



Department of the Taoiseach *Roinn an Taoisigh*

Ireland and the European Union

Identifying Priorities and Pursuing Goals



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Foreword

As I write, the European Union is on the brink of major change. It will, from 1 May 2004, be more than four times the size of its original membership and will stretch from the Atlantic to the Danube and from the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean.

The task of managing and organising the work of an enlarged Union will be a major challenge. Valuable work on the institutional and other changes necessary to successfully manage a Union of twenty-five or more member states is being done at the European Convention. The proposed new draft constitutional treaty, which the Convention is expected to produce in June, will form an important basis for discussions between Governments when they meet together in an Inter-Governmental Conference to agree a new treaty.

Ireland has, from the outset, been fully engaged in the work of the Convention and, as we work with our European partners to forge a new treaty, we will seek to ensure that our vital national interests and values are reflected in the treaty.

Over the course of the last year, the Irish people had an opportunity to discuss and reflect on our membership of the European Union and our relationship with the Union. In a referendum last October, the Irish people decided convincingly to approve the Nice Treaty and, in so doing, signalled

their clear desire that Ireland should remain at the heart of Europe.

This revised and updated *Ireland and the European Union: Identifying Priorities and Pursuing Goals* sets out our key national objectives in the European Union for the coming period. We will work tirelessly to achieve the aims set out in this document to build a better Ireland in a better Europe.

I look forward to 1 May 2004 when, as President of the European Council, I will welcome the accession states to full membership of the Union. I am confident that the European Union that they will join will be one which is more effective and efficient, more democratic and transparent, closer to its citizens and one of which all its citizens can be proud.



Bertie Ahern



Summary

Ireland And The European Union

Key Objectives 2003

Overriding Priority

Ireland's overriding priority in the coming year will be to prepare for and conduct an efficient and effective Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2004. In the wake of the successful outcome to the referendum on the Treaty of Nice the European Union concluded negotiations with ten accession countries in December 2002. These ten countries become observer members in April 2003 and full members in May 2004. Conducting the Presidency in a European Union of twenty-five will pose both a challenge and an opportunity for Ireland.

Overall Key Objectives

Ireland's overall objective in the European Union is to help achieve Ireland's and the European Union's aims of protecting the rights and interests of our citizens, maintaining freedom, security and justice, promoting prosperity, jobs and sustainable development and acting more effectively internationally to promote peace, security and development.

The European Convention is addressing the range of challenges confronting the European Union. Ireland will continue to be actively engaged in, and contribute to, the Convention and to the intergovernmental conference that will follow.

The imminent growth of the European Union, and the complexity of the issues it seeks to deal with, will require an even greater engagement at all levels of the Irish administrative system. An increased emphasis will be put in the coming years on networking and additional coalition building within the European Union. There is also a need to ensure more effective communication of the how and why

of decisions made at European level, to enable citizens to engage more in the processes that shape their lives.

Other Key Objectives

In the debate in the **European Convention** Ireland starts from a view that pragmatic reform is possible and desirable to ensure that the European Union acts at least as democratically, as efficiently and as effectively for a membership of twenty-five or more as it has for its current membership. At the same time the European Union should endeavour to be closer to the people. We also maintain that the balances within and between the Union's institutions have worked well.

We will strongly support the implementation of the **Lisbon Agenda** in seeking to ensure that the European Union becomes the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs, greater social cohesion and a high standard of environmental protection. The competitiveness of the European Union will be crucial to ensuring that the Union achieves its ambitious aims.

For the **European Union Budget** we will seek to ensure fair burden sharing, and to keep overall expenditure to a level consistent with our national objectives as regards the development of the European Union.

In the **State Aid** area we will support fair and even application by the Commission of the rules on State Aid in support of the Single Market and we will also continue to provide aid to meet particular policy objectives.

In sectoral areas, many of which are becoming increasingly cross cutting, Ireland's key objectives are as follows:

Culture: We will work with our partners to preserve and promote the richness of European cultural diversity, especially language diversity.

Justice and Home Affairs: We will support the creation in the European Union of the agreed area of freedom, security and justice. We will constructively engage in addressing the challenges facing the European Union in the areas of immigration, asylum and combating international crime.

Economic and Monetary Union: Our objective is to continue to participate in a successful and stable currency. We will also contribute to the development of an appropriate economic policy focused on increasing competitiveness, sustainable growth and employment and enhanced living standards for Europe's citizens.

Single Financial Market: Our objective will be to advance the achievement of an effective single market for financial services in Europe. We will do so by promoting early finalisation and timely transposition of the outstanding elements of the Financial Services Action Plan thus strengthening Ireland's financial services industry.

Taxation: Ireland will continue to support the adoption by unanimity of appropriate measures to facilitate companies operating on a trans-national basis and to address harmful tax competition.

Trade: We will support the European Union objective of achieving further liberalisation of trade within a well-regulated multilateral system. We will also seek to ensure that the major concerns of developing countries are taken into account.

Agriculture: We will seek to maintain an effective Common Agricultural Policy which contributes to a viable agricultural sector and viable rural communities.

Fisheries: We will continue to work towards the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and press for more equitable access to fisheries resources.

Environment: We will strongly support the implementation of sustainable development policies in the European Union.

Education: Ireland will continue to support European Union activities which aim to improve the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems and to facilitate access to these systems.

Foreign and Security Policy: We will continue to support effective European Union policies on regional and global issues. We will also contribute to the development of the European Security and Defence Policy consistent with Ireland's policy of military neutrality. The key objective throughout will be to promote international peace, security and development.



Part I

Introduction and Overview

2002 was a very important year for the European Union and for Ireland in Europe.

The successful outcome to the referendum held in Ireland on 19 October, 2002, removed the last obstacle to the ratification of the Treaty of Nice. This was followed in December by the conclusion of accession negotiations with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Following ratification of the Accession Treaty, these ten countries can become members of the European Union on 1 May 2004 and the Union can increase its membership from fifteen to twenty-five. This historic development, which will coincide with Ireland's Presidency of the European Union, will see European unity take a major step forward.

The enlargement of the European Union to twenty five members constitutes the most significant change to the Union since the foundation of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958. It underpins the essential role of the European Union in the creation of a greatly extended area of stability, peace, democracy and prosperity in Europe. Ireland is determined that the Union will meet the considerable challenge posed by this enlargement and will contribute constructively to making an enlarged Union a success.

A European Union expanding from fifteen to twenty-five members will create challenges and opportunities for each new and current member state. It is in our interests and in the interests of all in Europe that the European Union, founded on unique principles and structures will, in any new configuration, operate at least as efficiently, effectively and democratically as it has before.

The European Convention is currently meeting and is expected to address a range of the issues which will enable the Union to function in a more transparent and intelligible way and allow it to reap the benefits of enlargement. Following the completion of the work of the European Convention, expected by June 2003, an intergovernmental conference will be convened to agree Treaty changes.

Part III of this publication is devoted to examining the issues which are currently being addressed in the European Convention. Ireland has been working hard in the Convention to ensure that the purpose of the Union is to serve the welfare of its people and to bring the European Union closer to its citizens.

