

## Parliamentary Questions

Date	TD	Question	Response																								
5 July 2011	Mattie McGrath	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the amount of foreign aid given to Botswana in each year since 2001.	<p>The Government's aid programme, which is administered by Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs &amp; Trade, is concentrated on the least developed countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Botswana is not one of the priority countries for the aid programme. However, since 2001, just over €680,000 has been provided in assistance for development work in the country by Non-Governmental Organisations and missionaries. The grants have included support for people living with HIV/AIDS, for primary health care and basic education and for the protection of human rights.</p> <p>The following is a breakdown of funding provided annually since 2001. Funding details for 2011 are not yet finalised.</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2010</td><td>€13,000</td></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>€48,000</td></tr> <tr><td>2008</td><td>€200,018</td></tr> <tr><td>2007</td><td>€159,451</td></tr> <tr><td>2006</td><td>€89,607</td></tr> <tr><td>2005</td><td>€67,678</td></tr> <tr><td>2004</td><td>€21,912</td></tr> <tr><td>2003</td><td>€48,364</td></tr> <tr><td>2002</td><td>€35,390</td></tr> <tr><td>2001</td><td>€0</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td>€683,420</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Amount	2010	€13,000	2009	€48,000	2008	€200,018	2007	€159,451	2006	€89,607	2005	€67,678	2004	€21,912	2003	€48,364	2002	€35,390	2001	€0	Total	€683,420
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28	Nicky McFadden	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the specific roles and responsibilities of the Ministers of State in his Department.	<p>Eamon Gilmore</p> <p>I propose to take Questions Nos. 70 and 71 together.</p> <p>There are two Ministers of State at my Department - Minister of State Lucinda Creighton T.D. and Minister of State Jan O Sullivan T.D. Minister of State Creighton, appointed to both the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, has special responsibility for European Affairs. She plays an active role in engaging with partners in EU member States and the European institutions. She deputises for me on matters relating to the EU agenda when necessary, including in the context of Foreign Affairs Council and General Affairs Council meetings. She also plays a key role in coordinating the Government's handling of EU issues, including through chairing the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on European Affairs and the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on the Presidency.</p>																								
28 June 2011	Nicky McFadden	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the level of participation and responsibility of each Minister of State in his Department in	<p>I have responsibility for representing Ireland at the Foreign Affairs Council and the General Affairs Council. On occasions when I have not been able to do so, Ireland has been represented by Minister of State Creighton. Since the formation of the Government she has represented Ireland at the General Affairs Council meetings on 21 March, 13 April, 23 May and 21 June; and at the Foreign Affairs Council meetings on 21 March and 23 May.</p> <p>Minister of State O'Sullivan is Minister of State for Trade and Development at my Department. This role includes responsibility for the Government's Overseas Development Aid programme, Irish Aid, which is managed by my Department. Ireland's aid programme is internationally recognised as one of the best in the world and has as its overall focus the reduction of poverty with an emphasis</p>																								

		<p>relation to attendance at Ministerial Councils for which he has responsibility since the formation of the Government; if he will list all such meetings which have taken place and the Minister in attendance at each meeting</p>	<p>on hunger and related areas. The aid programme also responds to humanitarian emergencies and development assistance is delivered through a range of partnerships including local and national authorities, communities, NGOs and international partners such as the UN system.</p> <p>Minister of State O'Sullivan has also been assigned responsibility for Trade. As the Deputy will be aware, my Department now has an enhanced role in trade promotion and I will be fully supported in this by the Minister of State. In particular, she will be working with me in the Export Trade Council, which I will chair and which will be established shortly. The Council will bring together Government Departments, the State Agencies and representatives of the private sector with experience of the export sector. Both the Minister of State and I will lead trade missions as appropriate. We will work closely together to develop the key contribution of Ireland's Embassy network to the export-led growth essential to economic recovery. I can assure the Deputy that Minister O'Sullivan has already been actively engaged in economic and trade work in the course of a number of overseas visits, including to Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and most recently to Africa.</p> <p>In relation to Minister of State O'Sullivan's attendance as Ministerial Councils, twice a year, usually in May and November, the Foreign Affairs Council meetings include a session on development, which is attended by Member States' Development Ministers. Minister of State O'Sullivan attended the development segment of the May 2011 Foreign Affairs Council which was held in Brussels on 24 May. The next development cooperation session of the Foreign Affairs Council is scheduled for 10 November 2011. Both Ministers also undertake other Departmental duties, at my request, as the need arises.</p>
21 June 2011	Maureen O'Sullivan	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his views on the National University of Ireland's participation in awarding degrees in countries with atrocious human rights records, in view of what is happening in Bahrain now with NUI medical graduates on trial, accused of attempting to topple the government while in fact they were performing duties of care to the injured; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	<p>Eamon Gilmore</p> <p>I propose to take Questions Nos. 60 and 71 together.</p> <p>I think that it is important to distinguish between the involvement of the Royal College of Surgeons in the training of Bahraini medical personnel, which I would regard as entirely positive, and the detention of medical personnel by the Bahraini authorities, about which I have made clear the Government's concerns.</p> <p>The Irish Ambassador to Saudi Arabia attended the RCSI graduation ceremony in Bahrain on 13 June, in response to an invitation from the RCSI. He did so however in a private capacity as he is not yet formally accredited to Bahrain, pending the finalisation of bilateral accreditation procedures.</p> <p>As he is not yet able to make formal representations directly to the authorities in Bahrain, Ambassador Holohan met yesterday with the Bahraini Ambassador in Riyadh to inform him of my own deep concerns, already expressed in this House on a number of occasions, and those of the Irish Government and people in relation to recent events. The Ambassador also used the occasion to urge the Bahraini Ambassador to convey immediately to his authorities that all those who are charged with nothing more than peaceful protest should be released without further delay.</p> <p>The Government's clear stance on current developments in Bahrain will continue to be conveyed in the fullest terms to the Bahraini authorities on all appropriate occasions, through our Embassy in Riyadh and all other appropriate channels.</p> <p>In relation to the RCSI, whose graduates receive degrees awarded by the NUI, I have already made clear previously that the Royal College of Surgeons' provision of educational services in Bahrain and elsewhere is primarily an operational issue for the RCSI. The RCSI is a private third-level institution which has its own relationships in Bahrain and which decides for itself the extent to which it wishes to comment on developments there. However, it also has to be acknowledged that the RCSI has been involved on a commercial basis in Bahrain for some years now and that the medical campus and facilities which it operates represent a very substantial investment which is of direct economic relevance to this country.</p> <p>I would further like to say that I regard the activities of the RCSI in assisting with the training of foreign medical personnel overseas as a highly worthwhile activity through which the College makes a significant contribution to the quality of life of millions of people around the world.</p>
21 June 2011	Maureen O'Sullivan	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, in view of his recent reply showing concern for the</p>	<p>I would further like to say that I regard the activities of the RCSI in assisting with the training of foreign medical personnel overseas as a highly worthwhile activity through which the College makes a significant contribution to the quality of life of millions of people around the world.</p>

		48 surgeons, doctors, paramedics and nurses on trial in Bahrain, the reason his ambassador (details supplied) attended a graduation ceremony alongside the Prime Minister of Bahrain, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, at RCSI Bahrain in view of the fact that those on trial were performing their duties of care to the injured and now stand accused of attempting to topple the State; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	
15 June 2011	Anthony Lawlor	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the auditors currently employed by him; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	Eamon Gilmore Overall responsibility for audit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as for all Government Departments, lies with the Comptroller and Auditor General. My Department does not employ any external auditors. The Department has an internal audit function which employs four qualified auditors to undertake this task. In addition in our Programme Countries in receipt of Overseas Aid funds the Department employs eight internal auditors.
15 June 2011	Anthony Lawlor	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the top ten countries to receive Irish aid; the amount of funding they received in 2010; and the amount they are budgeted to each receive in 2011.	Jan O'Sullivan The Government's aid programme, which is administered by Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, provides assistance to over eighty countries in the developing world, with a strong focus on the least developed countries, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa. There are nine Programme Countries for the aid programme, where we have a commitment to long term strategic assistance. Irish Aid administers specific budgets for long term development assistance in these countries, on the basis of detailed development plans focused on the reduction of poverty levels. The Programme Countries are: Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia and Timor Leste. Additional funding is also provided through development Non-Governmental Organisations, missionaries, the multilateral and UN systems, and in response to humanitarian emergencies. The ten countries to which the greatest amount of funding was directed under the aid programme in 2010, are listed below. Final confirmation of these figures is subject to the receipt of the finalised detailed financial reports from NGOs and other partners. Uganda Mozambique Tanzania Ethiopia Zambia Vietnam €40.9 million €40.7 million €35.3 million €32.6 million Malawi Lesotho Sudan Sierra Leone million €23.6 million €13.1 million €12.8 million €11.8 million

			<p style="text-align: right;">million€9.8 million€7.6 million</p> <p>For 2011, the following direct programme budgets have been allocated for our aid programmes in the nine Programme Countries (these figures do not include Irish Aid funding which will be channelled through NGOs and multilateral agencies)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Ethiopia</td> <td style="width: 10%;">€26 million</td> <td style="width: 10%;">€10.7 million</td> <td style="width: 10%;">€9.93 million</td> <td style="width: 10%;">€37.5 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lesotho</td> <td>€31.3 million</td> <td>€33.25 million</td> <td>€20.21 million</td> <td>€3.42 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Malawi</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>€12 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mozambique</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tanzania</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Uganda</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zambia</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Timor-Leste</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vietnam</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Full details of all countries receiving funding from the Government under the aid programme are contained in the Irish Aid Annual Reports which can be accessed at <a href="http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/publications_report.asp">http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/publications_report.asp</a> and which have been placed in the Dáil Library. I expect that the Annual Report for 2010 will be published in September.</p>	Ethiopia	€26 million	€10.7 million	€9.93 million	€37.5 million	Lesotho	€31.3 million	€33.25 million	€20.21 million	€3.42 million	Malawi				€12 million	Mozambique					Tanzania					Uganda					Zambia					Timor-Leste					Vietnam				
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15 June 2011	Anthony Lawlor	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will provide a list of non-governmental organisations which receive funding from Irish Aid the amount of funding received in 2010; and the amount they are budgeted to each receive in 2011.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>The Government's aid programme, administered from within the Department of Foreign Affairs by Irish Aid, is sharply focused on the reduction and eventual eradication of global poverty and hunger. Our partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) represents a very important element in this effort, reflecting the broad support among Irish people for the development programme.</p> <p>In 2010, the Government, through Irish Aid provided over €125 million for the development work of NGOs. This NGO funding is administered through a range of funding schemes covering long term development, emergency and recovery assistance and development education. Significant recipients of such grants include Concern, Trócaire, GOAL, Self Help Africa, Irish Fair Trade Network, Christian Aid, Oxfam Ireland, World Vision, Action Aid and Plan Ireland. These organisations received a combined total of over €77 million for their development and humanitarian work in 2010. As valued partners of the development programme, all these organisations are due to receive grant allocations of a similar size in 2011. Decisions on final disbursements for 2011 are dependent on appraisal and approval processes which are still underway.</p> <p>Additional funding is provided to NGOs under the development programmes from the nine priority countries for Irish Aid, where we have a commitment to long-term strategic assistance. Furthermore, a small grants programme is administered by eleven Embassies accredited to countries where Irish Aid does not have a bi-lateral development co-operation programme. In total, Irish Aid provides grants to over 200 NGO partners.</p> <p>The following table provides a list of those organisations which received significant funding (over €100,000) in 2010 from funding schemes administered by Irish Aid headquarters and amounts confirmed to date for 2011.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Organisation</th> <th style="text-align: right;">2010</th> <th style="text-align: right;">2011 (to date)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>80:20 Educating &amp; Acting for a Better World</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 380,234</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€50,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Action Aid Ireland</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 850,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€1,275,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AidLink</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 960,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€480,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AIDS and Rights Alliance in Southern Africa (ARASA)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 450,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>AIDS Partnership Africa</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 127,191</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Banúlacht</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 100,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€90,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Belun-CICR</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 350,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bóthar</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 100,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Camara Education</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 400,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Camfed International</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 200,000</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€200,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Organisation	2010	2011 (to date)	80:20 Educating & Acting for a Better World	€ 380,234	€50,000	Action Aid Ireland	€ 850,000	€1,275,000	AidLink	€ 960,000	€480,000	AIDS and Rights Alliance in Southern Africa (ARASA)	€ 450,000		AIDS Partnership Africa	€ 127,191		Banúlacht	€ 100,000	€90,000	Belun-CICR	€ 350,000		Bóthar	€ 100,000	€100,000	Camara Education	€ 400,000		Camfed International	€ 200,000	€200,000												
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			Childfund Ireland	€ 692,000	
			Children in Crossfire	€ 780,000	€780,000
			Christian Aid Ireland	€ 3,302,134	€3,184,618
			Christian Blind Mission (CBM) Ireland	€ 778,594	€194,682
			Church Mission Society Ireland	€ 495,856	€208,649
			Comhlámh	€ 597,530	€363,190
			Concern Universal	€ 250,000	€200,000
			Concern Worldwide	€ 24,227,880	€22,765,000
			Crosslinks	€ 101,899	
			Dóchas	€ 242,964	€250,000
			ECPAT International	€ 150,000	€150,000
			Friends in Ireland	€ 171,639	€79,539
			Friends of Hospice Uganda (Ireland)	€ 298,368	
			Friends of Londiani	€ 193,400	€192,000
			Frontline	€ 450,000	€225,000
			Galway One World Centre	€ 117,853	€79,369
			Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation	€ 250,000	
			Global Witness Trust Ltd	€ 194,600	€199,800
			Goal	€ 17,029,347	€15,679,600
			Gorta	€ 150,000	€150,000
			Habitat for Humanity Ireland	€ 175,836	
			HALO Trust	€ 1,400,000	
			Handicap International	€ 338,488	
			Haven Community Foundation	€ 100,000	€200,000
			Health Economics and AIDS Research Division	€ 400,000	
			Health Poverty Action (formerly Health Unlimited)	€ 300,000	
			HelpAge International	€ 500,000	
			IDEA (Irish Development Education Association)	€ 180,000	€118,000
			Institut Panos Paris	€ 150,000	
			International Alert	€ 100,000	
			International Commission of Jurists	€ 158,800	
			International Crisis Group	€ 100,000	€100,000
			International Federation for Human Rights	€ 200,000	€200,000
			International Institute for Environment and Development	€ 550,000	€550,000

