many of the most vulnerable in our global society – including women, children, the elderly, people living with disabilities and those affected by HIV and AIDS – the economic crisis means a further slip into poverty and out of sight, with even less chance of a better future.

Many vulnerable people could be lifted out of poverty by improved social services and the provision of some type of social protection, or ‘safety nets’. Dóchas urges Irish candidates for the European Parliament to ensure that EU aid remains focused on, and inclusive of, the most vulnerable in society, ensuring that its overseas development work is truly inclusive.

The obstacles to development are enormous for many women and girls, with particular challenges in poor countries. Women are society’s primary carers, yet some 500,000 women die each year due to preventable pregnancy-related complications. Policy makers often overlook key issues for half the world’s population, such as women’s right to own and inherit property, female genital mutilation, gender-based violence, access to reproductive health, and equal representation in decision-making.

Despite two Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) specifically targeted at education, 75 million of the world’s poorest and most marginalised children still do not have access to a basic education. 55% of those out of school are girls and one-third have a disability.

One in five of the world’s poorest people have a disability, and 82% of people with disabilities in developing countries live below the poverty line. People with disabilities are the only vulnerable group omitted from the MDGs and, despite a resolution passed by the European Parliament in 2006, disability remains a peripheral issue in EU policies.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Ensure that the eradication of poverty remains at the heart of Europe’s engagement with developing countries, and that the promotion of gender equality is taken into account as a key element of development cooperation and of Europe’s wider external relations agenda;
- ★ Advocate for achievement of the agreed commitment to spend 20% of ODA on basic health and basic education, and hold the Commission to account for any failure to achieve that; and
- ★ Ensure that increased spending on education, health, water and sanitation, and social ‘safety nets’ is targeted at the poorest and most vulnerable in developing countries, through approaches that specifically include women, children, the elderly, people living with disabilities and those infected with, or affected, by HIV.



Urge Europe to get to grips with the world's hunger crisis

The fact that almost one billion people go hungry every day is a scandal and a stain on our humanity. In Africa alone, the number of people vulnerable to hunger has increased since 1990 and now reaches 400 million.

This crisis accelerated in 2008 as a result of increases in food prices, which in turn exposed the great vulnerability of the world's poorest people, the "bottom billion" described by commentators. Food riots occurred in over 30 countries and a number of governments imposed export bans and taxes to keep domestic food prices down.

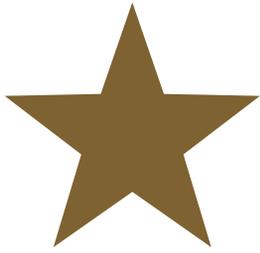
World leaders were forced to recognise the importance of food security and agriculture more so than at any time since the early 1970s. The elements of a coherent response have begun to emerge, but there remains a long way to go.

The European Union has played its part in this response and must continue to do so. It must demonstrate a meaningful commitment to short, medium and long term policy change in favour of hunger eradication. Beyond emergency responses and support for social protection measures, it must prioritise agriculture.

Almost half the world's hungry are marginalised farmers, living on small farms but not able to produce enough food to feed themselves. Europe must focus on increasing investment in agriculture, food production and nutrition in developing countries; increasing the productivity of small and marginal farmers, many of them women; and increasing the involvement of ordinary people, including farmers' and women's groups, in decisions that affect their lives. The EU must also ensure that it is coherent in its trade, agriculture and development policies.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Engage progressively on all efforts to ensure that Europe deploys adequate and appropriate emergency supplies, whether in terms of food aid or, in certain circumstances, cash supports to buy food;
- ★ Advocate for increased and sustained European investment in agriculture in developing countries, accompanied by clear indicators of the intended impact on the poorest and most vulnerable;
- ★ Provide democratic scrutiny over programming of European aid, including the €1billion EU Food Facility, and encourage democratic engagement of small farmers groups, women's groups and other civil society actors in policy processes at local, national and European levels; and
- ★ Ensure Europe's efforts are aligned to and supportive of national, regional and international initiatives, including the *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme*, the *Comprehensive Framework for Action*, and the new *Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition*.