At the same time the Government has been addressing the concerns expressed in the wake of our first referendum on the Treaty of Nice. A range of measures has been taken at the national level to ensure the greatest level of openness and transparency, participation and understanding of the European Union and Ireland's place in it. In particular:

- the National Forum on Europe, established in 2001, has met in plenary sessions on twenty-eight occasions and has travelled the country debating enlargement, the future of Europe and the full range of issues associated with Ireland's engagement with the European Union;
- from 1 July 2002, measures proposed at European Union level have been subjected to a rigorous system of Oireachtas scrutiny. This system has now been placed on a statutory basis;
- Ministers attending Council of Ministers meetings now appear as a matter of routine before the relevant Oireachtas Committee to explain issues and answer queries, and

- a more enhanced system of interdepartmental coordination has been introduced, which includes an interdepartmental coordinating committee chaired by the Minister for European Affairs.

In addition, this publication shows clearly that Ireland's agenda is the European Union's agenda and the European Union's agenda is Ireland's. The European Union provides the framework within which Ireland's future prosperity and well-being will be secured and within which we will achieve our aims and objectives. The European Union is the means through which Ireland can mediate the forces of globalisation over which nations, on their own, can have little influence.

With enlargement, the European Union single market - in effect Ireland's "home" market - will expand from some 380 million customers to some 500 million customers. Access to the single market has been a major factor in stimulating investment, exports and jobs in the Irish economy. Enlargement will provide still further opportunities in this regard for Irish enterprise.

Ireland has proven its ability to succeed in the European Union. However, as the nature of Ireland's relationship with the European Union and as the European Union itself expands and grows more complex, we will have to develop and adapt our ways of doing business in Europe.

The growth of the European Union and its complexity implies an ever greater engagement with the European Union, with its institutions, the member states and with the accession countries at all levels across the Irish political and administrative system. This greater engagement will help us achieve our national aims and objectives.

At the same time, we in Ireland will have to work harder to be aware of, understand and take into account, the aims and aspirations of our partners in Europe. It will be necessary to continue to work to build networks and coalitions to ensure successful outcomes. With a larger European Union there will be even more work required to further our national interests within the Union.

As the European Union grows ever more complex, there is a correspondingly greater need for people to feel that they understand better how it works and how it affects their lives. At European Union level there is a need to communicate more effectively with people in the member states. At national level every effort must be made to explain the framework within which decisions are taken, the reasons behind these decisions and to communicate back the genuine concerns that people may have.

The following chapters look at the range of European Union policy and sets out Ireland's key objectives both from a national perspective and from the perspective of ensuring that the European Union reaches its objectives. It is hoped that a greater knowledge of the broad policy framework within which national policy is formulated will assist in a greater understanding of the benefits to Ireland of engaged membership of the European Union.

Clearly as we look to the future the major challenges facing the European Union and Ireland are the European Convention on the Future of Europe and the ability of the Union to deliver on its jobs promise. Ireland will have the privilege and the challenge during its Presidency, in the first half of 2004, of advancing the European Union on these and other key issues.



Part II

Overriding Priorities

The most important overriding priority for Ireland in the coming year will be to prepare for and conduct an efficient and effective **Presidency** of the European Union in the first half of 2004. The Presidency will take place against the background of the expected accession, in May 2004, of the ten new member states. How we, as Presidency, manage and organize the transition from fifteen to **twenty-five** member states while continuing to progress the Union's agenda will be the major challenge for our Presidency and, if successful, will be an enduring legacy for the continued progress and development of the Union.

Other important factors, which will influence the Irish Presidency's work programme, are the European Parliament elections, due to take place in June 2004 and the conclusion of the European Commission's term of office.

Conscious of this challenge, Government Departments have been fully engaged over the past year in preparations for the Presidency. Interdepartmental Committees have been established to oversee logistics, work programmes and the cross-cutting Lisbon Agenda. These Committees, which meet under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of the Taoiseach, report on progress to the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on European Union Affairs, chaired by Minister of State Roche, and to the Cabinet Committee on European Affairs. Work has already advanced considerably, particularly in relation to staff training and deployment, development of the calendar of meetings, programming matters and other essential preparatory work.

Ireland enjoys a good reputation within the European Union as an example of how a smaller member state can run an efficient and impartial

Presidency. Against the background of on-going discussion in the European Convention on the Presidency function in an enlarged Europe, expectations will be high that Ireland can, once again, deliver an effective Presidency. Achievement of this objective will be an essential task for the next eighteen months, requiring sustained attention and resources throughout this period.

It is intended that the programme and priorities for the Irish Presidency will be agreed over the coming months taking into account progress made in the meantime and decisions taken at European Council meetings in 2003.

The Seville European Council, in June 2002, decided that the European Union would adopt a three year multi-annual **strategic programme**. The first of those will be adopted in December 2003 for the period 2004 – 2006. An annual operating programme for 2004 will also to be adopted in December and will be prepared jointly by the Irish and Dutch Presidencies. It is intended that Ireland's six month Presidency programme will be developed in line with these programmes.

As regards the business of the European Union itself Ireland will focus in the coming year on the overriding priorities set out below:

The Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 brought to a close **enlargement** negotiations with the ten acceding countries. Following ratification procedures, all ten countries are to become European Union members on 1 May 2004, during Ireland's Presidency. Romania and Bulgaria aim to complete their negotiations for membership in the first half of 2004 and to become members in 2007. A decision must be taken by the end of 2004 on the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey.

Preparations for membership will intensify for the ten countries until their accession. After signature of the Accession Treaty on 16 April 2003 they will be gradually integrated into the Union. They will actively participate as observers in European Union business and in the Intergovernmental Conference that will follow the European Convention.

Ireland will work to develop closer relations and alliances with these countries and to help them prepare for membership. In particular an extensive programme of Ministerial and official contacts take place this year.

The exact timing of the next **Intergovernmental Conference** (IGC) will be for the European Council to determine in the light of the outcome of the current European Convention. However, should the IGC not conclude during the Italian Presidency, Ireland could be charged with bringing these complex and sensitive negotiations to a conclusion in the first half of 2004. Ireland's approach to the Convention and the IGC are set out in Part III.

Progress on the **Lisbon Agenda**, is of key importance to Ireland. The Lisbon Agenda has the aim of making the European Union the most competitive knowledge based economy in the world by 2010. The Government's priority will be to ensure that renewed momentum is given to the Agenda and its social and sustainable development dimension. At a time of economic uncertainty, continued commitment to economic and social reform, within a quality environment, is essential if the European Union is to make a real difference to the lives of its people. Ireland will continue to press for the rapid agreement and implementation of measures necessary to give effect to the Lisbon Agenda. These measures range across a broad range of policy areas: employment, social policy, research

and innovation, sustainable development, economic policy, regulatory reform and financial services.