			International Rescue Committee	€ 981,986	
			Irish Fairtrade Network	€ 3,920,000	€3,074,000
			Irish Family Planning Association	€ 207,000	€209,600
			KADE (Kerry Action for Development Education)	€ 113,000	€115,000
			Link Community Development	€ 156,381	€128,128
			LYCS (Lourdes Youth & Community Services)	€ 164,826	€120,000
			Malaria Consortium Africa	€ 257,566	TBC
			Mama Cash	€ 240,000	€240,000
			Medecins sans Frontieres	€ 1,325,000	€900,000
			Mercy Corps Scotland	€ 250,000	
			MERLIN	€ 1,764,883	
			Methodist Missionary Society	€ 174,680	
			Micronutrient Initiative	€ 150,000	
			Mines Advisory Group	€ 400,000	
			Minority Rights Group	€ 400,000	
			Northern Ireland Foundation	€ 175,000	
			NYCI (National Youth Council of Ireland)	€ 205,000	€225,000
			Orbis Ireland	€ 200,000	€200,000
			Oxfam Ireland	€ 2,277,503	€2,300,000
			Partnership Africa Canada	€ 200,000	
			Plan Ireland	€ 1,839,992	€850,000
			Playing for Life	€ 134,900	€148,000
			Power4good Ireland	€ 125,827	
			Progressio	€ 700,000	€281,487
			Protea Education Development Project	€ 114,732	
			Raising Voices	€ 155,000	€75,350
			Right to Sight	€ 100,000	€50,000
			Self Help Africa	€ 2,802,500	€2,800,000
			SERVE in Solidarity Ireland	€ 147,336	€143,860
			Sightsavers Ireland	€ 780,000	
			Social & Health Education Project	€ 113,822	€122,346
			Suas Educational Development	€ 110,000	€182,000
			Tearfund UK	€ 546,000	€136,500
			The Carter Center Inc.	€ 390,000	

			<p>The Leprosy Mission Ireland € 587,778 €303,030</p> <p>The Rose Project € 200,000 €200,000</p> <p>The Support Africa Foundation € 100,000</p> <p>TRAIDLINKS € 450,000</p> <p>Transparency International € 200,000 €200,000</p> <p>Trócaire € 18,851,727 €17,920,000</p> <p>Valid Nutrition € 450,000</p> <p>VITA € 700,000</p> <p>VSO Ireland € 960,000 €480,000</p> <p>War on Want NI € 400,000</p> <p>WaterAid € 136,625</p> <p>Waterford One World Centre € 126,500 € 95,000</p> <p>Womens World Banking € 100,000</p> <p>World Resources Institute € 200,000 €200,000</p> <p>World Vision Ireland € 2,292,519 €2,255,000</p>
2 June 2011	Seán Ó Feargháil	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade if he will commit to publishing the Africa trade strategy; and if he supports the broad thrust of this strategy.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>The Government attaches great importance to the continuing development of Ireland's relations with Africa as a whole, and with individual African countries. My Department manages a significant developmentcooperation programme, Irish Aid, which is strongly focused on sub-Saharan Africa. Our broader relations with Africa are managed through our Embassy network across that continent, as well as through our relationships with the European Union, the United Nations, and other international bodies.</p> <p>While development needs remain very evident, Africa is also undergoing major political, economic and social change, and it is important that we consider ways of strengthening our approach to Africa in order to respond to these changes. Against this background officials in my Department have been examining ways to strengthen all aspects of our relations with our African partners in the political, economic, and development spheres.</p> <p>Trade, investment and business-to-business exchange are increasingly important emerging facets of our relationship with Africa, and we will be sharpening our focus on identifying opportunities in these areas. Some practical work has already been done in this area in terms of staff training and enhancing the capacity of our Embassies in Africa to undertake economic and trade work. The enhanced role for my Department in the trade area will also facilitate greater coherence in this regard in Africa. A broad review of our relations with Africa, and options for strengthening these, is at an advanced stage in my Department, and I envisage that we will be making a more detailed statement and publishing our plan in this regard in the near future.</p>
2 June 2011	Mary Lou MacDonald	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade his position towards the upcoming UN General Assembly special session on HIV and AIDS; and the action	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>I propose to take Questions Nos. 14, 25, 26 and 50 together.</p> <p>This year marks thirty years of the global AIDS epidemic. Addressing HIV and AIDS, which has destroyed the lives of millions of men, women and children, is of fundamental importance to the reduction of global poverty. AIDS remains a leading cause of death in many developing countries. Over 22 million people in sub Saharan Africa are infected with HIV.</p> <p>At the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV and AIDS in New York next week, Ireland will urge the UN to continue to lead efforts to ensure that resources are spent effectively. This means an end to the duplication of effort, a strengthening of</p>

		Ireland will take to combat the global perception that the focus on HIV and AIDS is waning.	<p>coordination on the ground, a trustworthy system of monitoring and evaluation and a single-minded focus by all on achieving results. We will urge all global partners to work closely with national Governments and local and international NGOs to strengthen national responses to HIV and ensure that limited resources reach as many people in need as possible. This will maximise value for money in health, HIV and nutrition programmes.</p> <p>Since women are most affected by the HIV pandemic, and since they are also traditionally responsible for food security in the household, Ireland is calling for increased attention to protecting women. Women are already suffering disproportionately during the current food, fuel and climate crises. These issues lie at the heart of the Irish response.</p> <p>Global financial commitment to fighting HIV and AIDS has increased steadily from about one billion US dollars in 2000 to an estimated 16 billion dollars in 2011. This is an enormous increase. Recent data from the UNAIDS World Report shows that international efforts are succeeding and that global HIV infection and death rates are now declining. Ireland's financial commitment to support the fight against HIV and AIDS is being maintained despite the hugely challenging economic difficulties we are currently facing. This year we estimate that we will spend approximately €100 million on HIV and AIDs and other communicable diseases as pledged at the UN General Assembly. Since 2006 we have expended approximately €695 million addressing HIV and AIDS and other communicable diseases. I am making a table available with this reply which outlines the division of expenditure.</p> <p>As the HIV and AIDS pandemic has progressed, our aid programme, Irish Aid, has consolidated and streamlined our efforts by focussing and prioritising more and ensuring that we achieve maximum value for money. It has also exploited opportunities to create connections with other priorities such as addressing hunger and under-nutrition. We use a mix of aid delivery channels for our assistance - including support directly to International Organisations, NGOs and governments. Although we advocate for increased focus on effective prevention in a comprehensive and balanced programme, it is not possible to accurately estimate the relative share that goes to prevention, treatment, care and support respectively as all these aspects are inter-connected and inter-dependent.</p> <p>Children affected by HIV and AIDS remain an explicit priority for Irish Aid. Ireland recognises that a supportive environment is crucial in this regard, with a focus on the household and culturally appropriate social protection networks. School and education protect children from HIV – and education for all, another explicit policy priority for Irish Aid, is thus an essential element of a comprehensive response to HIV prevention.</p> <p>Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV is a proven cost-effective intervention strongly supported by Ireland through UN organisations, the Global Fund and the Clinton Foundation, as is follow-up care and treatment if required. Adequate nutrition for mothers with HIV is crucial not only for birth outcomes, but also to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV. To this effect, Ireland is the first country to support a programme in Mozambique with €1.2 million to improve nutrition for pregnant and lactating women with HIV. Investments benefiting children well exceed 20% of total Government spend on HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases.</p>										
2 June 2011	Peadar Tóibín	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the amounts spent by Irish Aid in the years 2006 to 2010 on programmes aimed at preventing the spread of the HIV virus, treating persons infected by the virus, supporting persons and communities affected by AIDS and supporting universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support; the amount of that expenditure that was channelled through international organisations, Irish non-governmental organisations and bilateral Government to Government programmes respectively.	<p>AIDS remains a leading cause of death in Africa. Progress has been made but much remains to be done. Ireland is playing its part. For Ireland addressing HIV/AIDS is fundamental to our stated aim of poverty reduction and humandevlopment.</p> <p>Over the last 20 years the international community has come together to fight HIV and AIDS. It has been a long and difficult road and now many indicators of success are becoming apparent. There are more funds flowing into Africa to fight the epidemic than ever before. Coordination and focus is much improved. Treatment is now at 40% which is up from 1% only 10 years ago. Much remains to be done but we are on the right road and Ireland will continue to play its part.</p> <p>Vote 29 Summary of Expenditure - Health HIV and Aids and communicable diseases through various funding channels. Figures in € million</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2009</th> <th>2008</th> <th>2007</th> <th>2006</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2009	2008	2007	2006	2010				
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2 June 2011	Mary Lou MacDonald	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the way he has implemented the initiative announced in 2006 by the then Taoiseach, former Deputy Bertie Ahern, pledging that Ireland would increase spending on HIV and other											

		communicable diseases to at least €100 million per year with 20% of these resources to be spent on programmes that benefit children.	<p>Bilateral</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Programme Countries (via government systems and civil society)</td> <td>42.20</td> <td>46.19</td> <td>47.27</td> <td>40.55</td> <td>36.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Civil Society (Irish NGOs)</td> <td>24.45</td> <td>20.10</td> <td>25.00</td> <td>27.80</td> <td>24.35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thematic / Global Funds</td> <td>20.90</td> <td>25.05</td> <td>58.55</td> <td>73.98</td> <td>73.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (incl Emergency and recovery)</td> <td>9.00</td> <td>15.52</td> <td>7.37</td> <td>7.65</td> <td>9.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Bilateral</b></td> <td><b>96.55</b></td> <td><b>106.86</b></td> <td><b>138.19</b></td> <td><b>149.99</b></td> <td><b>143.95</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multilateral ( include UNAIDS, UNFPA, WHO)</td> <td>9.20</td> <td>9.50</td> <td>15.40</td> <td>19.00</td> <td>6.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>105.75</b></td> <td><b>116.36</b></td> <td><b>153.59</b></td> <td><b>168.99</b></td> <td><b>150.25 694.94</b></td> </tr> </table>	Programme Countries (via government systems and civil society)	42.20	46.19	47.27	40.55	36.60	Civil Society (Irish NGOs)	24.45	20.10	25.00	27.80	24.35	Thematic / Global Funds	20.90	25.05	58.55	73.98	73.14	Other (incl Emergency and recovery)	9.00	15.52	7.37	7.65	9.87	<b>Total Bilateral</b>	<b>96.55</b>	<b>106.86</b>	<b>138.19</b>	<b>149.99</b>	<b>143.95</b>	Multilateral ( include UNAIDS, UNFPA, WHO)	9.20	9.50	15.40	19.00	6.30	<b>Total</b>	<b>105.75</b>	<b>116.36</b>	<b>153.59</b>	<b>168.99</b>	<b>150.25 694.94</b>
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2 June 2011	Bernard Durkan	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the extent to which the developed international community is combatting AIDS in Africa; and if he will make a statement on the matter.																																											
2 June 2011	Denis Naughten	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade the progress being made to ban female genital mutilation at both EU and UN level; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>The practice of female genital mutilation is a clear violation of the human rights of women and girls. It also infringes on children's rights to special protection. The World Health Organisation estimates that between 100 million and 140 million girls and women worldwide are currently living with the consequences of female genital mutilation. In Africa alone, it is estimated that three million girls are at risk annually.</p> <p>Ireland is playing an active role in policy development, funding and research to address this appalling practice. It is a form of gender-based violence, and is one element in our comprehensive approach to ending such violence through the overseas aid programme. Through Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Government is cooperating with United Nations agencies in a concerted effort to end the practice of female genital mutilation. We are working closely with the new Agency, UN Women, which is prioritising the prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. The Government is providing €1.2 million to support the work of the Agency in 2011.</p> <p>We are also supporting the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in their work on child protection, gender equality, reproductive health and maternal mortality. At EU level we are working with partners to ensure that violence against women remains a focus of EU development policy, and of programmes funded by the EU in Africa. Progress is being made. On 6 February 2011, the International Day Against Female Genital Mutilation, the United Nations reported that there has been success in reducing the incidence of the practice in a number of African countries. The key to this progress has been the ability to engage with communities and persuade them to take the decision to abandon the practice.</p>																																										
19 May 2011	Finian McGrath	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will ensure that humanitarian principles remain the cornerstone of the	<p>Eamon Gilmore</p> <p>I propose to take Questions Nos. 21 and 22 together.</p> <p>The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, signed by the Council, European Parliament and European Commission in 2007, is the comprehensive policy framework governing the European Union's overall humanitarian aid response.</p> <p>The Consensus outlines the common objectives, fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and</p>																																										

		revised European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid in 2013.	independence, and good practices that the European Union as a whole pursues in this domain. It covers the entire spectrum of humanitarian action, from preparedness and disaster risk reduction, to immediate emergency response and life-saving assistance to vulnerable people in crises, through to situations of transition and onwards to recovery and longer-term development.
19 May 2011	Finian McGrath	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will report on the way he is meeting his obligations under the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and works to implement the action plan.	<p>In its recent mid-term review of the European Consensus and its accompanying Action Plan, the Commission confirmed good overall progress in the implementation of the Plan, noting, for example, that humanitarian aid has now become a fully-fledged policy area of the European Union, thanks to the new legal basis provided for it in the Lisbon Treaty. The mid-term review also highlighted improved efforts at coordination and advocacy as well as an ongoing effort to review funding approaches and adapt to growing humanitarian needs, not least due to the increase in the frequency and scale of natural disasters.</p> <p>The review also noted that the EU, especially when acting together, is particularly well placed to ensure that its humanitarian response is appropriate, effective and based on assessed needs, and can play a useful role in influencing the preparedness of the international humanitarian system as a whole. When taken together, the EU (including both the European Commission and the 27 Member States) represents the largest single provider of humanitarian aid in the world, having provided nearly half of all such assistance in the past three and a half years.</p> <p>Ireland is working actively to implement its obligations under the Humanitarian Consensus and in relation to the core humanitarian principles, which are enshrined in Irish Aid's own humanitarian relief policy. During its recent co-chairmanship of the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative, Ireland worked to promote donor compliance with these principles. We will continue to ensure that these remain the cornerstone of the planned revised Humanitarian Aid Regulation and any eventual successor to the current European Consensus.</p> <p>In addition, Ireland, along with a number of other EU member states, has led the way in the development of innovative funding approaches, with many providing the largest share of contributions to common funds such as the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which provides quick and flexible funding for UN agencies as and when they occur. Ireland is the sixth largest contributor to the CERF, having provided €81 million since 2006.</p> <p>Ireland also continues to pay specific attention to so-called "forgotten crises", such as those in the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which receive little media or international donor attention.</p> <p>While much has already been achieved, Ireland and the EU more generally is committed to further joint efforts on aid effectiveness, including through greater burden-sharing and better coordination, coherence. We will also work to ensure consistency between EU humanitarian aid and other policies, as well as a strengthened EU contribution to the international humanitarian system through stronger advocacy for the protection of humanitarian space, including the promotion of international humanitarian law.</p>
17 May 2011	Ciarán Lynch	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the reason funding was not provided for Africa Day in Cork when funds have been allocated to this event in other cities; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Eamon Gilmore</p> <p>Africa Day on 25 May is the official day of the African Union and an opportunity to highlight the diversity and potential of the African continent and its people. Through Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Government has supported initiatives in recent years to mark Africa Day in Ireland. The objective is to help build a more positive image of Africa and to promote public awareness of the Irish Aid programme, which is strongly focused on countries in sub-Saharan Africa.</p> <p>For this year's Africa Day, Irish Aid has prioritised support for music, art, sporting and educational events and family activities which are organised at community level. A call for proposals to mark the occasion was advertised nationally, stating that applications would be assessed on the extent to which they contribute to the educational and awareness-raising objectives set for Irish Aid support. The clarity of proposals, the extent of collaboration with other organisations and value for money were also important considerations. Following a thorough assessment of the applications, twelve initiatives by cultural and community groups and colleges were approved for Irish Aid support.</p> <p>A large number of applications was received, but on this occasion, the applications from organisations based in Cork were not successful. I look forward to future Irish Aid support for Africa day events in Cork.</p>