Make sure the EU is a global leader in tackling climate change

The Earth's warming climate is estimated to be responsible for 150,000 deaths and 5 million illnesses each year, a total that could double by 2030, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Many millions more have been affected by the increasing number and severity of disasters such as floods, hurricanes and droughts. Without an adequate global deal to halt and reverse the changes in our climate, a climate catastrophe will be inevitable. The EU will play a critical role in ensuring that a global deal is reached and implemented.

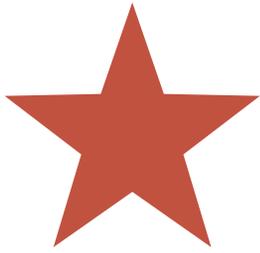
The EU must recognise its responsibility for contributing to this problem and for assisting vulnerable communities across the world that are already being confronted by the ongoing and devastating impacts of climate change - a problem they did not create and are least able to cope with.

Europe must call for and contribute to adaptation efforts with new, adequate, sufficient, timely and additional resources to support developing countries in their efforts to reduce the impact of climate change. The costs of adaptation for developing countries are already estimated at €40 billion per annum: this funding must come from new and innovative sources of financing, additional to overseas aid. The EU has a key role to play in developing the mechanisms to generate these funds and ensuring that they are managed and distributed in an equitable way.

The global climate talks under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are due to conclude in Copenhagen in December 2009, during the Parliament's next term. At these talks the international community must agree on, and put into force, new international mechanisms to urgently address climate change and manage its impact. This is a crucial moment for the EU to show much-needed leadership and commitment, and to ensure that vulnerable populations bear neither the cost of lowering greenhouse gas emissions or of adaptation to climate change, which they have not caused.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Ensure that the EU supports a global deal to keep global warming to as far below 2°C as possible;
- ★ Push for a global deal that cuts greenhouse gas emissions in developed countries, such as those in the EU, by at least 40% by 2020; and
- ★ Ensure that the EU calls for and substantially contributes to new, adequate, sufficient, timely and additional resources to support the efforts of developing countries to adapt to the impact of climate change.



Push for European progress on trade justice

The EU, as the largest economic bloc in the world and its biggest exporter, has enormous influence on world trade and therefore on the livelihoods of millions of people across the developing world.

But EU trade policy is deeply unfair to developing countries as it continues to push for trade agreements which are harmful to the interests of developing countries and those living in poverty. There must be enhanced co-operation between the International Labour Organisation and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to ensure that labour rights are promoted and not undermined by international trade.

At the WTO the EU has sought agreements that threaten developing countries' abilities to regulate their own economies in the public interest.

In a series of proposed bilateral trade agreements being negotiated under the 'Global Europe' strategy, the EU is also proposing further opening of poor country markets and additional rules that will restrict access to technology, including seeds and medicines.

Most controversial of all are the proposed Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) currently in negotiation with ACP countries, which include 39 of the poorest countries in the world – including many of Ireland's priority countries for development cooperation. These agreements seek to open up markets to EU exports at the expense of jobs, livelihoods and government revenue in developing countries; they make technology more expensive; and restrict developing countries' options for future economic development.

Under the Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament will have an expanded role in shaping EU trade policy.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Call for a rethink of EU trade policy to ensure that it prioritises development, environmental sustainability, core labour standards and human rights objectives, especially with regard to the world's poorest countries;
- ★ Actively participate in scrutinising the new Commission and its trade strategies during the life of the Parliament, especially those with particular impact on poor countries, such as EPAs, to ensure that they support and facilitate development objectives; and
- ★ Ensure that EU trade agreements do not hinder the regional development and integration of Europe's trade partners in the developing world, or negatively affect lives, livelihoods and the ability of governments in the developing world to decide their countries' economic futures.



Hold the EU to its promises on aid quantity and quality

The new term of office of the European Parliament (2009-2014) coincides with the lead up to the 2015 deadline for achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As we move beyond the mid-point to these eight global anti-poverty targets, there are well-grounded fears that some will not be met. Climate change and the global recession are further threatening their achievement. Against this background, it is vital that the EU lives up to its promises to increase aid and make possible the achievement of the MDGs.