In the **Justice and Home Affairs** area, completion of the agreed commitments by 1 May 2004 will be the key objective of the European Union. This involves agreement on a daunting range of legislation and measures across the areas of immigration, asylum, civil law and criminal justice. Success in this area will be pivotal to the overall success of the European Union in years to come.

The development of the European Union's relations with the wider world will continue to be an overriding priority for Ireland and the European Union. Ireland's approach to the **external policies** of the European Union is set out in Part V.

The other overriding priorities for Ireland within the European Union in the coming year will be:

- a successful outcome to the ongoing World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations;
- to preserve the benefits of the Agenda 2000 Agreement in the negotiations on the Common Agricultural Policy;
- a sustainable and equitable common fisheries policy;
- an effective European Union approach to the environmental challenges facing Europe and the member states, and
- preparation of the negotiations of the European Union's financial perspectives for the period commencing in 2007.



Part III

The Future of Europe Debate

The European Convention was convened on foot of the Declaration on the Future of the European Union agreed at Nice in December 2000. The Laeken Declaration of December 2001 tasked the Convention with considering four questions in particular:

- the division and better definition of competences;
- the simplification of the Union's instruments;
- democratic legitimacy, efficiency and transparency, and
- the potential development of a constitution for Europe's citizens.

The Convention has been meeting since February 2002. Its work has been divided into three phases. The first, a listening phase which ran up to the summer of 2002, was devoted to a series of general debates on a wide range of issues. The second, an analysis phase, was dominated by the formation of eleven working groups which considered those issues in greater detail. All of the working groups have now reported. The third and final phase will be dominated by the drafting of a Constitutional Treaty and by consideration of institutional issues.

The Government's Approach

The Government, through its representatives, has been taking an energetic and constructive approach to the work of the Convention. It has, initially through Mr Ray MacSharry, former EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Minister for Finance, and then through Mr Dick Roche TD, Minister for Europe, been making a positive contribution to the Convention's work. The Representatives of the Oireachtas, Mr John Bruton TD and Mr Proinsias de Rossa MEP, and their

alternates, Mr Pat Carey TD and Mr John Gormley TD, have also been taking an active and positive approach to the Convention in highlighting a range of issues. The Government recognises the vital importance of their role.

Government representatives participate in the plenary sessions of the Convention and in a number of its working groups. They also take part in a number of informal discussion and coordination groups. These groups bring together the representatives of a range of other participating countries.

The Government's broad approach is to seek to reform and renew the European Union, to equip it to meet the challenges of the future, and to make it clearer and more accessible to citizens, while at the same time seeking to protect the solid foundations underlying the success of the Union to date. It supports:

- a balanced institutional framework in which the interests and fundamental equality of all member states are protected;
- the maintenance of the community method and the central importance of the Commission;
- a recognition that, while the nation state remains the basic building block of the Union, there are many areas where, in pooling sovereignty, we can achieve substantially more together;
- enhancing the coherence and effectiveness of the Union's external relations to enable the Union to play a greater role in support of peace and stability, in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations;
- a continuing commitment to the principle of solidarity, and

- matching the drive for economic competitiveness with measures to enhance social cohesion.

The Convention is making good progress. There appears to be general support for the creation of a single legal personality for the Union, which will in turn pave the way for a single Constitutional Treaty with a clear structure setting out the basic values, objectives, policies and procedures of the Union.

Progress has also been made on how to reduce the number of legal instruments to make the decision-making process clearer. Positive proposals have also emerged aimed at enhancing the role of national parliaments in that decision-making process, particularly in relation to policing the application of the principle of subsidiarity.

There appears to be broad support for the incorporation into the Treaty of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which is not intended to, and does not, confer new powers or competences upon the Union. The Government is continuing to consider its definitive approach to this option, including in the light of improvements which have been proposed in the Convention to the legal definition of the Charter's exact scope and application.

The Government supports more effective decision-making in an enlarged Union. Qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council of Ministers will continue to be the norm, and will usually be accompanied by co-decision with the European Parliament. The Government can support its further extension on a case-by-case basis, but also remains firmly of the view that its extension in a limited number of areas of great national sensitivity is not appropriate including taxation, common foreign and security policy and some aspects of justice and home affairs.

The Convention is also examining ways in which to ensure that the Union's institutions are fully ready to meet the challenges ahead. It is very much in Ireland's interests that the Union continues to be efficient in its operation, effective in its decision-making and balanced in its approach.

The Government wants to see a strengthening and underpinning of each side of the institutional triangle - the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament. We are working to build the greatest possible consensus in what is a notably fluid process of debate and discussion. Irish Government representatives have submitted papers to the Convention on enhancing the effectiveness of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and on the possible election of the Commission President by an electoral college comprising both national parliaments and the European Parliament.

Among the main institutional issues being debated in the Convention are:

- the method of appointment of the Commission and its President;
- the size and composition of the Commission;
- the Presidency of the Council, including the question of a possible President of the European Council, and
- institutional aspects of the Union's external relations including the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

In the external relations area, the Government would wish to see the European Union's external relations further developed to enhance the Union's capacity to promote peace and stability, based on the United Nations Charter, in particular the rule of law and human rights. There is also a need to define

development cooperation policy as a distinct European Union policy area with its own specific Treaty-based objectives.

Ensuring that European Security and Defence Policy continues to develop in the service of peace and in accordance with the spirit and provisions of the United Nations Charter will also be a priority.

A key test of the Convention, the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) and the new Treaty will be whether it will succeed in bringing the European Union closer to its citizens. With this in mind, the Government will seek to ensure that citizens are kept fully informed of developments in the Convention and in the European Union as a whole. The ongoing work of the National Forum on Europe is vital in this respect, as is the successful implementation of the new Oireachtas scrutiny measures introduced in July of last year. The Government representatives are appearing regularly before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on European Affairs to update the Oireachtas on Convention developments.

The Convention is aiming to reach a consensus, and to bring forward a solid set of proposals to the IGC.

It is our view that the accession countries should be fully associated with the IGC. The question of the timing of the IGC is likely to be decided at the European Council in June 2003. Ireland believes that there should be a reasonable period of reflection after the completion of the Convention, allowing for consideration of its outcome by parliaments and public opinion. While the length of the IGC will be closely related to the level of agreement reached in the Convention and the number of outstanding issues, it is quite likely, though not certain, that work on a new Treaty will be concluded in the Irish Presidency in 2004.



Part IV

Sectoral Priorities

While many of the following issues have been traditionally seen as sectoral, they increasingly have a cross-cutting dimension at both the European and national levels. Many of these sectoral issues form an integral part of the Lisbon Agenda. An example of a cross-cutting sectoral area is the development of the new Chemicals Policy which will have to have an appropriate balance between the environmental, economic and social dimensions.

A key development over the past year has been the putting in place of a statutory Parliamentary Scrutiny regime which ensures that European Union proposals and developments are monitored in depth by the relevant sectoral Oireachtas committee.