17 May 2011	Pat Breen	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs following the expulsion of Britain's High Commissioner from Malawi after a leaked email in which he criticised the President of Malawi; if he will confirm that Ireland's aid commitment to Malawi will not be adversely affected by this diplomatic incident; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>The Government of Malawi expelled the British High Commissioner to Malawi on 26 April 2011, following the alleged leaking of a diplomatic report. We have condemned this decision along with our EU partners, as have Churches and Non-Governmental Organisations in Malawi.</p> <p>Malawi has been a priority country for Ireland's aid programme since 2006, with a commitment to long-term strategic assistance. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked 153 out of 169 countries on the 2010 UN Human Development Index. Malawi has suffered two major famines in the last decade and over 54% of the population live below the national poverty line. Over 40% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition and 12% of the adult population are living with HIV and AIDS.</p> <p>The current Irish Aid five-year programme of assistance to Malawi, which commenced in 2010, is clearly focused on increasing the supply of food, improving nutrition, strengthening agricultural research and smallholder farming and helping to build democracy. The priorities reflect our commitment, across the aid programme, to playing a leading role internationally in the fight against global hunger and malnutrition. The Irish Aid programme is implemented in co-operation with communities in Malawi, with Irish, international and local NGOs, and with Government institutions.</p> <p>We have clear differences of view with the Government of Malawi and are following developments closely through our Embassy in Lilongwe. Along with our EU partners, we have told the Government frankly that they need to demonstrate respect for human rights and for the principles of democratic government, and that we are closely reviewing developments in this regard.</p> <p>It is important to emphasise that Ireland's aid programme is concentrated on the needs of the people of Malawi, and especially the poorest and most vulnerable communities. I want to ensure that it will continue to have an impact in reducing the risk of famine, building agricultural production, helping those living with HIV and AIDS and providing children with the opportunity of receiving a decent education. It is also important that we use our influence so that these children have the opportunity to build their lives in a truly democratic society.</p>
18 May 2011	Aodhán Ó Ríordáin	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will provide an update on the way he is ensuring a more coherent policy approach among various groups and Departments concerned with the issue of overseas aid; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>Ireland is playing a strong role in international development, building on the efforts and contributions of individual Irish people and organisations and the effectiveness of the Government's aid programme. The Government is committed to the target of spending 0.7% of GNP on Official Development Assistance (ODA), and to seeking to achieve this by 2015. We recognise that ODA alone cannot provide sufficient resources for international development, and that developed countries need to work more effectively with developing countries on the mobilisation of domestic resources for this purpose. The reduction of poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals requires a coherent and comprehensive approach beyond aid to include the other policy areas that have an impact on people living in poverty in developing countries.</p> <p>The Government is committed to improving the coherence of our development policy, across all Government Departments. I look forward to discussing our approach at an early meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Development, which brings together representatives from all relevant Government Departments with the goal of promoting a coherent approach to overseas development. My officials are also in close contact with other Departments concerning issues relevant to overseas development, including taxation, trade, agriculture and global challenges, including climate change.</p> <p>The focus of Ireland's aid programme is very clearly on the fight against extreme poverty and hunger, especially in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa. It is important to ensure that our policy priorities are promoted at international level, within the EU and the United Nations, and in our dialogue with partner Governments in the developing world. I am also meeting with representatives of the Irish development Non-Governmental Organisations to discuss their work and to ensure that we co-operate to maximise the collective contribution which Ireland can make to the fight to end global poverty and hunger.</p> <p>In keeping with the commitment in the Programme for Government, we are now preparing to review the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid. The review will involve wide consultation and will provide an opportunity to improve the coherence of our overall</p>

			<p>contribution to global development, through the aid programme, across Government, through our engagement with multilateral organisations and in co-operation with the non-Governmental sector.</p>
3 May 2011	John McGuinness	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the specific proposals in the programme for Government for which he is responsible; the target dates which he has agreed in relation to the delivery of these proposals; and if he will publish an implementation schedule.</p>	<p>Eamon Gilmore</p> <p>The Programme for Government contains a number of proposals that are wholly or partly the responsibility of the Department of Foreign Affairs. These include proposals related to repairing Ireland's reputation in the EU and the wider international community; Ireland's Overseas Development Aid programme and its review; matters relating to Northern Ireland; and consideration of the transfer of the passport service to the Department of Justice. Details on how these proposals are being addressed are outlined below. While the majority of the proposals will span the lifetime of the Programme, where target dates are applicable these have been included. The Programme for Government contains an explicit commitment to restore Ireland's standing as a respected and influential member of the European Union and the wider international community. This work is already underway and implies the need for a broad effort, across Government and administration, of engagement with EU institutions and with EU partners bilaterally, as well as with our international partners.</p> <p>At Government level, Ministers have been availing, in particular, of opportunities to meet their EU colleagues and with representatives of the European institutions. These efforts will intensify in the coming months. The channels open to us through membership of wider European-level political groupings are also being exploited.</p> <p>I have availed of meetings of EU Foreign Ministers to meet High Representative Ashton and to establish personal contacts with my EU colleagues. Similarly my colleague, Minister of State Creighton has availed of visits to Brussels and Luxembourg to meet representatives of the institutions and her counterparts. Over the months ahead we will continue to maximise all opportunities arising from our presence at the scheduled meetings of the Council of Ministers to arrange bilateral exchanges with key interlocutors, both among the member States and in the institutions and bodies including the Commission, European Parliament and European External Action Service.</p> <p>On 19 April I invited EU Ambassadors to Iveagh House to set out the Government's analysis of the economic situation facing the country, seek the understanding and support of partners for our course of action, and also to underline the desire of the Government to engage constructively and more widely on the range of issues on the European agenda. I will be meeting non-EU Ambassadors later this week.</p> <p>The Irish embassy network plays a crucial part in the process of national recovery. Irish embassies are tasked on the one hand with transmitting the Government's economic message, and the context for it, to key decision-makers in the EU and beyond; on the other hand they provide vital insights on the views and policies of partners. I have called a conference of all Irish Ambassadors to be held on 1 and 2 June in Dublin, which will have an emphasis on economic and commercial themes, both in an EU and wider international context. The conference is being organised in conjunction with the main State Agencies in the economic and trade promotion sector.</p> <p>Embassies are already actively engaged in emerging markets, and in the BRIC countries in particular, in-line with the current</p>

			<p>Strategy for Trade, Tourism and Innovation. Embassies and State Agencies in these countries have detailed market plans and are actively pursuing specific targets. This effort will be strengthened with the transfer of responsibilities for foreign trade promotion to my Department. Discussions between officials regarding the practical arrangements for the transfer are well advanced and it is anticipated that they will be completed shortly.</p> <p>In recognition of the important role the Global Irish Network can play in our economic recovery, I wrote to all members of the Network on 20 April drawing their attention to the priorities set out in the Programme for Government. My letter acknowledged the contribution made by network members in assisting Embassies and State Agencies in the trade and economic area, and indicated that I would be interested in any specific proposals which members may have which would facilitate job creation in Ireland or would enhance the export potential of our indigenous companies.</p> <p>In relation to overseas development assistance, we have made a commitment to review the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid. I expect that the review will be carried out over the coming year. It will involve consultation with the public and with all interested parties, and will take account of the achievements of the aid programme to date and the changes in the national and international context since 2006.</p> <p>With regard to the proposal to unite NGOs providing humanitarian aid, officials from my Department have already met representatives of Irish-based humanitarian NGOs to discuss the proposal to establish a disaster and emergency committee in Ireland. We have also begun discussions with the Irish development NGOs regarding opportunities for job seekers to share their skills in developing countries.</p> <p>The Programme for Government states clearly our commitment to the 0.7% GNP target and to seeking to achieve it by 2015. This is in line with the long-standing UN target for Official Development Assistance, and with the commitment of the European Union. It is clear that, in current circumstances, this will be a challenging target to meet. However, the Government was elected to face up to the challenges of rebuilding our society and our economy, of restoring economic growth and our international reputation. I believe that we can do this without undermining our work to improve the lives of some of the world's poorest people.</p> <p>Minister of State O'Sullivan recently met representatives of Shannon Airport to discuss the proposal that it be made a hub for the storage and distribution of emergency humanitarian supplies. We will continue to discuss the issues involved with Shannon Airport and to facilitate contact between Shannon and the relevant international humanitarian agencies as the proposal is further advanced in the months ahead.</p> <p>As Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, I also have responsibility for leading on implementation of the Northern Ireland sections of the Programme for Government. The Government looks forward to working with the new Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly, following its election in the coming weeks, to advance progress on the full implementation of all Agreements and to drive forward the North-South agenda. We will have an early opportunity to take forward this important agenda at the first meeting of the North South Ministerial Council with the new Executive scheduled for 10 June.</p> <p>Lastly, with regard to the possible transfer of the Passport Service to the Department of Justice to operate as an Independent Executive Agency under the aegis of that Department, officials in my Department are currently examining the issues associated with this commitment and I expect to take a position on this matter within the coming months.</p>
21 April 2011	Niall Collins	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the number of members in the Irish Aid Rapid Response Corps; the location at which they were last deployed; and if	<p>The Rapid Response Corps was established in 2007 to provide a body of skilled and experienced volunteers for deployment at short notice to work with Irish Aid's humanitarian partner organisations in emergency situations overseas. One of the important lessons learned from the international response to the devastation of the 2004 Tsunami was that the mass deployment of volunteers, while well-intentioned, can often hamper relief efforts. Ireland's Rapid Response Corps was therefore designed to provide highly-specialised skills as rapidly as possible, as and when requested by the agencies leading the relief effort. This model is regarded as best practice internationally in responding to humanitarian crises.</p> <p>At present, there are 155 people on the Rapid Response Corps roster, with specialised skills in logistics, engineering, telecommunications, humanitarian coordination and protection. Individual members of the Corps are deployed at the request of</p>

		he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>the UN and other humanitarian organisations which have identified a need for their specific skills.</p> <p>Since 2007, there have been more than 122 deployments of the Corps to 33 countries. Members of the Corps are currently working in Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Iraq, Nepal, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Uganda. Membership of the Corps is open to members of the public. The Department of Foreign Affairs generally holds at least one recruitment campaign each year. The 2011 recruitment programme began in March and is expected to add 40 new members to the roster, bringing to 195 the total number of volunteers available to deploy to humanitarian crises. New recruits will participate in induction training in May, which will include a course on personal security awareness, facilitated by the Defence Forces' UN Training School in the Curragh.</p>
21 April 2011	Michael Colreavy	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will honour the commitment given at the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Summit to pledge €1 million in support for developing countries to deal with climate change; and if so, the fund from which it will be taken.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>Climate change has been described by the UN Secretary General as the greatest humanitarian challenge facing the world today. It is clear that the communities which are being most severely affected by climate change are those in the world's poorest countries. The impact of climate change is contributing to a growing incidence of humanitarian disasters, and to increased poverty, food insecurity, hunger and disease.</p> <p>At the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit in December 2009, Ireland affirmed that it would meet its international climate commitments and play a full role in agreeing a new comprehensive global climate agreement. Ireland signed up to the Copenhagen Accord, under which developed countries committed to provide a total of US\$10 billion annually over the three years 2010 to 2012, building towards a total annual contribution of US\$100 billion by 2020, for climate actions in developing countries.</p> <p>Recognising that climate change presents particular challenges for developing countries, the European Union committed at Copenhagen to making a significant contribution of €7.2 billion in fast start financing for developing countries in the period 2010-2012. The then Taoiseach pledged at the European Council prior to the Copenhagen Summit that Ireland would provide up to €100 million in the period 2010-2012 as its share of this EU commitment. Ireland's contribution is being provided under the Votes of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, which has the lead role on the international climate change negotiations, and the Department of Foreign Affairs, which manages the Government's aid programme. Through the Department of the Environment, €23 million was provided in 2010 for climate actions in developing countries. The funding was channelled through the EU Global Climate Change Alliance, with a particular focus on the impact of climate change in a number of the priority countries in Africa for Ireland's bilateral aid programme.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme, administered by Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, has a strong climate change focus to its work in a number of countries. It is estimated that in 2010, over €10 million was provided under the programme for work focused on the effects of climate change. This includes support to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, a group of institutions working to help farmers in developing countries to adapt to the challenges presented by climate change. In Malawi, for instance, Ireland's support focuses on increasing smallholder productivity, using drought resistant crops and sustainable agriculture techniques, and working with communities to devise programmes which can help them cope better with climatic and economic shocks.</p> <p>It is important that developed countries act in line with the commitments which they have made internationally and continue to play their part in assisting developing countries to cope with the impact of climate change. As Minister with responsibility for Ireland's overseas development programme, I will ensure that we continue to strengthen our response, in particular for the least developed countries, which are least able to cope. Through the aid programme, we will build our support for programmes and projects that have a strong impact on the interlinked areas of development and climate change adaptation.</p>
21 April	Seán Ó	Ba mhaith liom	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>I thank Deputy Ó Fearghail and I acknowledge the Leas-Cheann Comhairle's contribution and that of my predecessor as Minister of</p>

2011	Fhearghaíl	<p>comhgairdeachas a dhéanamh leis an Tánaiste agus leis na hAirí Stáit, na Teachtaí Jan O'Sullivan agus Lucinda Creighton, as ucht a gceapacháin. Tá mé ag súil le bheith ag comh-oibriú leo go héifeachtach san am atá romhainn.</p> <p>I thank the Minister of State for her reply. She has my full support and the full support of the Fianna Fáil Party in doing everything she can to maintain Ireland's overseas aid programme, against the background of our own extremely difficult budgetary situation. I readily acknowledge the scale of the challenge that confronts herself and the Minister in that regard. The Leas-Cheann Comhairle had the privilege of serving effectively in this area for a number of years, when the State was in a position to be more flaitiúlach than we are at present, regrettably. It is significant that we are considering this issue in the week when the Trócaire Lenten campaign nears an end, with its focus this year on development projects in</p>	<p>State.</p> <p>I agree with the Deputy regarding NGOs, and particularly Trócaire. I have already met them and Dóchas, which represents the various NGOs. They have done excellent work and continue to do so. Approximately 20% of the Irish Aid Budget goes through NGOs to their work in various countries.</p> <p>With regard to reaching the 0.7% target for overseas aid, the amount that has been set aside this year is the amount it is intended to spend this year. We do not know what national wealth will be in the years ahead. While we are constantly striving towards the 0.7% target, we will not know the actual amounts until we see the outcome in respect of growth. In 2010, Ireland contributed €675 million to official aid, most of it coming through Irish Aid</p> <p>I have begun the process of reviewing the 2006 White Paper. We intend to consult widely, particularly among NGOs but also among the people of Ireland. The process will take a number of months because we want genuinely to consult with the people. We expect to have completed the review process within about a year. I believe it will take that time for all of the consultations.</p>
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21 April 2011	Seán Ó Fhearghaíl	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs his views on whether the commitment to provide 0.7%	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>First, I congratulate Deputy Ó Fearghail on his appointment as Fianna Fáil spokesperson on foreign affairs. We worked together very closely in the Joint Committee on Health and Children.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme has always had broad cross-party and public support. It reflects our values as a people, and is central to Ireland's foreign policy. The aid programme has built on years of effort by courageous individual Irish people. It is now</p>

