



STRONGER TOGETHER

CONGRESS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

21 November 2011

Ms. Jan O'Sullivan
Minister for State of Trade & Development
Department of Foreign Affairs
Irish Aid
Riverstone House
23-27 Henry Street
Limerick

Aid effectiveness needs decent work and private sector regulation

Dear Minister,

As you are aware, at the end of November, governments will gather in Busan, South Korea, to discuss aid effectiveness. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) is pressing for a conclusion that promotes pro-poor growth and favours working people, and I am contacting you to seek your support for trade union proposals for accountable employers and decent work.

Congress has been alerted by our trade union colleagues in developing countries, through the ITUC, to the current draft of the outcome document from the Busan forum starting at the end of November, and I wanted to express some concerns to you in the hope that you could seek to improve the text, even at this late stage.

In particular, whilst I know that you are personally committed to develop the private sector as a key agent of growth, I hope you will agree that the private sector alone and unregulated is unlikely to deliver the job-rich growth developing and emerging countries need.

I would therefore like to press you to ensure the inclusion in the outcome document of references to a social protection floor, and support for sensible regulation of the private sector on the basis of agreed international standards (ILO, OECD, Ruggie etc). Thus, in the section on the private sector and development, I would want to see language to the effect that private sector growth 'should be promoted, based on the principles and standards of the International Labour Organisation and the other international agreed instruments such as the OECD Guidelines for multinational enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.'

I would also like to see the text stressing more effectively the need for job creation and decent work, something along the lines of: 'economic strategies driven by strong, sustainable and inclusive growth should focus on job creation and fighting unemployment, especially amongst young people and women, and the promotion of decent work to create sustainable livelihoods that generate social and economic stability and development.'

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Finally, I hope you will agree that the role of social partners in economic development should be recognised in the text. The ITUC has suggested the text below, and I would be grateful to know whether you could support its inclusion?

Please let me know whether you can support these suggestions, and let me know if you need more information. The ITUC contact in Busan will be Jan Dereymaeker and we would be happy to facilitate any contact with the Irish delegation. We wish you every success in getting a good agreement in Busan.

Yours sincerely,



David Begg
General Secretary

New clause:

Stressing the essential role of social partners (employers' and workers' organisations) and of social dialogue in addressing inclusive economic and social policies for development, we will

- a) recognise the essential role of social partners (employers' and workers' organisations) as engine for economic development and for dynamic and productive labour markets;
- b) work with the employers' and workers' organisations to contribute actively to the fight against poverty and social exclusion and to use the benefits of inclusive economic growth for improving livelihoods for the underprivileged, especially women and young people; and
- c) promote social dialogue as a cornerstone for democratic ownership in economic and social policy setting, for coordination between social and economic goals, the promotion of full employment and a rights based exit out of informality and under-employment.