

**DÓCHAS**  
*The Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organisations*

**PRESS RELEASE**

28 May, 2013

**Irish NGOs welcome EU's new vision to fight poverty and climate change but urge need for strong accountability mechanisms**

**On World Hunger Day, Irish Government ensures EU prioritises global hunger and nutrition**

At the European Foreign Affairs (Development) Council in Brussels today, European Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers committed to ending extreme poverty within one generation and setting the world on an environmentally sustainable and socially just path.

Irish development NGOs welcomed this as a positive step towards advancing a new global framework for sustainable development to succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

Welcoming the EU Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers' statement, Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas – the Irish Association of Development NGOs – said:

“The EU's new commitments to the global poverty and sustainability agenda are extremely welcome. Today, the EU has committed to a vision that integrates the twin challenges of poverty eradication and climate change into a single, universal framework and the EU's leadership on this approach is to be commended.”

“Last February, the European Commission issued its vision for the EU's role in creating an ambitious post-2015 framework for fighting poverty and climate change. We are pleased to see that philosophy and many of its recommendations contained in today's conclusions, but we remain concerned about the lack of concrete proposals for *how* the EU will achieve this and how it will be held to account for it.”

Dóchas pointed out that today's announcement, containing commitments on global hunger and nutrition, coincides with World Hunger Day.

“Ireland has been recognised internationally for raising the issue of global hunger and nutrition. It is worth noting that on World Hunger Day, through the efforts of the Irish

Government and Irish NGOs engaging the EU Presidency, Ireland has strengthened the EU's commitment to the 800 million people who go hungry every day and who, we hope, can now look to a better future," said Zomer.

Dóchas, however, expressed disappointment at the EU's lack of explicit commitment to mechanisms to hold governments to account for the targets they commit to. Zomer said:

"The Millennium Development Goals prove what can be achieved when governments commit to targets to end the worst instances of extreme poverty. Four goals have already been achieved ahead of the 2015 deadline, but the lack of explicit accountability mechanisms has been widely recognised as a major reason for the global failure to meet the remaining four. We urge the EU and governments around the world to ensure that history does not repeat itself."

"We are astounded that today EU members reaffirmed their commitment to spending 0.7% of GNI by 2015 on overseas aid yet their track record shows that very few countries are taking their pledges seriously. It appears that - without debate in the Oireachtas - the Irish Government has set itself the target of lowering our aid budget to 0.44% of GNI by 2015. This is far short of our current aid levels and of the 2015 target which the EU reiterated just hours ago."

Irish NGOs are also disappointed that EU Ministers' conclusions take a 'business as usual' approach with regard to addressing the damaging levels of unsustainable production and consumption in European countries.

"It is a shame that EU Ministers have shied away from making concrete commitments on what the EU is ready to do to play its part in addressing unsustainable levels of production and consumption. Developed countries have done more to impact on the lives of the world's poor through our contribution to climate change. We are called on to play our part, and it would have been an important and constructive political message to the international community if the EU had committed itself more ambitiously and responsibly in this regard," concluded Zomer.

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## Notes to editors

- The Dóchas Policy on the post-2015 global framework for development ‘The World We Want: the Opportunity of the Irish EU Presidency’ can be downloaded here: <http://worldwewant.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/dochas-EU-v6-lowres.pdf>
- Further information on the Dóchas World We Want campaign is available at the campaign website: [www.worldwewant.ie](http://www.worldwewant.ie)
- Dóchas is the association of Irish Non-Governmental Development Organisations and a member of CONCORD Europe. It provides a forum for consultation and cooperation between its 51 member organisations, and helps them speak with a single voice on development issues. For more information, visit: <http://www.dochas.ie>.

## DÓCHAS MEMBERS

ActionAid Ireland – Afri – Africa Centre – Aidlink – AIDS Partnership with Africa – Alan Kerins Projects – Amnesty International Ireland – Camara Education – Centre for Global Education – Child Aid Ireland–India – ChildFund Ireland – Children in Crossfire – Christian Aid Ireland – CBM Ireland – Comhlámh – Concern Worldwide – Development Perspectives – Foundation Nepal – Friends of Londiani (Ireland) – Galway One World Centre – Gorta – Habitat for Humanity Ireland – Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) – Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) – Irish League of Credit Unions International Development Foundation (ILCU/IDF) – Irish Missionary Union (IMU) – Irish Red Cross (IRC) – Kerry One World Centre (KOWC) – Misean Cara – National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) – Nurture Africa – Oxfam – Ireland – Plan Ireland – Progressio Ireland – Self Help Africa – SERVE in Solidarity Ireland – Sightsavers – Skillshare International Ireland – Suas Educational Development – Tearfund Ireland – The Haven Community Foundation – The Hope Foundation – The National Council of Ireland YMCA Trust – Trócaire – UNICEF Ireland – Vita – Voluntary Service International (VSI) – Voluntary Service Overseas (Ireland) – Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM) – War on Want Northern Ireland – World Vision Ireland.