		<p>of GNP in overseas aid by 2015 is feasible in view of the revised growth forecasts for the economy here.</p>	<p>recognised internationally for its focus on the fight against global poverty and hunger and for its leadership in making aid more effective, especially in the poorest countries in Africa.</p> <p>The Government is strongly committed to Ireland's development programme and to Ireland's role internationally in helping to achieve the millennium development goals. Our programme for Government states clearly our commitment to the 0.7% GNP target, and to seeking to achieve it by 2015. This is in line with the long-standing UN target for official development assistance and with the commitment of the European Union.</p> <p>It is clear that, in current circumstances, this will be a challenging target to meet. However, the Government was elected to face up to the challenges of rebuilding our society and our economy and of restoring economic growth and our international reputation. I believe we can do this without undermining our work to improve the lives of some of the world's poorest people.</p> <p>The Irish people have always shown great generosity to those less fortunate than ourselves. In the current economic crisis, with pressure on domestic budgets and on international aid budgets, it is all the more important that our development programme, which is managed by Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, focuses rigorously on delivering results for the poorest people. Over the coming year, we will review the 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid in order to ensure that Ireland can make the strongest possible collective contribution to the fight against global poverty and hunger.</p> <p>As Minister of State responsible for development, I intend to visit a number of our programme countries in Africa over the coming months to see the difference Ireland's work is making to the lives of poor families and communities and to assess how we can strengthen our contribution, especially in the area of hunger and undernutrition.</p>
<p>21 April 2011</p>	<p>Seán Ó Fhearghaíl</p>	<p>I commend the Government on what appears to be a superb idea which will have my party's active support. Is it envisaged that jobseekers will arrange work through the Department or Irish Aid or will they liaise directly with the relevant charities and organisations? Does the Minister of State have a timescale for engaging with organisations such as GOAL and Trócaire to obtain their input into what appears to be an excellent plan? Will this be part of the jobs initiative - perhaps I should refer to it as a jobs budget - which the Government will announce in</p>	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>I do not mind whether the Deputy calls it the jobs budget or jobs initiative. I welcome his support for this proposal. In reply to his earlier question, I have begun to consult and have met the board of Dóchas, an umbrella organisation for all the various bodies, to discuss how this might work. I also met Trócaire and I plan to meet within the next few weeks the various other organisations such as Concern, GOAL and Misean Cara, which represents the missionaries. We already have the mechanism of going through those kinds of bodies. Voluntary Service Overseas is another major organisation for volunteering and it would seem a good channel to use as we know it works well.</p> <p>With regard to establishing a new mechanism, I am not sure any of us would wish to begin setting up new bodies or organisations, and I would probably be condemned if I suggested that. Primarily, we want to use what we already have. I point out that Irish Aid has a volunteering and information centre on O'Connell Street, Dublin. I would advise anybody who wishes to access information on volunteering to visit the centre, which is in an obvious location with a big shop front-type window.</p> <p>I do not envisage this will be a specific proposal in the jobs initiative or jobs budget. Frankly, I do not believe it will be ready for that time and those proposals will largely relate to other areas of job creation. We certainly intend to develop this.</p>

		the next month or thereabouts?	
21 April 2011	Billy Kelleher	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will provide further detail on the commitment in the Programme for Government to establish a Civilian Corps.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>In keeping with the commitment in the programme for Government, over the coming months I plan to explore options for the establishment of a civilian corps which could allow some jobseekers to use and share their skills in developing countries while retaining some jobseeker's benefit.</p> <p>Support for volunteering has always been strong in Ireland. Much of the achievement and the strong international reputation of our development programme is built on the contribution of generations of courageous Irish volunteers and missionaries who worked to improve the lives of the world's poorest people. The volunteering experience today contributes to young people's personal and professional development, while providing skills and expertise that complement those existing on the ground. Since I was appointed Minister of State with responsibility for trade and development, I have begun a process of dialogue with the Irish development non-governmental organisations, both collectively and individually. I hope to meet shortly with the main organisations which send volunteers to work in developing countries. I will explore with them how people who have become unemployed or cannot find employment in Ireland could most usefully play a role in international development, if they wish to do so.</p> <p>The focus of the Government's aid programme is on the fight against poverty and hunger in some of the poorest countries and communities in the world. It is strongly concentrated in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Through the aid programme, which is administered by Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Government is currently funding the work of about 1,300 development workers, volunteers and missionaries in developing countries. In addition, Ireland's rapid response corps, established by Irish Aid, enables those with specific skills to deploy swiftly in humanitarian crises. I am also examining a pilot initiative at European Union level to develop a European voluntary humanitarian aid corps.</p> <p>It is clear that volunteers can have a very important role to play as part of Ireland's overall contribution to development. I want to ensure we can build on the contribution already being made by individual Irish volunteers in the most effective, relevant and safest manner possible.</p>
21 April 2011	Dessie Ellis	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if Ireland will be participating at the fourth high level forum on aid effectiveness in Busan in the Republic of Korea; and if so, the proposed strategy and agenda.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>One of the most important international meetings on development issues this year will be the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, to be held in Busan, in the Republic of Korea, in November. The Forum will represent a milestone in the international effort to judge the quality of development assistance and its contribution to social and economic progress in developing countries.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme, which is administered by Irish Aid in the Department of Foreign Affairs, has a strong international reputation for its focus on poverty and hunger in some of the poorest countries, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa. The OECD Development Assistance Committee has described the aid programme as cutting edge, and a champion in making aid more effective. Ireland has played a strong role, in cooperation with other international donors and with developing countries, in the concerted international effort over the past decade to ensure that development aid is delivered to maximum effect, and contributes to sustainable change in the lives of people and communities in poor countries. Ireland is fully engaged, both nationally and through the EU, in the preparations for the Busan meeting.</p> <p>The High Level Forum will assess progress on the role and contribution of aid in international development. Considerable work is being undertaken internationally to prepare and present evidence on the extent to which Official Development Assistance, together with developing countries' own resources, is leading to sustainable improvements in the lives of poor people. The Forum will bring</p>

			<p>together Government representatives from the developing and the developed world, parliamentarians, civil society and others with an interest in strengthening the impact of aid. It will be an important opportunity to discuss the framework for development in the run-up to the 2015 target date for the Millennium Development Goals, and beyond.</p> <p>Ireland's aid programme has always had strong cross-party support, not least because of the demonstrable effect it is having in our Programme Countries. I look forward to visiting several of the Programme Countries over the coming months. It is essential that we be in a position to show clearly, both to the people of developing countries where we work and to the Irish people, the impact of our assistance. For instance, in Mozambique the number of people living on less than a dollar a day is continuing to decline and income per capita has doubled in the last 10 years. In Tanzania, the Government now reports a primary school enrolment rate of 95.9 per cent. In Lesotho, the percentage of people living with HIV who are accessing anti-retroviral drugs has increased from 25 per cent in 2007 to 44 per cent in 2009. Improvements such as these have only been possible through cooperation at Government, local and community level, ensuring that all resources for development are used coherently and effectively, and are focused on achieving long term improvements in the lives of poor people.</p> <p>I want to ensure that Ireland's experience and evidence from our aid programme are brought to bear in Busan. In the preparations for the High Level Forum, Ireland is engaging with our partners in developing countries, and with the OECD, the EU and the UN. I believe it is important to consult also with the elected representatives of the Irish people and with the Irish organisations involved in development. I will ensure that arrangements for these consultations are put in place in the coming period, and I look forward to further discussions with Deputies in advance of November's meeting.</p>
21 April 2011	Dessie Ellis	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the date on which he will report to the UN on the way Ireland will achieve its millennium goals.	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed by world leaders at the United Nations in 2000 as the framework for international development policy up to 2015. They provide a clearly measurable way to track progress in the fight against global poverty. The Goals are central to Ireland's overseas development programme, and to the Government's development policy.</p> <p>Last September, the MDG Review Summit at the UN in New York assessed progress against each of the Goals and set out the measures which will be necessary if they are to be achieved by 2015. It is clear that there has been significant progress in some areas since 2000. There have been remarkable improvements in primary school enrolment, access to clean water, child health and the treatment of HIV and AIDS. However, progress has been slow in other areas, for instance in reducing maternal mortality. The Summit agreed that international assistance needs to be directed more effectively at regions where progress has been slowest, notably sub-Saharan Africa, which is the main focus of Ireland's aid programme.</p> <p>Despite the advances, the actual numbers of people living in poverty and hunger continue to increase. The first of the MDGs aims to halve the proportion of people suffering from poverty and hunger. Hunger is one of the key determinants of poverty and exclusion, and reducing hunger is a key pillar of Ireland's development policy. I know that the focus on hunger, and especially on agriculture and on mother and child nutrition, is supported in Ireland across the political spectrum. We are building our cooperation with the US Administration, with our EU partners and with developing countries to ensure that it receives the concerted international attention required.</p> <p>In my role as Minister of State for development I plan to visit a number of our Programme Countries in the coming months to see the impact of our aid programme, to assess how we can strengthen our work on hunger and to underline the Government's commitment to the achievement of the MDGs.</p>
21 April 2011	Jonathan O'Brien	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs his strategy for reaching the 0.7% of GDP target for investment	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>In 2011, Ireland's total contribution to Official Development Assistance (ODA) will amount to €669 million. It is estimated that €534 million of this funding will be administered by Irish Aid, in the Department of Foreign Affairs, which manages the Government's aid programme. Some €135 million is accounted for by contributions of other Government Departments and by Ireland's share of the EU development cooperation budget. On current projections, this level of allocation will ensure that Ireland</p>

		in overseas aid.	<p>will provide approximately 0.52 % of GNP for development assistance.</p> <p>As I have stated in my reply to the earlier Priority Question, the Government is strongly committed to Ireland's aid programme. We are very proud of the programme and its achievements and we value the broad cross-party and public support on which it is based. Development remains central to Ireland's foreign policy. In our programme for Government we have clearly stated that we are committed to the 0.7% GNP target, and will seek to achieve it by 2015. Given the current economic circumstances facing the country, the target will be difficult to achieve. Our strategy is to restore growth to the economy, and to provide the basis for sustained growth in the Government's aid programme.</p> <p>As I have stated already, the Government was elected to rebuild our society and our economy, but not to do so at the expense of people who are significantly less fortunate than ourselves, many of whom have to provide for their families on incomes of less than \$1 a day. Decisions on the annual allocations for the aid programme will of course have to be taken in the context of the overall budgetary situation. However, I can give the assurance, as Minister with responsibility for trade and development, that I will make the strongest possible case for funding for development assistance.</p> <p>Ireland's aid programme has a strong international reputation for its focus on clear results in the fight against poverty and hunger, especially in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa. I want to ensure that Ireland can meet its international commitments, and that Irish people can remain proud of their contribution to the building of a fairer society, not just at home but also in the poorest countries and communities.</p>
19 April 2011	Dara Calleary	To ask the Minister for Defence if he will elaborate on the commitment in the programme for Government to initiate a detailed legal review of the basis, structures and governance of the Red Cross here; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Alan Shatter</p> <p>The Programme for Government provides for the initiation of a detailed legal review of the basis, structures and governance of the Red Cross in Ireland to improve its functioning in the light of changing circumstances. As the legislation that governs the Irish Red Cross Society substantially dates back to the pre World War II era, I believe it is now opportune to carry out a comprehensive review of the legislation governing the operation of the Society.</p> <p>In 2007 a resolution was passed by the Council of Delegates of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) which urged all National Societies to examine and update their Statutes - the rules of the National Societies - and the related legal texts. Arising from this, governance reform has been undertaken by many Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world in accordance with the "Guidance for National Society Statutes" and relevant International Conference resolutions.</p> <p>I am aware that a Working Group to propose changes in the governance of the Society was established by the Irish Red Cross in 2008. The Chairman of the Working Group presented the findings, which included changes recommended by the International Federation, to the Central Council of the Irish Red Cross Society at a meeting held in November 2009. The Working Group's report was then submitted to the Department of Defence early last year.</p> <p>Following the Department's review of these proposals and the related legislation, a draft Order that would amend the Irish Red Cross Order 1939 was submitted to the Office of the Attorney General. The 1939 Order sets out the basis upon which the Society is governed and was made pursuant to the Red Cross Act 1938. Discussions with the Office of the Attorney General on the extent of changes that can be made to the 1939 Order are continuing. Following receipt of legal advice from the Office of the Attorney General, which is expected in the coming weeks, I will review the legislative changes that are proposed and consider bringing them to Government for approval.</p> <p>Finally, it is important to note that whatever changes may be made to the 1939 Order, a comprehensive review of all Red Cross legislation, and in particular the primary legislation, will be commenced by my Department as a matter of priority. In this regard, I believe that an overriding principle should be to ensure that whatever legislative changes are made have the full support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.</p>
19 April	Aodhán Ó	To ask the Minister	<p>Alan Shatter</p> <p>The Programme for Government provides for the initiation of a detailed legal review of the basis, structures and governance of the</p>

