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Editorial Statement

Trócaire, the Irish Catholic Agency for World Development produces the *Trócaire Development Review* as part of its programme of policy research and development education. This programme aims to raise awareness in Ireland and elsewhere of the scale, dimensions and causes of world poverty and to advocate for policies to overcome it.

Trócaire, in producing the *Trócaire Development Review*, draws together policy analysis and research findings with particular relevance to Ireland's evolving role in international development. *Review* articles are on economic, social and political themes related to poverty and injustice in the developing world. A particular focus is the impact on developing countries of aid, trade, financial and other policies adopted by industrialised countries. Ireland's policies in the context of European Union policies are of special interest.

Articles that fall within the remit outlined above are welcome. While analytical, they should not be over-technical in presentation. In general, individual country case studies should only be used to illustrate a general argument. Research findings on pertinent issues would be particularly welcome. All articles are subject to blind peer-review by the Editorial Committee; articles should not exceed 7,000 words. Short notes and comments are also welcome.

The views expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Committee nor of Trócaire.

Trócaire Development Review is published annually in the spring. Contributions should be submitted by 1 December addressed to:

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Preface

2005 was an important year for the development community in Ireland and internationally. Through the Make Poverty History Campaign, which brought together all the main development NGOs, the development community sent out a united message to the government. That message was unequivocal: promises to the poor must be kept. There could be no more backsliding on the solemn promise of the Taoiseach to meet the UN target of 0.7% of GNI going to overseas aid.

The Make Poverty History march in June drew an unprecedented crowd of 20,000 people and demonstrated that there is widespread public support for the campaign. That show of support, we believe, played a major role in shifting government policy on ODA. At the start of the year, there was talk of abandoning the 0.7% target. By June, there was talk of it being met by 2015 – the date when the Millennium Development Goals are meant to be achieved. By September, the government agreed on a compromise target of 2012, setting out interim targets to ensure that the goal is kept on track.

Now that the target has been agreed, a much greater task lies ahead: how to ensure that the additional aid is spent effectively and efficiently, in ways that will have a long-term impact in reducing poverty. The substantial amounts of aid being channelled in the aid programme demands that we raise our game in terms of technical capacity through ensuring that our programme has the human resources necessary to deliver a quality aid programme.

Moreover, the rising aid budget requires an informed public debate around sensitive issues such as governance and corruption. Achieving better governance is a central issue domestically as it is essential to ensuring that public funds are well-spent. Public support for higher aid will only be sustained if people can see the impact their money is making. Addressing governance effectively, however, is about much more than that. As the articles in this year's *Trócaire Development Review* demonstrate, the task of achieving better governance is an intrinsic part of development itself. Whilst there are no straightforward answers on how to achieve better governance, the articles in this year's *Review* provide some key insights.