Culture

The preservation of the richness of European cultural diversity in all its forms, including especially the diversity of language, is an essential element of the European project. The European Union has taken measures:

- to improve the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of European peoples;
- to conserve and safeguard cultural heritage of European significance;
- to support non-commercial cultural exchanges;
- to advance artistic and literary creation, including in the audiovisual sector, and
- to advance cultural cooperation with third countries and international organisations, especially the Council of Europe.

Ireland is actively supporting the development of further initiatives in this area, including a programme to follow on from the five year Culture 2000 programme.

Television Without Frontiers requires member states to ensure freedom of reception and retransmission on their territory of television broadcasts from other member states. Member states, however, are allowed to provisionally suspend retransmissions in the case of a breach of the provisions relating to the protection of minors, pornography and gratuitous violence, or the prohibition on the incitement to hatred. Other key provisions relate to:

- the promotion and distribution of television programmes;
- the designation of sporting and cultural events as events of major importance to society which should continue to be available on free-to-air television services;
- minimum standards with regard to television advertising, sponsorship and teleshopping, and
- the protection of minors and public order.

The current regime is under review and it is likely that work on a new measure will begin during Ireland's Presidency in 2004. Ireland will be conducting consultations over the coming period with a view to developing our national policy in this area.

Justice and Home Affairs

The Treaties have, as a primary objective, the establishment within the European Union of an area of freedom, security and justice by progressive stages. This objective is progressed within two areas of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), which have different decision making processes. One sector is 'inter-governmental' in nature and the other sector operates within the Community framework.

The area referred to as 'Title VI' focuses solely on intergovernmental action in the fields of police and

judicial cooperation in criminal matters. This involves the taking of common action to prevent and combat all forms of cross-border crime including terrorism, organised crime, trafficking in persons, offences against children and drugs trafficking. Decisions in this area are taken by unanimity in the Justice and Home Affairs Council and in consultation with the European Parliament.

The other area, referred to as ‘Title IV’, operates within the general Community framework where decisions are usually taken by qualified majority voting and co-decision with the European Parliament. This area involves judicial cooperation in civil matters, immigration, asylum, visa policy and other policies relating to the free movement of persons. However, many of the decision making procedures found in the Title VI area, such as unanimity, have also been maintained in this area for a transition period. Due to the Common Travel Area measures, under Title IV, do not automatically apply to Ireland. However, Ireland has the right to opt-in to measures. Moreover, our common law system is fundamentally different to all other partners, except the UK, which adds further to the complexity.

In addition, Ireland does not participate in the border aspects of the Schengen system (the Schengen system involves open borders between participating states, together with compensatory police and judicial cooperation measures). However on 28 February 2003 the Council of the European Union approved Ireland’s request to participate in aspects of the Schengen system including police cooperation, judicial cooperation, certain immigration measures, the Schengen Information System and data protection.

Ireland’s strategic approach in this area is based on a commitment to:

- take part in the negotiation and adoption of Title VI measures (police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters) with a particular focus on the ratification of international conventions and the implementation of legislation to give effect to European Union measures negotiated under Title VI, such as those related to terrorism, extradition and mutual legal assistance;
- take part in Title IV measures (immigration, asylum and civil judicial cooperation) to the maximum extent compatible with the maintenance of the Common Travel Area with the UK; this includes participation in the development of mutual recognition of decisions in civil and commercial matters in order to ensure better access to justice within the European Union;
- participate in the non-borders aspects of the Schengen system (including police cooperation, judicial cooperation, certain immigration measures, the Schengen Information System and data protection) and to implement Ireland’s Schengen obligations, both administrative and legislative;
- progress the work programme for the JHA area up to and including the Irish Presidency;
- ensure that Ireland is well placed to successfully lead and manage the Presidency workload in all areas of its JHA responsibilities;
- make an effective contribution to deliberations at the European Convention.

Ireland will also seek to ensure effective coordination of Justice and Home Affairs policies across the various Council formations of the European Union and with other international bodies such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

Economic and Monetary Union

Following the successful introduction of euro notes and coins last year, and given the increased economic uncertainty and heightened geo-political risks which could delay the global economy recovery going forward, the importance of effective economic policy coordination in Europe has increased substantially.

While some progress has been made in recent years, challenges to fiscal consolidation in Europe remain. Budgetary policies must continue to be geared towards achieving public finances 'close to balance or in surplus over the medium term' while supporting growth by letting the automatic stabilisers work, as envisaged by the Stability and Growth Pact. In its Programme, the Irish Government have reaffirmed that the Stability and Growth Pact provides the overall framework for Ireland's budgetary policy.

Over the last few years progress has also been made in implementing structural reforms in European product, capital and financial markets. However, structural rigidities remain particularly with regard to certain aspects of European labour and product markets. Ireland firmly believes that these must be tackled in order to raise the productive potential of Europe's economies and consequently to achieve higher rates of sustainable economic growth and employment creation in the long run. Comprehensive structural reform will also help Europe better withstand and overcome the impact of future economic shocks.

The main instruments through which greater European economic policy coordination is achieved are the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs) and the Stability and Growth Pact. The BEPGs are

intended to define the main objectives and policy orientations for European economic policy. The dynamic potential of the economy will be achieved only if there is confidence based on fiscal stability, as envisaged by the Stability and Growth Pact. In pursuing public finances which are "close to balance or in surplus over the medium term" we must ensure that countries with low debt levels and significant infrastructural deficits should be able to adopt a fiscal stance which recognises both the needs of their economy and their ability to sustain moderate deficits.

To this end Ireland will continue to emphasise these economic policy objectives within the European Union. As regards decision making within the Union, while the status of ECOFIN should be maintained, particularly in the context of enlargement, the Eurogroup should continue to develop as the principal forum for discussion of eurozone economic and budgetary policy co-ordination.

Ireland welcomes and broadly supports the European Commission's recent proposals for strengthening the coordination of budgetary policies. The key aspects of these proposals were agreed at the 2003 Spring European Council.

Taxation

Taxation is a vital area of national policy and has come to the fore in broad European debate in recent years.

It seems clear that at European level, cooperation on taxation matters can facilitate economic development in dismantling barriers in the marketplace. Therefore where barriers to trade and investment arise through differences in tax treatment

these issues can and are dealt with at the European Union level.

Progress on taxation issues to date has been achieved through unanimous agreement. Ireland will continue to uphold this principle in any future negotiations in the European Union and it will be one of the important strategic priorities in 2003 to maintain this position.

Recently, agreement has been achieved on improvements in the value added tax (VAT) system such as the agreement on the treatment of electronic services and on the exchange of information which will provide for greater cooperation between member state tax authorities.

There are a number of policy proposals which are currently under consideration, such as the taxation of energy products, removing barriers to pension mobility, developing common approaches on the tax issues affecting the trans-national operation of companies and the development and use of co-operative approaches to eliminating harmful tax competition.

In indirect taxes and in particular VAT, proposals in respect of travel agents, the VAT treatment of cross frontier gas and electricity supplies and amendments to the right to deduct are being discussed in Council Working Parties. Other proposals are expected in 2003 from the Commission.

The national agenda and Ireland's approach to it will continue to develop in the course of 2003 as the various taxation work programmes of the Commission continue to be implemented.