2011	Ríordáin	for Defence the progress made in initiating a detailed review of the basis, structures and governance of the Irish Red Cross, as outlined in the programme for Government; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Red Cross in Ireland to improve its functioning in the light of changing circumstances.</p> <p>As the legislation that governs the Irish Red Cross Society substantially dates back to the pre World War II era, I believe it is now opportune to carry out a comprehensive review of the legislation governing the operation of the Society. In 2007 a resolution was passed by the Council of Delegates of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) which urged all National Societies to examine and update their Statutes - the rules of the National Societies - and the related legal texts. Arising from this, governance reform has been undertaken by many Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world in accordance with the "Guidance for National Society Statutes" and relevant International Conference resolutions.</p> <p>I am aware that a Working Group to propose changes in the governance of the Society was established by the Irish Red Cross in 2008. The Chairman of the Working Group presented the findings, which included changes recommended by the International Federation, to the Central Council of the Irish Red Cross Society at a meeting held in November 2009. The Working Group's report was then submitted to the Department of Defence early last year.</p> <p>Following the Department's review of these proposals and the related legislation, a draft Order that would amend the Irish Red Cross Order 1939 was submitted to the Office of the Attorney General. The 1939 Order sets out the basis upon which the Society is governed and was made pursuant to the Red Cross Act 1938. Discussions with the Office of the Attorney General on the extent of changes that can be made to the 1939 Order are continuing. Following receipt of legal advice from the Office of the Attorney General, which is expected in the coming weeks, I will review the legislative changes that are proposed and consider bringing them to Government for approval.</p> <p>Finally, it is important to note that whatever changes may be made to the 1939 Order, a comprehensive review of all Red Cross legislation, and in particular the primary legislation, will be commenced by my Department as a matter of priority. In this regard, I believe that an overriding principle should be to ensure that whatever legislative changes are made have the full support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.</p>
19 April 2011	Finian McGrath	To ask the Minister for Defence, in view of his commitment to good corporate governance practice, if he has concerns that the executive committee and the central council of the Irish Red Cross has a number of members who have served continually on the board for between ten and 20 years, in breach of internationally recognised good governance practice, including that of the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent and	<p>Alan Shatter</p> <p>My Department is engaged in consultations with the Office of the Attorney General on the extent of changes that can be made to the Irish Red Cross Order 1939. Following receipt of legal advice from the Office of the Attorney General, which is expected in the coming weeks, I will review the legislative changes that are proposed and consider bringing them to Government for approval. Amongst the issues that will be considered will be the question of introducing mandatory breaks in service.</p>

		<p>the International Committee of the Red Cross; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p> <p><i>And six follow-up questions on government funding of the IRC</i></p>	
19 April 2011	Terence Flanagan	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will respond to correspondence (detail supplied) regarding the humanitarian crisis in Japan; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	<p>One month after the devastating magnitude 9 earthquake and tsunami that killed more than 25,000 people in north-eastern Japan, the country's authorities are continuing to undertake a massive recovery operation and to bring help to the 170,000 people who remain homeless as a result of the disaster. A further 80,000 people living within a 20 kilometre radius of the Fukushima nuclear power plant which was badly damaged as a result of the tsunami, have also been ordered to evacuate their homes, as workers inside the facility attempt to remove contaminated water and cool the plant's reactor.</p> <p>The Government responded swiftly to the emergency through the decision on 16 March to allocate €1 million to the Japanese Red Cross, which has been central to the emergency response operation. In addition, the Government placed Irish Aid's Rapid Response Corps – a roster of highly skilled humanitarian personnel – on standby to assist and offered the use of emergency shelter, water and sanitation equipment from our pre-positioned stockpiles in Dubai and Malaysia. At this stage however, the Japanese authorities have indicated that they are unlikely to require this additional support as they now have sufficient resources available within Japan to procure relief supplies and to deliver them to the worst affected areas.</p> <p>As I have noted elsewhere, Japan has a long history of coping with natural disasters and has one of the best-developed systems of civil protection anywhere in the world. While many thousands of people remain in evacuation centres, the Government of Japan has already developed detailed plans to provide them with accommodation and has requested the housing industry to build 30,000 temporary homes by mid-May. With the vast majority of towns and cities in Japan left undamaged by the disaster, some 42,000 pre-existing housing units have also been made available by local or public authorities across the country to accommodate the displaced. At this stage, it is not anticipated that accommodation will be required overseas given the significant resources which Japan itself is able to devote to this operation. The Government continues to monitor the situation in Japan and remains ready to offer further support should the Japanese consider this necessary.</p>
14 April 2011	Eoghan Murphy	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the last time a value for money audit was conducted in relation to moneys allocated under overseas development aid programme.</p>	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>The last value for money work relating to the overseas development aid programme was completed in November 2009. This was a review of Irish Aid's expenditure of €340 million devoted to HIV/AIDS programmes for the period 2000 to 2007. This report was published and is available in the Dáil Library and on the Irish Aid website.</p> <p>Further value for money work is planned to be undertaken in 2011. This value for money exercise will be a review of Irish Aid's support to Concern Worldwide under the Multi-Annual Programme Scheme for NGOs over the period 2007-2010.</p>
14 April 2011	Eoghan Murphy	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the mechanisms in place to ensure that overseas development</p>	<p>Jan O'Sullivan</p> <p>Irish Aid has rigorous planning, monitoring, evaluation and audit mechanisms in place. This ensures that all funds are spent effectively and are used for the stated objectives of the programmes receiving funding.</p> <p>Irish Aid planning processes have a strong results focus which identifies specific objectives and results against which Irish Aid programmes are measured and evaluated. All development aid funding is disbursed based on clear and detailed</p>

		aid funding is spent as intended once drawn down by the recipient, that is, in accordance with the stated objectives of the programme receiving funding.	<p>proposals in line with these specific objectives. Proposals are appraised by Irish Aid staff as well as by an independent external Programme Appraisal and Evaluation Group using a number of different criteria, including quality of intended impact, sustainability, cost effectiveness and efficiency in the use of resources.</p> <p>Programmes in receipt of funding from Irish Aid are continually monitored and assessed, by both staff in the field and at headquarters, to ensure that they are achieving results and that the intended objectives and goals are being accomplished. This takes place through regular supervision and reporting, and external reviews are also conducted as necessary.</p> <p>Irish Aid programmes are regularly audited and evaluated by independent evaluation and audit firms as well as by Irish Aid's Evaluation and Audit Unit, including internal auditors based in our Programme Countries. The Unit's work is also reviewed by the Department's independent Audit Committee. These evaluations and audits provide assurance that funds are used for the purposes intended and have a particular focus on poverty outcomes and value for money.</p> <p>While we are working in some of the most difficult environments in the world, I am satisfied that the monitoring, evaluation and audit systems which we have in place provide the best assurance that development aid funding is used for the intended objectives.</p>
14 April 2011	Eoghan Murphy	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will provide a detailed breakdown of overseas development aid spending in 2009 and 2010; the amount that was allocated, by country and region, as well as programme of support and if money allocated in the years in question was drawn down.	<p><b>Jan O'Sullivan</b></p> <p>For 2010, Ireland spent €675 million on Official Development Assistance (ODA). Of this total, €521 million was administered by my Department through Irish Aid. A further €154 million was accounted for by ODA eligible expenditure made through other Government Departments, and Ireland's share of the EU Development Cooperation budget.</p> <p>This level of expenditure resulted in Ireland spending approximately 0.53% of its GNP on ODA - and ensured Ireland met, and indeed exceeded, the wider EU target of 0.51%.</p> <p>Comparative figures for 2009 show that Ireland spent a total of €722 million on ODA, which represented 0.54% of GNP.</p> <p>Ireland's aid programme is internationally recognised as being of the highest quality and having a sharp focus on poverty reduction, with hunger eradication at its core. The latest OECD review of Ireland's aid programme has described the programme as "cutting edge". Most of Ireland's bilateral ODA is directed to the least developed countries, with a particular focus on a limited number of very poor partner countries, called Programme Countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa.</p> <p>Ireland's aid programme is based on the promotion of sustainable development results and has a particular focus on the social sectors of health, education, governance and addressing food security and hunger. Funding is delivered through a wide range of partner organisations including Programme Country national systems, NGOs and Missionary Organisations and UN and other international specialist agencies.</p> <p>My Department is currently in the process of finalising the detailed analysis of Ireland's ODA expenditure for 2010, which will be published shortly in the Irish Aid annual report. The detailed analysis of Ireland's 2009 ODA expenditure is available in the 2009 annual report which can be accessed through the Irish Aid website at <a href="http://www.irishaid.gov.ie">www.irishaid.gov.ie</a>.</p>
6 April 2011	Aodhán Ó Ríordáin	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will act on the recent publication by Dr. Sheila Killian at the University of Limerick, Driving the Getaway Car? Ireland, Tax and Development, written in co-operation with such prominent	<p><b>Jan O'Sullivan</b></p> <p>I welcome the interest among Non-governmental Organisations and academic researchers in the international debate on financing for development, and in particular on the issue of taxation and development. Official Development Assistance (ODA) is essential, both as a direct contribution to the fight against global poverty and as a catalyst for other development funding. However, development is about much more than aid. Sustainable change and inclusive economic growth will not be achieved unless countries themselves can take the lead in their own development. It is worth noting that, at present, domestic revenue raises about ten times more in development financing for Africa than does ODA.</p> <p>I have seen the report referred to by the Deputy. Notwithstanding its title, the report looks at some serious and important issues. While the Minister for Finance has responsibility for questions in relation to Ireland's taxation system, I would point out that Irish Aid, operating from within my Department, cooperates closely with the Department of Finance and the Revenue Commissioners in providing assistance to developing countries to build up their tax systems and in Ireland's engagement on global policy issues in this</p>

		non-government organisations (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>area.</p> <p>Efficient and fair tax systems in developing countries are essential to the fight against poverty, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It is increasingly being recognised that tax evasion and avoidance, and illicit financial flows, represent a major obstacle to domestic resource mobilisation in poor countries, and are undermining development efforts. Ireland has engaged actively through the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the United Nations to ensure that effective multilateral action is taken to tackle these practices. A number of important recommendations are emerging, which will be considered in the coming period.</p> <p>More generally, the Government's approach to these issues will involve a strong commitment to the aid programme and to the 0.7% GNP commitment, which we will strive to meet by 2015. We are firmly committed to the Millennium Development Goals, and to ensuring that Ireland's development programme is rigorously focused on the poorest people and communities, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and on achieving results in the fight against global poverty and hunger. An important element in this is the building of capacity in our partner countries to raise their own revenue in a fair and efficient way, and to provide effective and accountable management of public resources. Through the Revenue Commissioners, for example, our cooperation with the Rwanda Revenue Authority is already being used to develop a tax compliance risk assessment system which has the potential for application in other developing countries. We are also supporting the African Taxation Administrators Forum in building capacity across the continent. I believe that Ireland must play its role, as a developed country, in responding to the opportunities which now exist, through the OECD and in cooperation with developing countries, NGOs and the private sector, to create greater international tax transparency. The aim must be to strengthen the enabling environment for developing countries to collect tax revenues, build their state systems, promote inclusive economic growth and end chronic poverty and hunger. In the current economic environment, it is essential that we ensure that our development assistance is achieving clear results, and that we strengthen the coherence of policies across all Government Departments which affect developing countries.</p>
5 April 2011	Micheál Martin	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs his plans to implement the African trade strategy which was developed by the previous Government.	<p><b>Eamon Gilmore</b></p> <p>The Government attaches great importance to the continuing development of Ireland's relations with Africa as a whole, and with individual African countries. My Department manages a significant development cooperation programme, Irish Aid, which is strongly focused on sub-Saharan Africa. Our broader relations with Africa are managed through our Embassy network across that continent, as well as through our relationships with the European Union, the United Nations, and other international bodies. While development needs remain very evident, Africa is also undergoing major political, economic and social change, and it is important that we consider ways of strengthening our approach to Africa in order to respond to these changes. Trade, investment and business-to-business exchange are increasingly important emerging facets of our relationship with Africa, and we will be sharpening our focus on identifying opportunities in these areas. As the Deputy will be aware, officials in my Department have been examining ways to strengthen all aspects of our relations with our African partners in the political, economic, and development spheres, including through the development of a strategy for the mutually beneficial enhancement of trade between Ireland and Africa. Some practical work has already been done in this area in terms of staff training and enhancing the capacity of our Embassies in Africa to undertake economic and trade work and we are looking to build on this. The enhanced role for the Department of Foreign Affairs in the trade area will also facilitate greater coherence in this regard in Africa. A broad review of our relations with Africa, and options for strengthening these, is at an advanced stage in my Department, and I envisage that I will be making a more detailed statement on our plans and priorities in this regard in the near future. I would underline that poverty, hunger and under-development continue to be the greatest obstacles for Africa, and efforts to eradicate these will continue to be a key focus in our work with African partners.</p>
23 March 2011	Michael Kitt	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if	<p><b>Jan O'Sullivan</b></p> <p>Efficient and fair tax systems in developing countries are essential for sustainable growth, poverty reduction, and the provision of services so that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can be met. They also help in promoting democracy and state</p>

		<p>he has received representations from non-governmental organisations on their concerns at the low capacity of developing countries to implement fair and effective tax collection systems; if an estimate is available on the loss of money from developing countries due to tax avoidance and evasion; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	<p>legitimacy, since tax payers are more likely to hold their governments to account. This is why building government systems, including tax and other systems of good governance, is such an important pillar of Ireland's overseas aid programme, Irish Aid. I welcome the growing interest in, and representations from non-governmental organisations on, the importance of building fair and transparent government systems.</p> <p>Tax avoidance and evasion is a major issue for developing countries. It is difficult to estimate the exact cost to state exchequers in all developing countries. According to the Oxford University Centre for Business Taxation, reported estimates of revenue losses suffered by developing countries range between approximately US \$35 billion and US \$160 billion per year.</p> <p>However, there are also grounds for optimism. First and foremost, governments of developing countries are seeing domestic revenue mobilisation in a new light. The uncertainty created by the global economic crisis has underpinned the realisation that it is primarily fair and efficient taxation that will meet the revenue needs of developing countries. The formation of the African Taxation Administrators Forum (ATAF) by revenue authorities across Africa, supported by our overseas development programme, Irish Aid, is playing an important role in building capacity in that regard.</p> <p>These efforts are being reinforced by a growing international consensus around taxation and development. The G8 and the G20 have made considerable advances with the assistance of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund and others towards addressing illicit capital flows and tax evasion. The EU has also adopted, with Ireland's support, an action plan to support tax administration and reforms in developing countries.</p> <p>I am also happy to note that a comprehensive Tax and Development Programme was recently launched, with the active engagement of OECD members, including Ireland, developing countries, non-governmental organisations, civil society and business. This Programme will respond to the new opportunities for more international tax transparency, and work towards an enhanced enabling environment for developing countries to collect tax revenues and to build effective states.</p> <p>Finally, Ireland is supporting through our aid programme a number of other important initiatives aimed at strengthening tax systems in Africa. This includes support for regional efforts such as AWEPA's work with the East African Community Customs Union. The very fruitful collaboration between the Irish Revenue Commissioners and the Rwanda Revenue Authority is also being supported. More generally, our partnership with the Irish Aid Programme Countries places an emphasis on strengthening the management of public finances and ensuring that revenues raised are used effectively and efficiently to tackle poverty.</p>
22 March 2011	Finian McGrath	<p>To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will advise persons (details supplied) regarding aid to Libya.</p>	<p><b>Jan O'Sullivan</b></p> <p>The humanitarian situation in and around Libya is extremely worrying. More than 250,000 people, mostly migrant workers, are thought to have fled across the country's borders and into Tunisia and Egypt in recent weeks, prompting a major international relief effort. At the same time, the situation within the country gives cause for real concern with widespread reports of civilian deaths and casualties. The violence has also sparked fears of much larger population movements and for the availability of food.</p> <p>Humanitarian access to western Libya and areas under the control of the regime has been very limited, making it extremely difficult to assess the needs of the population or prevent further suffering. Together with our EU and UN partners, we have emphasised the need to place concerted pressure on the Libyan Government to permit full and unhindered access for humanitarian agencies.</p> <p>The Irish Government, through Irish Aid, has also committed nearly €400,000 in response to the crisis, through both direct funding and in-kind assistance. This assistance has included the transport of 18,500 blankets and 100 tents for distribution by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) as well as €250,000 for the International Organisation for Migration to help transport some of those stranded at border areas back to their countries of origin. My Department stands ready to provide further support in response to the needs identified by the United Nations and other aid agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC).</p> <p>The ICRC, which works to prevent and alleviate human suffering and to provide emergency medical services to people affected by disasters or conflicts, is currently working with the Libyan Red Crescent in areas such as Benghazi. Proposals regarding the delivery</p>