The EU currently gives over half of world aid and has promised to increase its aid spending to 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2015². However, many Member States are not on track to reaching these targets.

Ireland has made substantial progress in recent years towards its commitment to give 0.7% of national wealth as aid by 2012, ahead of the UN deadline, though substantial cuts in 2008 and 2009 make its interim target of 0.6% by 2010 difficult for the Government to attain. MEPs are well placed to keep the pressure on the EU and its Member States, and ensure that the EU as a whole delivers on its commitments.

In tandem with promises to increase aid, the EU and other donors have agreed to take measures to make aid work better: the so-called "aid effectiveness" agenda. These are contained in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and further elaborated under the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action³.

As the largest donor in the world, Europe must show leadership in honouring its commitments in terms of aid volumes and in terms of making aid work better for the poor. The next European Parliament must ensure that the EU meets its commitments on aid quantity and quality in order to speed up progress towards the MDGs.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Ensure the EU delivers on its commitment to give 0.7% of GNI as ODA by 2015 and to give 50% of this increase to Africa;
- ★ Ensure that aid is driven by the priorities and needs of the people it is supposed to benefit;
- ★ Ensure EU aid becomes more effective through the timely implementation of the Accra Agenda for Action; and
- ★ Make EU aid more transparent and accountable.

² The EU has made a collective commitment to spend 0.7% of GNI as ODA by 2015 with an interim target of 0.56% by 2010. The 15 "old" EU Member States agreed an individual target of 0.51% ODA/GNI by 2010 and the 12 that joined after 2002 committed to an individual target of 0.33% by 2010.

³ The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, endorsed on 2 March 2005, is an international agreement to which over 100 developing countries, donors, regional development banks and international agencies adhered. The Declaration aims to streamline the way aid is delivered with a view to making it more effective in reducing poverty. The Accra Agenda for Action was agreed in September 2005 during a review of the Paris Declaration carried out in Accra, Ghana.

What you can do as an MEP

Irish MEPs can be a powerful voice for development.

Take 3 simple steps to put yourself on the development path:

- ★ During the hearings on the new Commission, ask the nominees for Commissioner to set out how their proposed areas of competence will affect developing countries – and how they propose to ensure a positive impact.
- ★ During the annual Budget discussions, ensure that sufficient funds are made available by the EU for development programmes that directly target poverty, and for effective, independent humanitarian action in chronic and sudden emergencies.
- ★ Inform your Irish constituents on a regular basis about the EU's contribution – and your unique initiatives within that – to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and making poverty history.

Some of the other ways you can help during the Parliamentary term include:

- ★ Drafting relevant legislation and proposing amendments.
- ★ Engaging in relevant Committee business and doing preparatory work for plenary sessions.
- ★ Writing or amending special reports.
- ★ Making written declarations.
- ★ Submitting oral and written questions to the European Commission.
- ★ Leading or joining study visits.
- ★ Promoting key development, humanitarian, human rights, aid, governance or justice issues - whether global, regional or related to individual developing countries, crises or troubled areas.

Work for poverty eradication and EU coherence for development

Within the European Parliament, the Development and Foreign Affairs Committees offer very obvious possibilities for MEPs to exert a positive influence in favour of principled and effective development and humanitarian action.

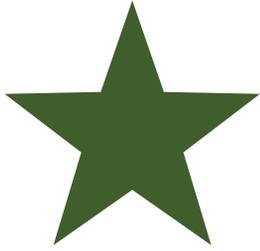
MEPs can also be a positive influence on the EU's policy coherence for development through their participation in other Committees (Budgets, Agriculture and Rural Development, International Trade, Women's Rights and Gender Equality to name but a few). Engagement can be on a broad range of thematic issues or particular national or regional issues across the developing world.

At all times and in all of these different fora, Irish MEPs can help ensure that EU development policy remains clearly focused on the eradication of poverty. Actions towards developing countries must be based on Europe's development policy, and that policy must not become a tool of wider foreign and security policy.

The European Parliament has already demonstrated that it can be a strong and progressive force for change on issues such as the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the controversial Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, the introduction of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), and the promotion of a robust International Accounting Standard that requires country-by-country reporting.