In approaching the discussion of such proposals, it will be necessary for Ireland to consider carefully

where the balance of advantage lies with a view to ensuring that common approaches that enhance economic opportunities are progressed without compromising the autonomy of individual member states to implement the taxation policies they consider appropriate to their economic and social circumstances.

This approach will help to determine Ireland's taxation priorities for the 2004 Presidency.

European Union Budget

Ireland will remain a substantial net beneficiary from the European Union under the Budget for the period 2000-2006. Due to our increased prosperity, Ireland is likely to become a net contributor to the European Union toward the end of this decade. This change to being a net contributor is not caused by the enlargement of the European Union, it simply reflects our economic success and would have happened irrespective of enlargement.

The strategic implications are that in future negotiations on the European Union Budget, Ireland will:

- seek to ensure that the method of financing the European Union Budget reflects a fair burden sharing among member states, and
- seek to keep overall expenditure to a level that is consistent with our national objectives as regards the development of the European Union including, in particular, the Common Agricultural Policy and permits Structural Funds / Cohesion Fund spending that will implement a well targeted cohesion policy in an enlarged Union.

Single Financial Market

The Financial Services Action Plan (FSAP) was published in 1999 but was subsequently incorporated as a crucial component into the Lisbon Agenda. In November 2002, the benefits of European Union financial integration were highlighted in a study done of the European Commission, by independent consultants, which suggested that such a market could result in an increase in European Union GDP of 1.1% over the next decade.

The FSAP covers forty-two action points, many of them of a legislative nature with a completion date of 2005. To meet that deadline, all outstanding Directives would have to be completed by mid-2003, so as to allow for transposition by end-2004. While this deadline will largely be met, there will be some slippage. For instance, the Investment Services Directive is currently being negotiated and will probably be carried over into the Irish Presidency next year, at least in regard to the latter stages of the process such as conciliation with the European Parliament. Also, the new Capital Adequacy Directive is not expected to be published until well into 2004.

Competitiveness

The creation of the Competitiveness Council in 2002 is intended to give fresh focus to the policies of the Union which impinge on the competitive environment for businesses. The Council will play an important role in the lead up to each Spring European Council and will act as a channel for the key competitiveness issues affecting the achievement of the goals in the Lisbon Agenda. It should help to focus attention at the highest political level on issues

affecting the competitiveness of enterprise. We also believe that we can improve the way the competitiveness agenda is communicated to citizens and to the enterprise sector. Competitiveness benchmarking is an important and transparent tool to assist in this exercise.

Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

The Commission Green Paper on Entrepreneurship was published in January 2003. This is a new area of national policy focus which is targeted at the individual as entrepreneur rather than the firm. Our policy aim at national level is to broaden and strengthen our indigenous enterprise base as a source of future employment and we are pursuing a number of initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship. At European Union level we wish to see any European Union measures which will emerge, following consultation on the Green Paper, complement national measures.

One of the key methods identified in achieving the Lisbon Agenda objective is the adoption of quantitative policy targets. Member states are making commitments to achieve concrete targets in a number of elements of policy which shape the framework conditions for enterprises. This work is being coordinated by a Contact Group on Quantitative Targets.

We are anxious to ensure that the dynamic created by target setting and monitoring is maintained so that we can measure progress towards the Lisbon goals.

Corporate Governance

Measures to advance competitiveness under the Lisbon Agenda include the Commission package on

better law making and the decision to develop an Action Plan on Company Law which would cover corporate governance, shareholder information, communication and decision making.

Some of the issues relating to Company Law are already being addressed in Ireland through the proposed Companies (Auditing and Accounting) Bill, the Company Law Review Group and in other fora. It is likely, however, that major issues will arise in relation to ongoing action at European Union level. Ireland will be participating fully in these deliberations as they progress during 2003.

Internal Market

A well functioning internal market plays a key role in ensuring the competitiveness of European business. In this regard, the Commission's Strategy for the internal market, which is updated and adjusted annually, provides an important framework to plan for Ireland's Presidency in 2004. It, together with member states' and Commission's yearly Cardiff report, are inputs to the Spring European Council.

As a small open economy with over 60% of exports going to other European Union countries, it is in Ireland's interest to ensure a correct application of Single Market rules. In this regard, Ireland is committed to doing its utmost to meet the transposition targets set by the European Council i.e. a 1.5% transposition deficit for overdue internal market directives and a 100% implementation rate in the case of directives whose implementation is more than two years overdue. Clearly, if these very cornerstones, on which the internal market is built, are weak, then citizens and business will never reap the full benefits from the single market.

Internal Market in Services

Ireland also welcomes the new focus on services. Employment in services has accounted for the bulk of new job creation in all member states for the last 20-30 years. In recognition of the important economic role of services, the competitiveness of this sector should be underpinned by appropriate community actions.

The Commission report *The State of the Internal Market for Services* was published in July 2002. This report will form the foundation of work for the second stage of the services strategy. The Commission will now draw up measures to tackle the relevant legal and other barriers in the services sector.

Ireland has welcomed the Commission's report and its commitment to tackle and remove barriers that hinder the free movement of services within the Community. Our priority is to proceed to the second phase of the strategy prior to our Presidency in 2004. We have paid special attention to this issue as our experience with Irish service providers shows that there are remaining barriers to services in the single market. We will keep this item highlighted on the agenda.

Consumer Policy

There is recognition that the benefits of the European Union's internal market are not being fully realised. An important element is consumer reluctance to cross borders. To address this, and to improve on low levels of cross-border retail shopping within the European Union, efforts are now being made to enhance legislative and enforcement regimes. These seek to provide for a higher level of consumer confidence and so

encourage shopping beyond traditional catchment areas.

Different member states have different approaches and traditions in place to protect consumer interests. However, the very diversity of these traditions and approaches has itself been a disincentive in relation to cross-border purchasing within the European Union. Accordingly, the benefits of better value and choice, particularly with the access which e-commerce now allows, are not being fully realised. This is a significant impediment that needs to be addressed if the benefits of liberalisation and enhanced competition are to be more fully realised by all citizens of the European Union, and particularly those in peripheral regions like Ireland.

Accordingly, the European Commission will be proposing two measures to supplement and reinforce existing consumer protections. The first will provide for renewed Community-wide agreement on the provisions and legal characteristics that are indispensable to fair trading practices. The second will promote Community-wide cooperation on the part of enforcement authorities whose function it is to protect and vindicate the rights of consumers in the different member states.

From an Irish perspective these initiatives are welcome. They will add to existing provisions for consumer protection. The much higher level of confidence in cross-border retail shopping which they will provide is in the best interests of Irish consumers and businesses alike.

A Knowledge Economy

The new eEurope Action Plan 2005 aims to harness the untapped potential of the information society to

improve productivity and the quality of life. This potential is growing due to the technological developments of broadband and multi-platform access, i.e. Internet connection via means other than a personal computer, such as digital television and third generation (3G) mobile telephones. New services, applications and content will create new markets and provide the means to increase productivity and hence growth and employment throughout the economy. They will also provide citizens with more convenient access to information and communication tools.