			of medical supplies or equipment from Ireland may usefully be addressed to the ICRC, or to the Irish Red Cross in Dublin.
22 March 2011	Pádraig MacLochlainn	To ask the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs the aid plans that have been put in place to offer assistance to the people of Japan following the earthquake and tsunami which have hit there.	<p><b>Jan O'Sullivan</b></p> <p>A devastating earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale struck Japan on the afternoon of Friday, 11 March, causing widespread damage and triggering a massive tsunami. The twin disasters ravaged the northeast of the country leaving thousands of people dead and many thousands more destitute. More than 500,000 people were evacuated from their homes and many of these have been forced to take refuge in community centres and temporary shelters.</p> <p>Engineers have also been battling to save the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, 220 km from Tokyo, where the tsunami caused significant damage. There have been a number of explosions at the facility as well as radiation leaks. With some estimates placing the cost to the Japanese economy at \$200 billion (dollars), the recovery and reconstruction effort is likely to be long and difficult.</p> <p>Japan's disaster response capability has been stretched to the limit by the scale of the emergency and last week they appealed to the EU for assistance. Support was specifically requested for the Japanese Red Cross, which has deployed 84 mobile medical teams and 735 staff members to the affected areas.</p> <p>The Government responded immediately to this request by agreeing to provide €1 million to the Japanese Red Cross, which will provide relief for people left injured or homeless by the disaster.</p> <p>The Government has also made available our emergency stockpiles in Subang, Malaysia. These are composed of emergency shelters, blankets and water and sanitation equipment and provide a basic infrastructure to those who have lost their homes. Irish Aid officials are also in ongoing contact with the EU and United Nations with a view to assessing how Ireland might further contribute to the relief operation.</p>
<b>30th Dáil</b>			
27 January 2011	Seán Ó Feargháil	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs his views on the current overseas aid programme; the way he envisages the programme being sustained and expanded into the future; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Peter Power</b></p> <p>For 2011, the Government has provided an overall allocation for Official Development Assistance (ODA) of €669 million. Of this total, €534 million will be administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and a further estimated €135 million will come from other Government Departments, including Ireland's share of the EU Development Cooperation budget.</p> <p>The 2011 allocation ensures our ODA effort is stabilised at approximately 0.52% of GNP which remains ahead of the EU average. In the context of our very difficult economic circumstances, I believe this is a significant achievement, and clear evidence of our commitment to the fight against global poverty and hunger. As I have stated many times the stabilisation of our public finances and the return of economic growth are the best foundations for restoring growth to the development aid programme.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme is the Irish people's aid programme. We are proud of its strong international reputation for quality and effectiveness and in particular for its sharp focus on the poorest countries and communities in sub-Saharan Africa. I am determined to maintain the high quality of our aid programme and ensure that we continue to deliver a programme that has maximum impact and is rigorously focused on achieving clear results for the lives of the poor, the marginalised and the hungry.</p>
25 January 2011	Leo Varadkar	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if he has carried out, during the course of 2010, advertising campaigns to promote any policies or programmes being	<p><b>Brian Cowen</b></p> <p>The Department of Foreign Affairs carried out no advertising campaigns in 2010 to promote any policies or programmes it was implementing. Advertising undertaken by the Department typically includes: advisory notices on public opening hours over holiday periods, changes in passport application procedures and fees, public information notices relating to significant developments in the European Union or to promote public awareness of Ireland's official Development Aid Programme.</p> <p>Much of this material is now placed on the Department's Website but advertising continues to be necessary in order to reach all of our citizens including those with no access to internet, particularly in relation to important passport and consular services. The</p>

implemented by his Department; the name of the campaign or relevant programme; the total cost of advertising in publications, broadcast advertising, outdoor advertising and consultancy or production costs; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

following tables give the details of such advertising under Votes 28 (Foreign Affairs) and 29 (International Cooperation) in the course of 2010.

Vote 28 (Foreign Affairs)

Company	Transaction Date	Description/Invoice	Amount
National newspapers Iris Oifigiúil Brindley Iris Oifigiúil Truvo	February 2010 03/3/10, 12/8/10 and 24/8/10 1/4/109/7/1026/8/10	Communicating Europe Initiative grant scheme Criminal Justice mutual assistance Public Awareness in respect of industrial action in the Passport Office List of agreements entered into by the State Phone Book entry in EIRCOM's Golden Pages etc.	8,740,274.00 13,256.00 387.27 15,369.42
Total			€38,026.69

Vote 29 (International Cooperation)

Company	Transaction date	Description/Invoice	Amount
Brindley	11/02/2010	Africa Day advertisement	2,219.73
Brindley	24/03/2010	Volunteering Fair Cork	7,484.83
Brindley	09/06/2010	Africa Day 'Call for Proposals'	4,335.28
Brindley	18/10/2010	Promoting awareness of global hunger at National Ploughing Championships	1,842.59
Brindley	18/10/2010	Volunteering Fair Dublin	3,095.79
GTI Specialist Publishers Ltd	18/10/2010	Volunteering Fair Dublin	484.00
Voluntary Service International	17/06/2010	Advertisement in Voluntary Service International booklet 2010	320.00
PG Print Media	26/04/2010	Promoting awareness of global hunger at the National Ploughing Championships	968.00
Education Matters	21/10/2010	Education Matters Year Book 2010	1,050.00
Red Dog	13/08/2010	Africa Day banner Harcourt St, Dublin	2,628.00
Red Dog	13/08/2010	Africa Day street posters for Limerick & Dublin	697.00
Total			€25,125.22

25 January 2011	Leo Varadkar	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if agencies, boards, quangos or other bodies within the remit of his Department have carried out advertising campaigns during the course of 2010 to promote policies or programmes being implemented by those agencies or by his Department; the details of the campaign or relevant programme; the cost of advertising in publications, broadcast advertising, online advertising, outdoor advertising and other forms of advertising and consultancy or production costs; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Brian Cowen</b></p> <p>There are no State Agencies operating under the aegis of the Department of Foreign Affairs. There are four bodies operating under the aegis of the Department of Foreign Affairs. These are: the Ireland - United States Commission for Educational Exchange (the Fulbright Commission); the Development Education Advisory Committee; the Irish Aid Expert Advisory Group; and the Emigrant Services Advisory Committee. None of these bodies carried out an advertising campaign during 2010 to promote policies or programmes being implemented.</p>
20 January 2011	Seán Barrett	What is the Minister of State's view?	<p><b>Peter Power</b></p> <p>We need to work with our European partners in this area. Discussions are being held at present as to how the European Union might contribute to a wider multilateral force. However, they are at the very early stages.</p>
20 January 2011	Seán Barrett	<p>Anything is better than nothing but ten is very few, in this situation. The television programmes made it clear that the security situation is quite horrific.</p> <p>I do not expect Ireland to solve the problem but we are a key member of the European Union. We can awaken the EU to its responsibility and offer</p>	<p><b>Peter Power</b></p> <p>There needs to be a very clear distinction between our rapid response corps, which provides specialist aid in humanitarian situations, and the security or violent dimension to an emergency. In Haiti, the security situation is of concern to us but it is not our responsibility. It would be the responsibility of global organisations, such as MINUSTAH.</p> <p>There is discussion at European level as to how there can be a co-ordinated response on the security front by the European Union. The view, very much, is that because these disasters are of increasing frequency</p>

		<p>to support any peace corps that is designed to protect the forces of law and order in the country. Recapturing 4,000 escapees and dealing with crime on the streets would give people a chance to get back to normal living. Our membership of the EU should be used in that way. We could offer some of the well-trained and professional members of our Defence Forces to assist in such a mission. These are the sort of things on which Ireland can lead.</p>	
<p>20 January 2011</p>	<p>Seán Barrett</p>	<p>Did the Minister of State have the opportunity to see the recent television programmes about Haiti, particularly the programme dealing with the damage caused by escaped prisoners, of whom there are 4,000 and who have been convicted of all sorts of terrible crimes, including murder? These prisoners have caused havoc in the various shelters and temporary cities that exist in Haiti. My understanding is that only 450 peacekeeping troops are available to work with the police and round up these 4,000 people, who are causing havoc.</p>	<p><b>Peter Power</b>  I did not see the programmes but I am keeping a very close eye on the security situation in Haiti. As Deputy Barrett knows, I visited there last July and saw for myself the shocking horror of the scale of destruction there. I experienced at first hand the very fragile security situation that pertained, even six months after the earthquake. Even before the earthquake, the security situation in Haiti was perilous, to say the least. There is a history of gang violence and that has continued into the humanitarian camps that are being supported by us at present.  With regard to our intervention in Haiti itself, it is not within our remit to deal with the security situation, although we would naturally wish to see it resolved and have increasing concern for the safety and security of humanitarian workers. Needless to say, the Sharon Commins incident is a case in point. However, our job is to provide, first, humanitarian aid and, second, long-term reconstruction.  With regard to the deployment of a corps of people, we have one in place. It is the rapid response corps. The lessons from the 2004 tsunami were clear. We need fewer but more highly trained and skilled people. We have a corps of more than 150 people and we deployed more than ten of those to Haiti immediately after the earthquake to assist with the effort.  Are those the lines the Deputy was considering?</p>

	<p>Is the Minister of State aware of a report presented to the EU Parliament by the Commission in November 2010? The report said experienced volunteers involved with the earthquake in Haiti confirmed the need for skilled and rapidly deployable volunteers as an immediate response to the emergency and also spoke of the possibility of using less skilled volunteers for auxiliary functions. The report went on to say the majority of volunteers used by agencies in Haiti were paid, either by companies or governments. Unskilled volunteers who arrived <i>en masse</i> during the early days with good intentions were less effective and, in some cases, even disruptive.</p> <p>I raise this because I have been pressing for some time for Ireland to establish a civilian corps of skilled people, many of whom are unemployed at present. There is also, I understand, a desire on the part of the EU Commissioner for a skilled civil corps to be established.</p> <p>Will the Minister of State take an active role at EU level to</p>	
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		<p>press forward with this proposal? There are far better ways of using our money to get proper results than continual statements that, through Irish Aid, we are giving grantaids. I would like to see personnel, who are at present unemployed, used in a proper constructive fashion.</p>	
20 January 2011	Seán Barrett	<p>To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs his views regarding the apparent lack of progress being made to deal with the many difficulties existing after the earthquake disaster in Haiti; if he has any proposals on the way Ireland and or the EU could assist further; if the present UN peace keeping force could be further strengthened to deal with the many law and order problems facing the Haitian authorities; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	<p><b>Peter Power</b>  The earthquake in Haiti killed more than 230,000 people and left 1.3 million people homeless. I saw the conditions at first hand last July and since then the hurricane season, the cholera outbreak and political uncertainty have exacerbated the already terrible situation.  The international relief effort has, however, made much progress. Sanitation and clean water are being provided to the temporary camps and more than 30,000 transitional shelters have been constructed. Structures have been created to ensure the reconstruction effort is coherent and avoids duplication of effort. Nevertheless, it is clear that the pace of progress is too slow to respond to the needs of the population and a redoubled effort is essential.  Ireland, through Irish Aid, is supporting both long-term reconstruction and short-term humanitarian relief in Haiti. Tens of thousands of people have benefited from Irish-funded shelter, water and sanitation projects. We have provided vital technical skills via our rapid response corps, as well as €1 million to the Haiti Reconstruction Trust Fund. Ireland has provided €8.6 million of the €13 million I pledged on the Government's behalf at the Haiti Donor Conference last March. Total EU funding to date is €780 million.  The strengthening of the United Nations stabilization mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH, peacekeeping operation is a matter for the Security Council. The mandate and strength of the operation has been adjusted on several occasions, most recently following the earthquake.  A key focus of the mission is rule of law, public safety and public order. Some 8,651 military personnel, 4,391 police and almost 2,000 civilians serve with MINUSTAH. Ireland and its EU partners continue to follow the situation carefully and last December the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, reaffirmed the EU's commitment to the reconstruction of Haiti.  This will undoubtedly take many years as the country is not just recovering from the earthquake, but from many decades of crisis. It is essential, therefore, that the international community remain committed in the years ahead.</p>
20 January 2011	Joe Costello	<p>To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will make a statement on progress towards meeting the millennium development goals.</p>	<p><b>Peter Power</b>  The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed by world leaders at the United Nations in 2000 as the framework for international development policy up to 2015. Last September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and I represented Ireland at the Review Summit in New York, which assessed progress against each of the Goals and the measures required for their achievement 2015. At the Summit, Ireland focused strongly on the first of the MDGs, the reduction of extreme poverty and hunger, which is critical for progress across the full range of Goals. We also argued that international assistance must be directed more effectively to the issues and the countries which have made least progress, notably in sub-Saharan Africa which is the geographic focus of Ireland's aid programme.</p>