It is the clear hope of all Dóchas member organisations, supported by 850,000 Irish people, that Irish MEPs will take a leading role over the next Parliamentary term in advancing development, humanitarian action, human rights and justice issues.

Please visit www.dochas.ie for more information



Bring creative thinking to financing for development

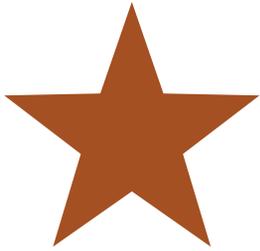
In the long term, eradicating poverty and inequality must involve developing countries mobilising their own domestic and international resources for development. The EU has a strong role to play in facilitating and supporting that, making this a key theme for Europe in the policy coherence for development agenda. Important challenges include generating more resources for development, mobilising domestic and international resources for development, tackling the injustices in the international financial and trading systems and addressing systemic issues that drain resources from developing countries.

Tax evasion and illicit capital flows from southern to northern countries cost poor countries between €271 and €388 billion every year, 5 times the volume of global aid. Much of this arises from commercial tax evasion, through transfer mis-pricing facilitated by a lack of transparency in offshore financial centres and inadequate international accounting standards. Many developing countries also continue to suffer under the burden of illegitimate debt and there is an urgent need for expanded, unconditional debt cancellation for poor countries, together with the cancellation of all illegitimate debts.

The international community made pledges on these issues under the Monterrey Consensus of 2002, which was reviewed in December 2008 at a UN Conference in Doha. Progress has been slow and much more needs to be done to free up vital domestic resources for development and increase other sources of finance.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ See that the EU responds effectively to the impact of the global economic crisis on developing countries by meeting their aid commitments in the first place, and then mobilising additional funding to mitigate the effects of the banking and credit crises;
- ★ Support innovative sources of financing to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (such as proposed levies on currency transactions, or ring-fencing for poor countries a given percentage of the proceeds of carbon trading quotas);
- ★ Intensify the fight against tax evasion, including through better cooperation between tax authorities inside the EU and with third countries;
- ★ Support European Parliament initiatives to demand mandatory country-by-country reporting by transnational corporations of their profits and taxes, as part of a new International Accounting Standard;
- ★ Urge the EU to support the reform of the global financial system, including equal representation of developing countries in the reform process; and
- ★ Promote the cancellation of debts, without conditions, for developing countries that need it, and the creation of an international taskforce on illegitimate debts that will oversee both sides of the debt equation, including holding creditors to account for creating unjust debts.



Focus on rights and human security

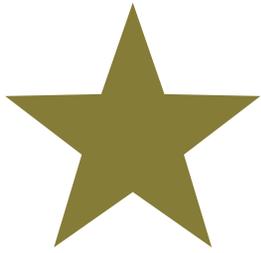
One of the key issues of concern to Irish and EU citizens and politicians is that of a safe Europe in a secure world. An increasing number of the initiatives, however, seem to focus primarily on military and terrorist threats, ignoring wider aspects of human security.

The real danger of the militarised approach lies in its potential to ignore, or indeed worsen, the underlying threats to human security: poverty, disease and injustice. Resources are being diverted from long-term solutions in favour of initiatives addressing the symptoms, not the causes, of insecurity.

The global economic, food and climate crises – all caused by rich countries – are having a heavy impact on poor countries. But we live in an increasingly inter-connected world and, even if one looks to benign self-interest, there's a strong case for the EU to work on enhancing human security. The EU cannot exist as an island of privilege in a wider world wracked by poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, disease and war because the effects will inevitably come to impinge on it – through economic chaos, the threat or reality of violent conflict and terrorism, environmental destruction, mass migration, disease pandemics, and other means.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Ensure that the EU builds its security and foreign policies on the values that are at the core of the European project: human rights, democracy, peaceful cooperation, rule of law and economic development;
- ★ Put people and their security at the heart of EU decision-making. Europe must focus on all types of threats to human security - not just the headline grabbing violent threats, but also the silent assault on people's lives manifested by human rights violations, political exclusion, oppression and structural poverty;
- ★ Focus not just on civil and political rights, but also realising social and economic rights (addressing food, water, core labour standards, decent work, and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexuality, HIV status, for example) and on realising collective rights, or so-called 3rd generation rights: to development, peace, common resources and a good environment; and
- ★ Commit to the emerging doctrine of an international responsibility to protect the weak and oppressed. The EU has a proud track record of pursuing sustainable, democratic and economic solutions before military answers. It needs to complement this experience with a commitment to side with the weak and uprooted.



