

Check Against Delivery

**Closing Remarks by
the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore T.D.**

Tuesday, 16 April 2013

Dublin Castle

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This has been no run-of-the-mill international conference. It has inspired us. It has energised us. Where do we go from here?

Two years ago, I agreed with Mary Robinson that we needed to join forces on the most glaring injustice of this century: the persistence of hunger in a world of relative plenty. I was, and am, determined that Ireland can make a difference. I know we can credibly take a lead. We will not stand aside from our responsibilities to those, our neighbours, who struggle daily to feed their families and deal with the impact and unpredictability of climate change.

I want to thank Mary Robinson and the Mary Robinson Foundation Climate Justice. I want to thank our other organising partners: the World Food Programme and the Climate and Food Security Programme of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. And I want to thank our tireless MC, Áine Lawlor, who brought to our proceedings the incisive intelligence and humanity which we political leaders experience every time we face her in the news studio.

Most of all, I want to thank those of you who have travelled long distances to share your experiences and views with us. I said at the start that you must be the heart of the dialogue. But today and yesterday you have also provided its soul. Many of you have said to me that you feel buoyed up, and that this could be the start of something different. You ask how we can keep alive the spirit we have generated together. And while we all need the reality check of daily life, and know there are many frustrations ahead, I believe we can now build on what we have achieved here in Dublin Castle.

Our dialogue and our interaction have convinced us that there is no business-as-usual approach to development. The world is changing fast, and we cannot pick and choose the aspects of that change which we address. Mary has set out eloquently the key messages we are taking from Dublin. We know, for instance,;

5. that knowledge, education and science are central to successful adaptation to climate change;

6. that it is vital to empower poor households and communities – and above all women - to engage in decision making.
7. that the challenge is one of justice and basic human rights. And that our response must be based on the needs, views and priorities of those women, men and children most directly involved.

Your contributions and your case studies have brought life to these lessons.

We have heard from many champions over the past two days. Now it is our turn to champion the cause. I promise you today that Ireland will keep the fight against hunger at the heart of our foreign policy. We will bring you, your communities and your views into our international policy discussions.

5. Next Monday, I will report on our conference to the Council of EU Foreign Affairs Ministers in Luxembourg. We will bring your views to the World Bank, to the OECD, to the UN and other multilateral institutions we belong to.
5. Over the coming months, Ireland will partner with the UK and the Children's Investment Fund Foundation on a Nutrition for Growth summit in London on 8 June. We will partner with the US and Concern on 10 June in Washington to build on the 1000 day baby nutrition challenge we set ourselves in 2010. A week later, the G8 leaders gather in Co. Fermanagh, just 160 kilometres from this hall. We will ensure that the messages from the Dublin Conference are heard in their deliberations.
6. As Presidency of the European Union – which generates over 50% of global development assistance - we are working with our partners to ensure a strong, coherent EU stand on the negotiation of a post-2015 framework for international development. We are making progress in breaking down the artificial barriers between policies for development and for environmental sustainability. The next crucial date on this calendar will be the Special Event on the MDGs at the UN General Assembly in the last week of September, which Ireland is helping to organise. I will focus the attention of this summit on the interlinked challenges of hunger, nutrition and climate justice, and on the views and solutions emerging from Dublin today. And we will bring this perspective into the work throughout next year, and beyond, to deliver the post-2015 framework.

7. After 2015, I want to see a single, new set of measurable Goals. They must bring together, in bold and specific terms, targets to end poverty and hunger and protect our environment. They need to be global goals, and there needs to be a clear commitment to implement them at national level.
8. We have learned from the experience of the MDGs. There have been huge successes, but also gaps. I believe the new goals need specific targets on hunger and nutrition. I believe we need a strong emphasis on agriculture, and in particular climate-sensitive agriculture. I believe we need a stronger, more specific approach on the rights of women and girls.

It is not for me and my fellow Ministers alone to negotiate and set these Goals. You, the representatives of local communities coping in your daily lives need to be heard at the negotiating table. When you cannot be there, you need to be credibly represented. Ireland will be a voice for you.

If there is one thing we have learned here, it is that we have to stop classifying our worlds as developed or developing, rich or poor, North or South. The challenge of hunger, poverty and climate change pays no heed to these boundaries of the imagination. It is in our common interest that we will strive to be your advocates for ambitious, realistic joined-up thinking and joined-up action

We have taken a small step by coming together here in Dublin. We have got to know each other. We have shared our hopes, our fears, our frustrations and our ambitions. We have not saved the world. But we have found a new spirit and energy to help us face local and global challenges. And I hope we have found the inspiration to insist that international negotiating processes keep before them the reality of the life of the smallholder farmer. And the ambition to build a more just, equal and hopeful world for her children, for all our children.

Thank you all for coming to Dublin.