			<p>The Summit noted that there has been good progress in some areas since 2000, with remarkable improvements in primary school enrolment, access to clean water, child health and the treatment of HIV and AIDS. For instance, almost 90% of children in developing countries are now enrolled in primary education and 10,000 fewer children are dying each day from largely preventable diseases than in 1990. However, progress has been uneven. The actual number of people living with chronic hunger and in extreme poverty continues to increase. Progress on the reduction of maternal mortality has been far too slow.</p> <p>At the Summit, Ireland took an international lead on the global hunger crisis. With the US Secretary of State, we organised a major international meeting which marked the launch of a new partnership between Governments, civil society and the private sector to address infant under-nutrition. The UN Secretary General, African political leaders and representatives of the private sector and international NGOs all expressed strong commitment to this ambitious new partnership. The Government remains strongly committed to working with our partners for the achievement of the MDGs, with a strong focus on sub-Saharan Africa and on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.</p>
20 January 2011	Bernard Durkan	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the extent to which the various crises, war, famine, genocide and human rights abuse throughout the African continent are being monitored, influenced or dealt with at both EU and UN levels; the extent to which particular focus has centred on the major flash points; the measures taken or expected by way of support or intervention; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Brian Cowen, Taoiseach and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs</b></p> <p>Conflict, food shortages, human rights abuses are unfortunately still widespread in Africa despite considerable progress in recent years. The international community continues to intervene to address these issues on the African continent, whether on a bilateral or multilateral basis. It is not possible to go into details on all parts of this question in the time available, but in any event, the Deputy's question has been answered many times already in response to his previous questions. With regard to the issue of hunger and famine, it is estimated that more than a billion people today do not have enough food. Ireland is responding to this challenge, working bilaterally in our Programme Countries with our EU partners and other donors, and at a global level through the UN agencies.</p> <p>With regard to security, UN and EU peacekeeping missions in Africa have a role in stabilising former and current conflict zones. Since the 1960s, members of the Irish Defence Forces have participated in numerous UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, and continue to do so. Eight members of the Defence Forces are currently serving with the UN missions in Western Sahara, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Côte d'Ivoire. We have also participated in EU missions, such as EUFOR Chad where Ireland played a critical role protecting refugees and facilitating the delivery of aid. Currently five members of the Defence Forces are deployed in Uganda where the European Union Training Mission is providing training to Somali soldiers.</p> <p>With regard to the thankfully rare cases of genocide, there are a number of current situations in Africa which give rise to continuing concern. The UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide is mandated to alert the international community to the potential of genocide in a particular country or region, and to make recommendations on actions to prevent or halt genocide.</p> <p>Active participation in multilateral organisations such as the EU and the UN, in particular the Human Rights Council, provides opportunities for Ireland to voice its concerns regarding human rights abuses. Through these organisations, international pressure can be brought to bear on those responsible for the violation of human rights.</p> <p>In developing a sustainable approach which properly addresses the root causes of all these issues Ireland takes the view that African leadership and responsibility are crucial. This is recognised by the EU and UN, which are both working to build the capacities of African States and the African Union to respond to these challenges. Ireland is committed to playing its part in this work, and I believe that our comprehensive and inclusive approach to these challenges stands the best chance of facilitating real and positive change in the lives of millions of people in Africa.</p>
20 January 2011	Joan Burton	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs his view on the plight of Haitians in view of the recent widely reported failures of governance, the delays in the	<p><b>Peter Power</b></p> <p>I propose to take Questions Nos. 18, 27, 31, 48, 49, 169 and 170 together.</p> <p>The earthquake in Haiti on 12 January 2010 was the greatest disaster to hit the country in more than 200 years, killing more than 230,000 people and reducing the capital, Port au Prince, to rubble. Among the survivors, more than 1.3 million people were made homeless and forced to take refuge in makeshift camps. While the international relief effort has made much progress over the last 12 months, the scale of the devastation is far beyond that of comparable humanitarian emergencies. The quantity of rubble to be</p>

		task of reconstruction, the health risks which are now being reported, and the request from the non-governmental organisation sector for urgent international assistance	<p>cleared is estimated at more than 20 times that left behind following the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001, which took more than 18 months to remove.</p> <p>The relief operation has also been hampered by the hurricane season, the ongoing cholera outbreak, as well as political uncertainty. Issues around land title have also contributed to the delay in beginning large scale reconstruction as many of those who lost their homes did not own the land on which they stood. There has, however, been some progress with sanitation being provided to the temporary camps, more than two million litres of clean water being supplied daily and more than 30,000 transitional shelters having been constructed. While the number of homeless remains unacceptably high at 800,000, this is a substantial improvement on the situation in the weeks immediately following the earthquake.</p> <p>Nevertheless, it is clear that the pace of progress at present is simply too slow to respond to the needs of the Haitian population. It is vital that the international effort, led by the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission, make better progress in reconstruction while simultaneously addressing the immediate humanitarian needs of the population, particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children and people with disabilities</p> <p>This parallel response has been adopted by the Government, through Irish Aid, in its approach to Haiti. During the immediate relief effort we concentrated on the provision of shelter and water through two humanitarian airlifts of emergency materials from our stockpiles. This was complemented by support to the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies for projects providing clean water and sanitation to those displaced in camps. Tens of thousands of people have benefited from the programmes. We have also provided vital technical skills via the deployment of fifteen members of our Rapid Response Corps.</p> <p>In 2011 we will prioritise the protection of women and children, in response to ongoing concerns about their safety in the camps. In parallel, the Government contributed to the reconstruction effort in 2010 via a €1 million contribution to the Haiti Reconstruction Trust Fund. To date, Ireland has provided €8.6 million of the three year commitment of €13 million which I pledged on the Government's behalf at the Haiti Donor Conference in New York last March. A detailed breakdown of this funding and of our Rapid Response deployments will be made available to Deputy O'Sullivan and attached to the record of this Question. At the European level, latest information indicates that a total €522 million has been pledged by the European Commission and €330 million of this provided to Haiti to date. Total EU Commission and Member State funding provided to date is currently €780 million.</p> <p>I saw for myself the conditions in which people are forced to live when I visited Haiti in July of last year. I remain convinced of the importance of the international community pulling together in a drive to make more sustainable progress in Haiti. Continued support will be needed in the months and years ahead if the Haitian people's efforts to recover from the events of last year are to be successful. Ireland remains committed to playing its part in delivering this recovery.</p> <p><b>Annex 1</b>  <b>Ireland's Funding to Haiti and Deployment of Humanitarian Experts from Ireland's Rapid Response Roster 2010</b></p> <p><b>January 2010</b>  €2,110,556 disbursed  3 RRI Deployments</p> <p><b>February 2010</b>  € 239,401 disbursed  4 RRI Deployments</p> <p><b>March 2010</b>  € 1,119,600 disbursed  1 RRI Deployment</p> <p><b>April 2010</b>  €28,638 disbursed  1 RRI Deployment</p>
20 January 2011	Martin Ferris	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the extent of aid provided to Haiti by Ireland to date to help deal with the devastation from the earthquake in January 2010.	
20 January 2011	Jan O'Sullivan	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will provide a month on month account of the assistance, both financial and in terms of manpower, offered to the people of Haiti over the last year.	
20 January 2011	Jan O'Sullivan	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the levels of assistance offered by Ireland to the people of Haiti following the natural disaster there of just over a year ago.	
20 January 2011	Bernard Durkan	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the extent to which he and his colleagues at EU and UN level have focused on the ongoing situation in Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake; the extent to	

		<p>which the world aid programme is adequately focused in order to restore quality of life to some extent; if he has used his initiative to bring about a sufficiently co-ordinated effort on the part of the global community thereby illustrating the way such disastrous situations can be addressed rapidly, positively and effectively in a shorter time scale than appears to be the case; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	<p><b>May 2010</b> €1,954,250 disbursed 1 RRI Deployment <b>June 2010</b> €141,501 disbursed 2 RRI Deployments <b>July 2010</b> €39,228 disbursed 2 RRI Deployments <b>August 2010</b> €139,364 disbursed <b>September 2010</b> €127,162 disbursed 1 RRI deployment <b>October 2010</b> €31,517 disbursed <b>November 2010</b> €697,263 disbursed <b>December 2010</b> €1,311,565 disbursed <b>January 2011</b> 1 RRI deployment</p> <p>In addition, funding of €700,166 was provided by Irish Aid in 2010 to several Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) as part of their work in Haiti. Since this funding was paid in tranches including funds for use in other countries, it is not possible to provide a monthly profile with regard to this funding.</p>
20 January 2011	Bernard Durkan	<p>To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if he is satisfied that international aid has been adequately directed and focused in the aftermath of the disaster in Haiti; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	
20 January 2011	Bernard Durkan	<p>To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the extent to which he has with his EU and UN colleagues focused on the situation in Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake; and if he will make a statement on the matter.</p>	

7 December 2010	Ruairi Quinn	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the annual funding he anticipates allocating for overseas development assistance for 2011 to 2014, inclusive, expressed in nominal terms and in terms of GNP, in view of the savings he intends to make over the course of the national recovery plan; the year he intends to reach the UN target of 0.7% of GNP for ODA funding; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Peter Power):</b></p> <p>Ireland has committed to achieving the UN target to provide 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP) for Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2015. The EU has committed to achieving the target collectively by 2015, and has set an interim target of 0.51% for Ireland and other Member States in 2010. This year, the Government has allocated a total of €671 million for ODA. On current projections, this will amount to at least 0.52% of GNP, ensuring that Ireland exceeds the EU interim target.</p> <p>The Government remains committed to the 0.7% target. However, the reality is that further progress towards its achievement must be influenced by the extremely challenging economic difficulties facing the country. The National Recovery Plan sets out the budgetary framework for the next four years, in order to restore stability to the public finances. This is an essential prerequisite for the resumption of sustainable economic growth, which in turn can provide the only sound basis for the resumption of sustainable growth in the aid programme.</p> <p>Future allocations for ODA will be based on success in restoring stable public finances, as well as our international commitments. Later today, the Minister for Finance will present the Budget to the House. It will include the Government's allocation for overseas development for 2011. The broad aim will be to consolidate ODA at this year's levels, maintaining spending at 0.52% of GNP. In the context of our very difficult economic circumstances, I believe this is a significant achievement, and clear evidence of our commitment to the fight against global poverty and hunger.</p>
2 November 2010	Michael Creed	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs his views that Ireland and the EU's development aid programme to Africa which is linked to better governance and democratic accountability of the recipient nation is being undermined by the very significant increased investment in the African economy by China where no such condition attaches and if this matter has been taken up with the Chinese authorities either at a national or EU level; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Minister, Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Micheál Martin):</b></p> <p>In recent years China has become a major economic global player and has focused very significant trade, economic investment and development aid on African countries. I am aware of the contrast often made between what has been perceived as the commercial focus of China's policy in Africa and the primary focus of Ireland and the EU on issues such as poverty reduction, human rights and good governance. However, I believe that this contrast can be overstated. There are signs that China is increasingly aware of the importance of peace and stability in Africa and, as such, these are areas of shared interest with Ireland and the EU. China also has a large contribution to make in Africa by the sharing of experience on the reduction of poverty, including in some key areas for Africa such as raising agricultural productivity.</p> <p>At the EU-China Summit held in Nanjing last November both sides welcomed trilateral dialogue between the EU, China and Africa, and agreed to explore appropriate areas for cooperation. They reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the full and timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to supporting Africa's sustainable development and early economic recovery from the global financial crisis. At the most recent summit, held in Brussels earlier this month, both sides reaffirmed their active commitment to peace and sustainable development of the world.</p> <p>I am also of the view that the commitment of African countries to human rights, gender equality, good governance and the fight against corruption is not only the product of pressure related to assistance from donors. African countries are participants in a wide range of international instruments which guarantee such freedoms and are, as is Ireland, accountable under the terms of these international agreements.</p> <p>As regards the provision of Overseas Development Aid, Ireland's assistance has a strong focus on poverty reduction and hunger. We work closely with our partner governments in Africa, and other donors, to ensure that international aid has the most effective impact in reducing poverty, alleviating hunger and in the providing basic services such as health and education. We welcome the provision of development aid to Africa by new donors who share our commitment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. China's engagement in Africa has the potential to contribute significantly to economic growth and to poverty reduction across the continent.</p> <p>Ireland will continue to work with our partners in Africa, and other international donors to ensure that Overseas Development</p>

2 November 2010	James Bannon	To ask the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> the persons or bodies in receipt of subventions or grants from his Department; the amount paid to each recipient in the year such payments commenced; the amount paid to each recipient in the current year; to place in the Oireachtas Library the latest two sets of accounts for these payments furnished by such persons or bodies to his Department; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>Assistance is directed to those areas most in need and is used in the most effective way in the fight against hunger and poverty.</p> <p><b>Minister, Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Micheál Martin):</b></p> <p>There are a number of different schemes operating in my Department which administer grant funding: the Irish Aid programme, Ireland's programme of official development assistance; the Emigrant Support Programme; the Reconciliation Fund for North-South and Anglo-Irish Co-operation; the Anti-Sectarianism Fund; the Communicating Europe Initiative; the Cultural Programme; and the Asia Strategy. In addition to this there are a number of grants which are given to specific projects, programmes or organisations such as the Atlantic Corridor Project; the Irish College in Paris; the Fulbright Commission; the European Movement Ireland, Title V of the Treaty on European Union Grants, and the Documents in Irish Foreign Policy Project.</p> <p>Appropriate financial procedures and regulations are followed in relation to all funding provided by my Department, including, where appropriate, the requesting of certified or audited annual accounts and tax clearance certificates. Many of the schemes are aimed at civil society organisations, most of whom are not required to publish annual accounts. In cases where the provision of the grant or subvention is on a statutory basis and requires the placement of the accounts in the library of the Oireachtas, this is done. In some instances it has not been possible, in the time available, to provide the detail requested relating to funding in the year payments commenced. Details can be provided to the Deputy at a later stage if required.</p> <p><b>Irish Aid</b></p> <p>The Government is providing a total of €671m for Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2010. Of this, €536m is administered by my Department, which manages the Government's development cooperation programme. Under Vote 29 (International Cooperation), Irish Aid, which is based in the Development Cooperation Division of the Department, provides funding to a wide range of partners, including developing country partner governments, UN Agencies and other Multilateral and International Organisations, development Non-Governmental and Missionaries Organisations, and other civil society groups.</p> <p>Funding is provided through various aid modalities and funding schemes managed by the aid programme. The clear focus of the programme, and funding allocation, is the alleviation of poverty, with a particular concentration on meeting fundamental needs, including food security, access to safe water, primary health care and access to basic education. Approximately 95% of the overall funding allocated to Vote 29 in 2010 is managed through Grant or Grants in Aid funding schemes. The balance is allocated to meet the costs associated with the management, oversight and administration of the aid programme.</p> <p>The main funding schemes, together with overall allocations for 2010, are summarised as follows.</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="817 933 1948 1327"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Irish Aid - Overall Breakdown of Types of Grants 2010</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bilateral Priority Partner Countries</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 190.3 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Bilateral countries</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 16.8 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Civil Society Funding Schemes including the Multi-Annual Programme funding scheme</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 101.6 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Development Education and Public Information , including the Strategic partnership with Irish Third Level Institutions</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 11.5 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Global Initiatives in the areas of Health, Education, HIV and AIDS, Food Security, Governance, Gender and Environment,</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 38.9 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recovery and support to Fragile States</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 20.5 million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Emergency Humanitarian Assistance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 54.0 Million</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contributions to Multilateral and other International Organisations including Voluntary Contributions to UN Agencies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">€ 67.5 million</td> </tr> </table>	Irish Aid - Overall Breakdown of Types of Grants 2010		Bilateral Priority Partner Countries	€ 190.3 million	Other Bilateral countries	€ 16.8 million	Civil Society Funding Schemes including the Multi-Annual Programme funding scheme	€ 101.6 million	Development Education and Public Information , including the Strategic partnership with Irish Third Level Institutions	€ 11.5 million	Global Initiatives in the areas of Health, Education, HIV and AIDS, Food Security, Governance, Gender and Environment,	€ 38.9 million	Recovery and support to Fragile States	€ 20.5 million	Emergency Humanitarian Assistance	€ 54.0 Million	Contributions to Multilateral and other International Organisations including Voluntary Contributions to UN Agencies	€ 67.5 million
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			<p>Detailed information on expenditure, including organisations and projects funded, under Vote 29 and Ireland's total Overseas Development Programme is provided annually in the Irish Aid Annual Report <a href="http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/publications_report">http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/publications_report</a>, which is placed in the Library.</p> <p>For full answer, see <a href="http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2010-11-02.1453.0&amp;s=overseas+aid#g1455.0.r">http://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2010-11-02.1453.0&amp;s=overseas+aid#g1455.0.r</a></p>
2 November 2010	Lucinda Creighton	To ask the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> the steps he is taking to ensure that Ireland meets its 0.7% target of GNP in overseas aid by 2015; the timeline for delivering on this commitment; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Peter Power):</b></p> <p>Ireland has committed to the UN target to provide 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP) to Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2015. The EU has committed to collectively attain the UN target by 2015, and has set an interim target of 0.51% for Ireland and other Member States in 2010. This year the Government is providing a total of €671 million for ODA. On current projections, this will amount to at least 0.52% of GNP, thereby exceeding the EU interim target. Last year, Ireland was the seventh most generous aid donor in the world in per capita terms. We are ahead of most other EU Member States in our progress towards the achievement of the international ODA target by 2015.</p> <p>The economic crisis of the past two years has required very difficult decisions across all areas of public expenditure, including the allocations for ODA. The sole motivation and objective of these decisions has been the need to restore stability to the public finances, in order to create the conditions for a resumption of economic growth. Stable public finances and sustained growth in our own economy are the indispensable bases for the resumption of sustainable growth in the aid programme. The Deputy will be fully aware of the extent of the challenge facing the Government in framing the Budget for 2011. The decision in relation to ODA, as with all budget expenditure decisions, will be taken in the light of the commitment by all parties to stabilising the public finances and restoring growth to the Irish economy.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme is the Irish people's aid programme. We can be justifiably proud that it continues to receive strong international recognition for its quality and effectiveness and for its particular sharp focus on the poorest countries and communities in sub-Saharan Africa. I am committed to maintaining the high quality of our aid programme, and its focus on the fight against global poverty and hunger.</p>
27 October 2010	Ulick Burke	To ask the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> his plans to continue his support by adhering to the stated promise to spend 0.7% of national income on overseas aid by 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p><b>Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Peter Power):</b></p> <p>Ireland is committed to the UN target to provide 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP) to Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2015. The Minister for Foreign Affairs confirmed the commitment at the recent United Nations Summit in September. The EU has committed to collectively attain the UN target by 2015, and has set an interim target of 0.51% for Ireland and other Member States in 2010. This year the Government is providing a total of €671 million for ODA. On current projections, this will amount to at least 0.52% of GNP, thereby exceeding the EU interim target. Last year, Ireland was the seventh most generous aid donor in the world in per capita terms. We are ahead of most other EU Member States in our progress towards the achievement of the international ODA target by 2015.</p> <p>The economic crisis of the past two years has required very difficult decisions across all areas of public expenditure, including the allocations for ODA. The sole motivation and objective of these decisions has been the need to restore stability to the public finances, in order to create the conditions for a resumption of economic growth. Stable public finances and sustained growth in our own economy are the indispensable bases for the resumption of sustainable growth in the aid programme.</p> <p>The Deputy will be fully aware of the extent of the challenge facing the Government in framing the Budget for 2011. The decision in relation to ODA, as with all budget expenditure decisions, will be taken in the light of our commitment to restoring growth to the Irish economy.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme is the Irish people's aid programme. We can be justifiably proud that it continues to receive strong international recognition for its quality and effectiveness and for its particular sharp focus on the poorest countries and communities in sub-Saharan Africa. I am committed to maintaining the high quality of our aid programme, and its focus on the fight</p>