One of the main objectives of the eEurope Action Plan 2005 is to accelerate the deployment of broadband. Key areas for action over the next three years are outlined below.

Ireland will cooperate with the European Commission and other member states in the use of the new regulatory framework for radio **spectrum policy** to ensure spectrum availability for, and efficient use by, wireless broadband services (e.g. W-LANs) in the introduction of new services. Ireland will participate in discussions on new approaches to spectrum valuation and trading of rights-of-use of frequencies.

Ireland, in cooperation with the Commission and other member states, will investigate **broadband access in less favoured areas** and may, where possible, use structural funds or financial incentives to progress access. The National Broadband Programme is a starting point in achieving the objective of greater access.

Ireland will work to **reduce barriers to broadband deployment** by easing access to rights-of-way, poles and conduits to facilitate investment, for instance through the removal of legislative barriers.

Ireland will endeavour, through public authorities and private sector cooperation, to offer **multi-platform content** on different technological platforms, such as interactive digital TV, 3G, etc.

In order to speed up the transition to digital television, Ireland intends to create transparency for the conditions for the envisaged **digital switchover** at the appropriate time.

The eEurope Action Plan 2005 also promotes a secure information infrastructure. The key actions in this area over the next three years include:

- participation in a Cyber Security Taskforce (CSTF), and
- promotion of a ‘culture of security’ in the design and implementation of information and communication products, as well as awareness of user security risks.

Employment

The European Employment Strategy is currently at the end of its first five years cycle (1997-2002). A new strategy, which will run from 2003-2010, has been prepared for agreement at the 2003 June European Council.

The general consensus is that the Lisbon Agenda must be the driving force for the new Strategy. This includes the achievement of a competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy. From an Irish perspective there are a number of priority areas:

- job creation;
- lifelong learning including a greater focus on mobility through upskilling;

- encouraging greater participation in the labour force, and
- gender equality.

Once the strategy has been agreed, guidelines for its implementation in the medium term (possibly 3 years) will be drawn up. Our objective is to ensure that the guidelines are simplified, reduced in number and more focused to facilitate implementation rather than monitoring and reporting. We also want to ensure maximum consistency between the employment guidelines and the broad economic policy guidelines. National action plans, to give effect to the guidelines in individual member states, will be prepared on an annual basis.

The proposed European Employment Taskforce will identify practical reform measures that can have the most direct and immediate impact on the ability of member states to implement the revised European Employment Strategy and to achieve its objectives and targets.

Member states were asked by the European Council in Barcelona to remove disincentives to labour force participation with targets to provide childcare, in line with national patterns of provision, by 2010. In Ireland, The Equal Opportunities Child Care Programme is taking the lead in carrying forward this objective.

Discussions are ongoing on mutual recognition of training and qualifications of a range of professionals in the health and education sectors. Ireland is concerned to ensure the highest standards, including public health and safety standards, in any measures adopted.

Equal Opportunities

Complementing national policy, Ireland will support measures at European Union level in favour of:

- gender mainstreaming;
- combating discrimination and promoting equal opportunities on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- equal opportunities and measures to promote the increased participation of people with disabilities in society, including the 2003 European Year of People with Disabilities, and
- the development of indicators on the provision of care facilities for children and other dependents.

The Barcelona European Council invited member states to set targets in National Action Plans to significantly reduce the numbers of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2010. Ireland will develop these targets in the new round of National Action Plans for 2003-2005.

Social Policy

The Social Policy Agenda forms part of the integrated European approach towards achieving economic and social revitalisation, as outlined in the Lisbon Agenda. It seeks to ensure the positive harmonisation of employment and social policy and to ensure political agreement to work towards strategic goals. A range of actions has been outlined in the agenda including the creation of more and better jobs, anticipating and managing change, adapting to new working environments and promoting mobility. The Agenda also encourages the greater use of social dialogue to meet the various challenges.

It is our intention to continue to promote the development of social dialogue at European Union level and to use the Social Policy Agenda as a means of economic and social regeneration. A mid-term review of the Social Policy Agenda is expected to be conducted in the second half of 2003 and could see a reprioritisation of certain issues or the emergence of new ones. Ireland will continue to participate actively in this area and during 2003 will closely assess the annual scoreboard and the outcome of the mid-term review.

A formal summit attended by the social partners, the Commission and the troika of Heads of State or Government will be held each year on the eve of the Spring European Council. One of the main tasks of the summit will be to monitor the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda.

In addition, discussions are underway on:

- good business practice in restructuring situations, and
- promoting corporate social responsibility.

There will be further detailed discussion during 2003 on the working conditions of temporary agency workers and Ireland will be seeking a balanced outcome that will take account of our concerns.

Ireland welcomes the thrust of the new European Union Strategy on Health and Safety at Work covering the period from 2002 to 2006. We will continue to promote the desirability of an action plan to reinforce implementation, control and evaluation of existing measures in this area.

Research and Development

A key Lisbon Agenda aim is promoting investment

in research and innovation. This will remain a core focus of both the European Union and the national competitiveness agenda in 2003. This is particularly the case as we seek to complete the transformation to a high-income, high-skilled, knowledge-based economy.

Ireland is making significant investments in science and technology through the Government's National Development Plan. This is being done as we seek to develop job opportunities through innovation in emerging areas (biotechnology, environment support services, etc.) and to complete the transformation to a high-income, high skilled, knowledge-based economy. This investment will underpin sustainable development in the years ahead. However, current indicators show that Ireland has a considerable distance to go in bringing innovation to the heart of development policies at national, regional, local and enterprise level. There is no room for complacency.

Research in Europe suffers from three weaknesses: insufficient funding, lack of an environment to stimulate research and exploit results, and the fragmented nature of activities and the dispersal of resources. Without determined action at European level the present weakness in Europe's efforts cannot be overcome.

The European Research Area (ERA) initiative is focused on the benchmarking of national research policies; the mapping of research excellence; improving the mobility of researchers; the developing and accessing of research infrastructures; networking of national research programmes; stimulating private investment in research; developing an effective intellectual property framework; electronic networks for research; the international and regional dimensions of research

and issues relating to science and society.

At the Barcelona European Council in March 2002 it was agreed that overall spending on research and development and innovation in the Union should be increased with the aim of approaching 3% of GDP by 2010 and that two thirds of this new investment should come from the private sector. The Commission has identified framework conditions that need to be addressed in a consistent way and has suggested that the mechanisms for coordinating national research policies should be strengthened and made more efficient.

In Ireland, as in the European Union, it is essential that the framework conditions are put in place which bring research, innovation and technological development to the centre of economic and social development policies. Gross expenditure on research and development in Ireland amounted to 1.2% of GDP in 1999 (the current European Union average is 1.9%) of which business expenditure amounted to 0.9%. Working closely with the European Commission to increase spending on research and development and innovation in the Union to 3% of GDP by 2010, is in line with the national objective to develop a globally competitive and sustainable knowledge-based economy. This objective will be central to our European Union strategy as we move towards the 2004 Presidency.