Protect independent, impartial humanitarian action

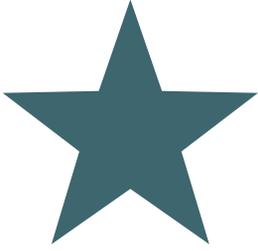
The global food crisis pushed millions more into hunger in 2008. The effects of climate change are likely to bring a greater number of more severe droughts, floods and other severe weather events, and economic recession has severely limited the coping mechanisms of nations, communities and individuals. The net effect is predicted to be bigger or deeper humanitarian crises in the coming years, with the poor and marginalised groups as ever most affected.

A key issue through the term of the next European Parliament will be implementation at EU and Member State levels of the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid* (2007), which establishes the political framework and principles guiding EU humanitarian action. Closely related to that is the need for adherence to humanitarian principles and needs-based humanitarian action (independent from political consideration) in the EU's external relations, regardless of whatever shape the European External Action Service takes when it comes into being.

Other important issues include the continuing reform of the global humanitarian system to deliver better and more efficient assistance; the EU's promotion of the international 'responsibility to protect' doctrine; the nature and limits of civil-military relations in responding to emergencies; the links to humanitarian action of efforts to address disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation; continued progress on the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative; and the workings of the new Council working group on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA).

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Ensure the political and policy space to allow the EU and Member States to deliver effective humanitarian assistance that is independent, impartial and neutral, regardless of broader EU foreign policy goals;
- ★ Provide and promote Irish leadership on the effective implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid;
- ★ Increase, or at least protect, the EU humanitarian budget to ensure the resources for ECHO, EU Member States and relevant NGO actors to deliver effective, needs-based assistance in continuing and sudden-onset humanitarian emergencies – and preparing poor countries to cope with such emergencies; and
- ★ Support the continued diversity of civilian humanitarian actors providing effective assistance in compliance with international law and humanitarian principles.



Get the EU institutions and structures working for development

In the early days of its next term, MEPs will be addressing the composition of the next European Commission, the outcome of the ongoing EU budget review and the review of various EU development programmes among other issues. All of these changes will have a profound impact on Europe's ability to fulfil its potential as a trusted partner in the fight against poverty and inequality.

During the upcoming term, Europe will have to make progress on the Reform Treaty. That provides for the creation of a new EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and a new diplomatic service, the European External Action Service (EEAS), two additions to the current structure that will inevitably have an impact on roles and responsibilities across the institutions. These changes present notable challenges, but also offer the potential for greater coherence in the formulation and implementation of development and humanitarian assistance policies.

At present, responsibility for the formulation and roll out of Europe's policies towards developing countries is fragmented across Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), Directorate-General for Development (DG DEV), Directorate-General for External Relations (DG RELEX) and the Directorate-General responsible for implementing external aid programmes. The new Commission is an opportunity to resolve this fragmentation and move towards **greater institutional coherence**.

Dóchas recommends that the next Commission include a single Commissioner for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance, with a mandate for all developing countries and in charge of all aspects of the project cycle from programming through to implementation. It is especially important that the delegation staff members implementing EU aid are recruited by, integrated into and accountable to this single structure, and that the mandate and integrity of the Commissioner is preserved when the new High Representative for Union Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the EEAS are established.

MEPs' role in providing **democratic scrutiny** is a crucial one in all areas, including aid quantity and quality as well as wider EU policies affecting developing countries. At present, the Parliament is limited to scrutinising EC aid to Asia and Latin America only, with no similar responsibility in relation to the ACP region. This inconsistency needs to be addressed during the next term of the European Parliament. Funding to the ACP region accounts for almost half of EC aid spending and the vast majority of the Commission's general budget support goes to Africa. The European Parliament should clearly have full democratic oversight of all EC aid, including aid to Africa.