12 October 2010	Lucinda Creighton	To ask the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> if he will outline his recent attendance at the United Nations General Assembly; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>against global poverty and hunger.</p> <p><b>Minister, Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Micheál Martin):</b></p> <p>A major event marking the opening of this year's General Assembly session was the High Level Summit meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) convened by Secretary General Ban and which took place from 20-22 September. I was honoured to head the Irish Delegation to this important event and to deliver Ireland's statement to the Summit on 21 September in which I restated Ireland's continued commitment to the achievement of the Goals, emphasising in particular the challenge of addressing hunger. Also on 21 September, as part of the events of the wider MDG Summit, I co-hosted with Hillary Rodham Clinton, the US Secretary of State, an important meeting of international leaders to address world hunger and undernutrition. The meeting was attended and addressed by Secretary General Ban as well as ministers from a number of developing and donor countries, by the Heads of several UN agencies including World Food Programme, the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, and by civil society and private sector representatives. The event, entitled <i>1,000 Days</i> and which focused on the danger posed by under-nutrition to children under two years old, was very successful in highlighting the need for more effective and concerted international action in this area as part of the drive to achieve the Millennium Development Goals while also providing an excellent example of the strong and effective cooperation which now exists between Ireland and the US in combating global poverty and hunger.</p> <p>As part of ongoing work by Ireland to progress the international disarmament agenda, I participated in a Ministerial Meeting of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty on 23 September and in a High Level Meeting convened by the UN Secretary-General on 24 September, to examine how the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the global disarmament machinery in general could be revitalised.</p> <p>Together with my EU counterparts, I participated in EU Ministerial meetings with both US Secretary of State Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov. Both meetings provided important opportunities for exchanges with these two key strategic partners of the EU.</p> <p>As is also customary during the UNGA Ministerial Week, I availed of the opportunity to conduct a round of bilateral meetings with a number of foreign ministers of other countries, including the foreign ministers of Australia, Turkey, Egypt, Serbia, Croatia, and New Zealand as well as the Secretary General of the Arab League.</p> <p>The focus of my visit to New York was not exclusively on UN matters but also provided me with a useful opportunity to engage in economic promotional work and also to meet local Irish community representatives in New York and Philadelphia. I carried out a number of engagements with business leaders, including the Irish American Leadership Council in New York and the Irish American Business Chamber in Philadelphia and also undertook a number of interviews with major US media, including Bloomberg, Fox Business channel and the New York Times, in which I briefed on the measures the Government is taking to meet the current economic challenges. I was also pleased during my visit to join with those taking part in the first annual Irish Theatre Festival in New York in celebrating and promoting Irish culture.</p>
12 October 2010	Liz McManus	To ask the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> his views on the contributions Ireland has made towards the progress of the 3rd millennium development goal regarding gender equality, in view of the fact that evidence shows that gender inequality is a driver of	<p><b>Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Peter Power):</b></p> <p>The Government is committed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the third of which is to promote gender equality and empower women. We recognise that achieving equality between men and women is crucial to poverty reduction, and to international development. Of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty across the world, 70% are women. Women work two-thirds of the world's working hours. They produce over half of the world's food, and yet they earn only 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property.</p> <p>In recent months, Ireland made a strong contribution to the negotiation of the Outcome Document of the Millennium Development Goals Review Summit, which was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly last month. I welcome its strong affirmation that achieving gender equality and empowerment of women is both a key development goal in itself and an important means for achieving all of the other MDG. In this context, the establishment of UN Women, the new United Nations body for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, is particularly important. Ireland played an active role in the intergovernmental</p>

		poverty	<p>negotiations to establish UN Women, and I welcome the appointment of the former Chilean President, Michelle Bachelet, to head it up. The Government's aid programme is informed by the Irish Aid Gender Equality Policy, approved in 2004, which focuses on the achievement of gender equality as an essential component of sustainable human development. We are working in partnership with Governments in our Programme Countries, with communities and civil society organisations and with the main multilateral agencies in order to advance gender equality in developing countries.</p> <p>I would cite a number of important examples from our partner countries. In Zambia, the primary school enrolment rate for girls increased to over 92% in 2008 as a result of policies implemented by the Ministry of Education with support from Irish Aid and other donors. In Sierra Leone, Irish Aid is supporting centres which help survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Since 2003, more than 6,000 women have been assisted at these centres. In Timor Leste, during the 2007 national elections, we worked with the UN to support women's electoral participation, and women now hold 30% of seats in the national parliament. As a key element in our focus on the global hunger crisis, we are also working to increase the productivity of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. 80% of farm work in the region is carried out by women. In Uganda, for instance, we have worked with the Government to ensure that the land law which is being developed protects and promotes women's access to land. As an element in Ireland's contribution to the achievement of the third MDG, a National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, on Women, Peace and Security, is currently being developed, in consultation with civil society. The Resolution calls for an increase in the participation of women in peace-making and peace-building processes. It focuses on the protection of women and girls in armed conflict, and it calls for the incorporation of a gender perspective into peacekeeping and peace-building. Through the Conflict Resolution Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland has also developed an innovative cross-learning initiative on women, peace and security involving participants from Northern Ireland, Liberia and Timor-Leste.</p> <p>The Government will continue to place a high priority on gender equality and women's empowerment as we work with our partners towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.</p>
12 October 2010	Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin	To ask the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> if the Irish Government is on track to meet its commitment to spend 0.7% of national income on overseas development aid by 2015 as promised as part of our commitment to the millennium development goals	<p><b>Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Peter Power):</b></p> <p>I propose to take Question Nos. 116, 130 and 135 together.</p> <p>Ireland played an important international role at the Millennium Development Goals Review Summit in New York last month in cooperation with our EU partners, with the US Administration and with our partner countries in the developing world. The Government is committed to working in close cooperation with our partners in order to achieve the ambitious development goals established by the international community for the period 2000 to 2015. We are committed to the UN target to provide 0.7% of Gross National Product to Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2015. The EU has committed to collectively meeting the UN target by 2015, and has set an interim target of 0.51% for Ireland and other Member States in 2010.</p> <p>This year, the Government is providing a total of €671 million for ODA. On current projections, this will amount to at least 0.52% of GNP, exceeding the EU interim target. Last year, Ireland was the seventh most generous aid donor in the world in per capita terms. We are ahead of most other EU Member States in our progress towards the achievement of the international ODA target in 2015.</p>
12 October 2010	Jan O'Sullivan	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if he will provide an up to date position on Ireland's solemn pledge to commit 0.7% of national income towards overseas development aid; what the current percentage is; the stage at which, given the	<p>The economic crisis of the past two years has required very difficult decisions across all areas of public expenditure, including the allocations for ODA. The sole motivation for these decisions has been the need to restore stability to the public finances, in order to create the conditions for a resumption of economic growth. Stable public finances and sustained growth in our own economy are the indispensable bases for the resumption of sustainable growth in the aid programme. Deputies are aware of the extent of the challenge facing the Government in framing the Budget for 2011. Decisions in relation to ODA will be taken in the light of our commitment to restoring growth to the Irish economy and to playing our part in the effort to achieve the MDGs.</p> <p>The Government's aid programme is the Irish people's aid programme. We can be justifiably proud that it continues to receive strong international recognition for its quality and effectiveness and for its sharp focus on the poorest countries and communities in sub-Saharan Africa.</p>

		current trend, he expects we will fulfil our promise to the poorest of the poor; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	<p>ODA is an essential element, but not the sole element, in a country's contribution to international development and the achievement of the MDGs. The global economic crisis has simultaneously increased the needs of the poorest countries and the pressure on aid budgets across the developed world. In these circumstances, it is clear that we must focus rigorously on the effectiveness of the aid we provide, and on key priorities. In Ireland's case, we are taking an international lead on the global hunger crisis and have been recognised by the OECD as champions in making aid more effective and working in a spirit of genuine partnership with our Programme Countries. Just last week, the influential Centre for Global Development in Washington recognised Ireland as among the best donors in the world across all measures of quality of aid provided. The Government is committed to maintaining the high quality of Ireland's aid programme, and its focus on the fight against global poverty and hunger, so that we make a strong national contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.</p>
12 October 2010	Emmet Stagg	To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs if the Government will make its pledge to reach 0.7% of GDP spending on overseas development aid real by ringfencing ODA from spending cuts, as the UK Government has done; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	
29 September 2010	James Bannon	Asked the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> the steps he will take to ensure that Ireland honours its commitment to contribute at least 0.7% of national income in [661] overseas aid by 2015, in order to meet the goals to alleviate extreme poverty as outlined by the Millennium Summit in 2000; and if he will make a statement on the matter	
29 September 2010	Finian McGrath	Asked the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> if he will support a matter (details supplied)	
29 September 2010	Deirdre Clune	Asked the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> if he will outline his original targets for	<p><b>Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs (Deputy Peter Power):</b></p> <p>I propose to take Questions Nos. 1199, 1200, 1208 to 1210, inclusive, and 1212, together.</p> <p>The international target for spending on Official Development Assistance is 0.7% of Gross National Product (GNP). This is known as the UN ODA target. The EU has adopted this objective and Ireland is committed to meeting the 0.7% expenditure on ODA by 2015. Over the 10 year period from 2000 to 2009, Ireland spent almost €6 billion on ODA, an enormous level of expenditure by any reckoning. This level of ODA has made Ireland one of the most generous donors in the world and we are currently placed as the 7th most generous international donor on a per capita basis.</p> <p>Ireland expended 0.54% of GNP on ODA in 2009. In 2010 we expect to spend 0.52% of our GNP on ODA, thereby exceeding the interim EU target of 0.51%. While our ODA budget for 2010 represents a small decline in overall aid expenditure, this must be viewed in the context of the difficult economic situation facing this country and the imperative of returning stability to our public finances.</p> <p>Over the coming months the Government will finalise preparations for Budget 2011. The over-riding aim will be to restore growth to the economy. This is the indispensable basis for the resumption of sustainable growth in the aid programme, to which we are committed. In the coming years, decisions on the budgetary allocations to ODA for each year will be made in the context of the progress made in achieving sustainable economic growth.</p> <p>It is important to note that ODA as a percentage of GNP is only one measure used to compare our aid programme with that of our peers. Volumes are a measure of an aid programme. Quality is an equally if not more important measure. Ireland's aid programme is internationally recognised as being of the highest quality and having a sharp focus on poverty reduction and hunger eradication at its core. Most of Ireland's bilateral ODA is directed to the least developed countries, with a particular focus on a limited number of very poor partner countries, called Programme Countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa. Our aid programme has been peer reviewed very positively, as lately as 2009 by the OECD, and described as 'cutting [662] edge', 'sharply focused on poverty reduction' and providing a 'leadership role in aid effectiveness'. The Government is determined that those qualities continue to be</p>

		overseas development aid; the way that these targets have been changed as a result of the economic downturn; if we have met the targets set both original and revised in the years 2000 to 2009; the current targets for the years 2010 to 2015; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	delivered across Ireland's aid programme.
29 September 2010	Deirdre Clune	Asked the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> his plans to meet the commitment to overseas development aid as a percentage of GNP; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	
29 September 2010	Michael Noonan	Asked the <b>Minister for Foreign Affairs</b> if he is still committed to spend by 2015, 0.7% of national income on overseas aid; the year on year increase in expenditure envisaged to achieve this target; and if he will make a statement on the matter.	