The adoption of the sixth Community Framework Research Programme (FP6) in 2002 was a major achievement. It will provide a unique opportunity for Irish industry, third level institutions and research organisations to win funding that will enable them to participate with other organisations in Europe and elsewhere in cutting edge research and to develop and intensify research and business

networks. The Government has enhanced supports to ensure Ireland secures the maximum benefits from FP6 over the next five years and, in 2003, the focus will be to ensure significant and early involvement in first calls for proposals.

State Aid

Ireland will continue the policy of all Irish Governments on state aid since European Union accession.

Ireland will therefore support strong and fair application by the Commission of the rules on state aid. This will ensure that the benefits of competition in the Single Market are preserved. It will also ensure that the effects of approved aid schemes are concentrated in the regions and on the factors where development is sought. Most importantly it will ensure that harmful "counterbidding" among member states in relation to new investment projects is minimized.

Ireland will also pursue an active policy of paying state aid under approved industrial development schemes in categories such as Regional, Training and Research & Development (R&D) aid, in order to develop industrial output and employment and boost economic growth and living standards for all. This approach is most notably reflected in the supports paid to industry by agencies such as the Industrial Development Authority and Enterprise Ireland.

Ireland's economic growth in recent years has resulted in a reduction in the intensity of the aid we can pay under the Regional heading, particularly in Dublin and, less so, in the other regions of Ireland outside of the Border, Midland and Western region.

The current state aid regime applies until the end of 2006. A review of the Regional Aid Guidelines is

likely to commence well before then, possibly in 2003. A number of factors is likely to affect any revision of the Guidelines. The major challenge is, of course, the impact of enlargement. The prospect of a European Union of up to 27 member states by the end of the decade radically alters the context for the calculations that underpin the current Guidelines. A key issue for the future will be to seek the best possible outcome from this review to enable Ireland to continue to support regional development where required. Another key issue will be to devise our policy response to the limiting of our ability under European Union Rules to pay Regional Aid on the scale we have used up to now. Training, research and development and small and medium sized enterprise (SME) aid is payable in all parts of the European Union so such payments in Ireland will not necessarily be limited by economic growth.

Trade

The current round of World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade negotiations is scheduled to conclude at the beginning of 2005. The Ministerial meeting in Cancun in September 2003 will be an important step in the negotiations process and we are anxious to ensure that it is a success.

Ireland supports the European Union approach to world trade, in particular, the strengthening of the WTO and the multilateral trade system. The economic benefits that can arise from a well regulated multilateral trading environment and from further liberalisation in trade in goods and services is of particular importance to a small open economy like ours. In addition, we are supportive of the development aspect of European Union trade policy and we will continue to encourage the European Union to display more openness to the wishes of

developing countries, both in terms of market access and in support of the development of their economies.

Agriculture

The agricultural arrangements for the new member states following enlargement will be funded within the budgetary limits set by the Berlin European Council meeting in March 1999, for the period to 2006. For the period 2007 to 2013, new budgetary limits have been set. These new limits, though restrictive, provide a measure of certainty about the funding of the CAP until 2013. The production and premium quotas agreed for the new member states are based largely on recent historical performance.

The Commission's Mid-Term Review outline proposals were published in July 2002 and in January 2003 the Commission published detailed proposals. The main proposals with implications for Ireland are the decoupling¹ of direct payments to farmers, the modulation² and digression³ of direct payments and changes to the market regimes for arable crops and milk.

The Doha Declaration of November 2001, which launched the current World Trade Organisation (WTO) round of negotiations, requires modalities, or rules, for the liberalisation of agricultural trade to be established by 31 March 2003. With this in mind, the European Union submitted a paper containing its own proposals on modalities to the WTO at the end of January. Negotiations on modalities will continue in the immediate future based on compromise papers prepared by the Chairman of the WTO's Committee on Agriculture.

In both the Mid Term Review and WTO negotiations, Ireland's objective will be to preserve the benefits of the Agenda 2000 Agreement and to secure the conditions under which the European model of agriculture can be maintained.

Food Safety

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) was established in January 2003. Its core task is to provide independent scientific advice and support and to set up a network for close co-operation with similar bodies in member states, including the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. The EFSA will assess risks related to the food chain and give the general public information about such risks. The regulation establishing the EFSA also brought about a reinforced rapid alert system for food and animal feed risks and new emergency powers for the European Commission to intervene when such products are likely to constitute a serious risk. The establishment of the EFSA is indicative of the high priority and increased emphasis given to the production of safe food within the European Union.

Consumers in the European Union and on international markets are ever more demanding in relation to food safety. As a major producer and exporter of food, Ireland is fully committed to achieving and maintaining the highest standards of food safety so as to protect human health and to build and retain consumer confidence in all of our products.

Animal Welfare

Society and consumers are increasingly concerned about the conditions under which animals used in food production are kept and transported. As a

¹ The disconnection of direct payments from production: after decoupling, a farmer's entitlement to direct payments would be based on his/her historical receipts from "coupled" direct payments.

² The reduction of direct payments and the use of the money saved for rural development purposes.

³ The reduction of direct payments and the use of the money saved for future financing needs.

result, the body of European Union legislation on animal welfare has increased steadily in recent years. As Ireland is a major producer and exporter of livestock products, establishing and maintaining the highest welfare standards is critical to our ability to market our produce successfully on domestic and export markets, as well, of course, as being right in itself.

However, higher animal welfare standards impose costs on European Union producers which can put them at a competitive disadvantage relative to producers in third countries which accept lower standards. Competitive distortions have in turn the potential to undermine higher welfare standards in the European Union. It will be important, therefore, to ensure that producers in the European Union are not put at a cost and competitive disadvantage by the implementation of lower welfare standards in third countries.

The Commission is expected to bring forward proposals for new conditions relating to animal transport in 2003, particularly in relation to maximum journey times. While Ireland is acutely aware of the ethical, as well as the veterinary and economic, imperatives of ensuring that the transport of animals is conducted in a manner which both safeguards their welfare and minimises the risk of transmitting disease, our objective will be to ensure that any further proposals in this area do not undermine the principle of the Single Market or unduly restrict legitimate and established trade.

Fisheries

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) sets the legal framework under which policy actions concerning the fisheries and aquaculture sectors are developed and progressed. The CFP legal framework was established in 1983 and was reviewed and reformed

in 1992 and again at the end of 2002. The new CFP has a heavy emphasis on stock conservation and recovery and the national key objectives are consistent with that overall aim and are fully supported by the Irish fishing, processing and aquaculture industries.