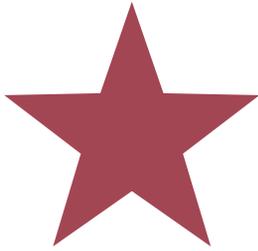
The European Development Fund (EDF) should also be included in the regular EU budget to ensure oversight across the entire EC budget.

Parliamentary scrutiny of EC aid should not stop in Brussels: it is equally essential in developing countries, and the European Parliament can support strengthening of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and of national parliaments in developing countries.

The EC's funding for development is currently divided between several different headings in the annual EU budget, which reduces the transparency and predictability of the EU budget. The creation of a specific heading for development would improve financial coherence, consistency and transparency.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Engage proactively on the composition of the next European Commission, as well as the ongoing review of the budget and various EU development programmes, in order to ensure positive development outcomes;
- ★ Support the case for a single Commissioner for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance, with a mandate for all developing countries, to ensure political and policy space in these areas even as new EU institutional arrangements come into force;
- ★ Promote the need for the European Parliament to scrutinise all EC aid, including the EDF and aid to Africa, and for greater scrutiny of EU policies affecting developing countries within their national parliaments; and
- ★ Strive for more coherent and transparent financial allocations through a clear development budget heading, and ensure that the European Parliament scrutinises EU delivery on its commitment to allocate 20% of EC official development assistance to basic health and basic education.



Tackle wider European actions undermining the world's poor

Though more and better aid is very important to the poor and vulnerable of the world, the role of Ireland or the EU in tackling global poverty and injustice is not just a matter of providing aid. As highlighted in the 2005 *EU Consensus on Development*, there is also a need to make progress in tackling other policy areas that hinder development – or even undermine aid efforts – by bringing a more coherent approach across Europe to the fight against poverty and injustice.

This **Policy Coherence for Development** (PCD) is important at an Irish level but even more so at EU level, given the nature and importance of EU competencies but also the impact that many EU policies (including Economic Partnership Agreements, the EU-Africa Strategy and many others) have on developing countries.

This is especially true of certain policy areas that can have an enormous impact on development – positive or negative – such as trade, agriculture, migration, energy and climate change policy, security, fisheries, and so forth.

Development cooperation is recognised, right across party political lines, as a central plank of Ireland's foreign policy. There is, therefore, a greater need to ensure that Ireland brings its development interests and priorities to bear at EU level – including through, but not only through, European Parliament scrutiny and oversight.

The European Commission is now producing biennial progress reports on Policy Coherence for Development by the EU and Member States. The second report is being prepared in 2009 and this focus could help galvanise European political will to remove the obstacles the EU puts before developing countries, especially in areas like trade and agriculture.

Development priorities will not always win out in the cut and thrust of EU democratic decision-making, but a dynamic, proactive PCD process, strongly supported by the European Parliament, can at least make the case for sustainable human development.

Dóchas urges Irish MEPs to:

- ★ Promote policy coherence for development, and vital themes within that wider agenda, in order to minimise EU incoherence and its negative effects on the poor in developing countries;
- ★ Work to redress first those EU policy incoherencies with the greatest impact on developing countries, and especially the poor within them; and
- ★ Consistently push for the EU to mitigate the worst effects of its policies where incoherence is unavoidable.



REMEMBER, YOU HAVE POWER IN THE PARLIAMENT TO:

- Protect poor countries and the most vulnerable within them.
- Urge Europe to get to grips with the world's hunger crisis.
- Make sure the EU is a global leader in tackling climate change.
- Push for European progress on trade justice.
- Hold the EU to its promises on aid quantity and quality.
- Bring creative thinking to financing for development.
- Focus on rights and human security.
- Protect independent, impartial humanitarian action.
- Get the EU institutions and structures working for development.
- Tackle wider European actions undermining the world's poor.



The Irish Association of Non-Governmental
Development Organisations

Dochas is the umbrella organisation of Irish Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) involved in development and relief overseas and/or development education in Ireland. Dochas aims to provide a forum for consultation and co-operation among its Members as well as to help them speak with a single voice on development issues.

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