

Leinster House must **Act Now** on 2015



2010: A Vital Opportunity to Keep our Millennium Promises to the World

Ireland signed up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the Millennium Summit in September 2000, as world leaders came together at a landmark moment to insist that they would not tolerate the extreme inequality in the world and would do all in their power to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

In September 2010, Member States of the UN will come together in New York to review progress and agree on the actions needed to accelerate achievement of the Goals. **Ireland's Development NGOs consider it vital that Ireland participates in this important UN Summit on the basis of pledges delivered and firm new commitments, not simply promises made.**

Dóchas members urge the Government to prepare for the Summit by bringing forward a concrete, time-bound action plan – an MDG breakthrough plan – including specific action on the following key areas:

1. Living up to its national and international commitments by ensuring that aid levels reach a minimum 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2015 at the latest, enshrining its overseas aid commitment in law, and continually improving the focus and effectiveness of overseas aid specifically targeting poverty reduction;
2. Support as ambitious, concrete and progressive a European Union plan to accelerate achievement of the MDGs as can still be agreed ahead of the MDG Summit in September;
3. Build on its stated strategic focus on hunger to make significant inroads on MDG1 (eradicating hunger and extreme poverty) by promoting smallholder agriculture and focusing on the role of women in agriculture, among other means;
4. Advocate for a rights-based approach towards the MDGs that specifically ensures MDG efforts are directed towards addressing discrimination and

inequalities, and prioritise the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups;

5. Commit to an ambitious national work programme to tackle key areas of policy incoherence, where Ireland's policies, practices or positions create obstacles for developing countries' striving to achieve the MDGs;
6. Support the establishment of monitoring and accountability mechanisms for achievement of the MDGs, as called for by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon;
7. Provide developing countries with the tools they need to mobilise domestic resources; and support international co-operation to prevent illicit capital flight and tackle large-scale corporate tax evasion and avoidance that is costing developing countries much of the tax revenue needed for social development.

Poverty is created by people and can be eradicated by people: ultimately, it is a matter of political choice and priorities. We hope and expect that Ireland will commit to ambitious actions in advance of the MDG Review Summit, and help bring about the changes need to tackle poverty and inequality in the world.

The 45 member organisations of Dóchas respectfully ask that you contact An Taoiseach Brian Cowen and Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheál Martin, before the Dáil and Seanad rise for the summer break, to urge that Ireland must bring tangible commitments as part of an explicit Irish action plan on the MDGs to the UN Summit in September.

As a small, open economy, Ireland depends on its global reputation as a reliable partner that keeps its promises. This year is our opportunity to cement that reputation.

Yours sincerely,

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