Ireland will work to achieve the following objectives in the Common Fisheries Policy:

- the continuation of the Irish Box as an effective conservation measure;
- the development of recovery plans, involving targeted technical measures such as closed areas and gear modifications, for depleted fish stocks of importance to Ireland;
- the development of strengthened technical conservation measures for the protection of juvenile fish;
- the development of measures to substantially reduce the quantity of discard fish through such measures as selected methods of fishing and opening markets for lower value fishery products;
- agreement on detailed measures to provide for strengthened control on the basis of the provisions of the framework regulations for CFP agreed in December 2002;
- agreement on annual Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and quotas at a sustainable level and the continued application of the Hague Preferences which deliver additional whitefish quotas to Ireland;
- the maximum benefit to Ireland from annual European Union / Norway Fisheries negotiations in respect of shared stocks, and
- the continued development of European Union policy on aquaculture in areas such as the

implementation of best practice regulations for the continuation of an environmentally sustainable aquaculture industry and the development of the highest veterinary standards in the interests of producing a healthy quality product.

Environment

The European Union has in place an impressive body of environment legislation and Ireland is fully committed to its implementation.

The European Union has a leadership role in the international arena in promoting global sustainable development, and this was effectively deployed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. The Plan of Implementation, arising from the Summit, reflects the strong role played by the European Union in reaffirming commitment to targets in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and other international agreements. The Plan also defines new targets for more sustainable use of natural resources, safer use and production of chemicals, and a delinking of economic growth from environmental degradation. These targets will influence action nationally, at European Union and at wider international levels in the pursuit of sustainable development. A ten-year framework of programmes will be developed to pursue more sustainable production and consumption patterns, globally and regionally.

Climate change is internationally recognised as the most significant and threatening global environmental problem. Over 100 parties, including the European Union and its member states, have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with entry into force now only dependent on ratification by the Russian Federation (expected in 2003).

Early and substantive progress on effective common and coordinated policies and measures is essential for member states and the Community to reinforce action to meet their Kyoto commitments. Under the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) the Commission prepared a range of additional European Union-level policies and measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions, thereby complementing the efforts undertaken by the member states. Measures taken by the Community are integral to the European Union's effort to achieve the common target. Progress has been made in developing and adopting cross-cutting issues, such as the emissions trading scheme, and work to develop further policies and measures is focusing on other cross-cutting issues and on the energy, transport and industry sectors.

Participation in Europe-wide climate action, in addition to national measures, will be important for Ireland to meet its Kyoto target. Ireland will continue to press for environmentally ambitious common and coordinated policies and measures, recognising that these suit Irish circumstances potentially more than other member states. The initiatives can have significant implications for Ireland and close interdepartmental coordination continues to be required on the various proposals.

The Emissions Trading Directive, now subject to a second reading in the European Parliament, has particular importance in that it is capable of providing access to the lowest-cost emissions reductions opportunities across the enlarged European Union from 2005 for the Irish energy sector and large-scale industry. Ireland's priority will be the establishment of a transparent, liquid market in carbon dioxide allowances compatible with meeting the ambitious Kyoto target for both the European Union as a whole and for Ireland.

The European Union's Sustainable Development Strategy, which now adds an environmental dimension to the **Lisbon Agenda**, consists of cross-cutting proposals to ensure coherent and cost effective policy making and to promote technological innovation and strong involvement of civil society and business in policy formulation. As all policies are to have sustainable development as their core objective, the sustainable development strategy has particular relevance to the Common Agriculture and Fisheries Policies, the Common Transport Policy, and Energy, Internal Market, Cohesion and Research Policies. Sectoral Council formations have prepared their own strategies for integrating environmental considerations into their core business. The external dimension of the strategy will be pursued to promote sustainable development at international level.

Community action on the environment over this decade will be determined by the **Sixth Environmental Action Programme (6EAP)**. This reflects the priority the Community attaches to climate policy and implementation, and provides a context in which other substantial initiatives will be taken forward, e.g. in relation to management of chemicals and pesticides, and the development of an environmental liability regime. Additional measures will cover soil protection, marine environment, air quality, sustainable resource use, the urban environment and waste recycling.

Ireland supports the Community's progressive position on sustainable development, recognising both its global dimensions, which must now be pursued in light of the outcomes of the World Summit, and its national relevance in that high economic growth here in recent years has brought increased environmental pressures.

The **chemicals regulatory regime** must provide a high level of protection for human health and the environment, while at the same time stimulating innovation and the competitiveness of the chemical industry. A draft regulation aimed at improving the current management system is due to be presented early in 2003. In view of its complexity and importance, there will be a need for a high level of cooperation across relevant Council formations to complete regulatory reform in this area.

In considering the proposed new chemical measure, Ireland will work to ensure that an appropriate balance is found between the environmental, economic and social dimensions.

Work is progressing on **environmental liability**, and political agreement may be achieved in June 2003 on a framework for the prevention and remediation of serious environmental damage in accordance with the polluter pays principle. Concerns about the implementation of certain provisions for business competitiveness are being monitored closely. Relevant Departments will continue to work closely to present an agreed national negotiating position.

Biodiversity must be better protected through the implementation of the recently published National Biodiversity Plan and the reduction of pressure on natural habitats in general, including the sustainable management of Natura 2000 Network in both terrestrial and marine environments.

Ireland's primary objective on **water quality** is to achieve and maintain improvements through the ongoing, effective implementation of the Water Framework and the Nitrates Directives. Legislation in this area will be further updated and strengthened through new directives on bathing water quality and groundwaters.

Ireland also supports the preparation of **dedicated thematic strategies** in specific areas, on the basis that they will be determined taking account of information on the state of and pressures on the environment, sound scientific and cost benefit analysis and consultation with all appropriate parties.

Transport

The European Commission's Transport White Paper sets out an ambitious action programme for the period to 2010. The proposals include: shifting the balance between modes of transport in favour of rail; eliminating bottlenecks; placing users at the heart of transport policy and managing the globalisation of transport. In the context of the implementation of the White Paper proposals, it is necessary for Ireland to make a strong case for the interests and concerns of an open, peripheral and island economy.

The European Commission is currently reviewing the guidelines for the development of the trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). This review is to be completed by June 2004. In line with the White Paper, the policy thrust of the review is to tackle bottlenecks on mainland Europe. Bottlenecks will be tackled mainly by encouraging modal shift from road to rail, especially for freight, and by promoting the concept of Motorways of the Sea. Another priority will be to prepare European infrastructure for enlargement.

Ireland's key objective in the negotiations is to ensure that the forthcoming revision takes sufficient cognisance of the diverse geographical and socio-economic circumstances of member states and addresses the need to strengthen access links

between peripheral member states and the rest of the European Union. Accordingly, Ireland considers that further development and extension of transport connections between outlying regions and mainland Europe (e.g. maritime links, and road access routes where they represent the most sustainable option) should form part of the new TEN-T programme. The extent to which bottlenecks in Britain and elsewhere that affect trade and tourism links with our European Union partners, are addressed, is also a matter of concern for Ireland.

Road transport is the dominant mode of moving goods in Ireland. Challenges facing the road haulage sector include increased customer expectations, traffic congestion, the need to achieve greater environmental efficiency operation, higher fuel and other costs and greater competition. Ireland's dependence on road haulage to access our markets in the rest of the European Union could render us disproportionately vulnerable to charging policies designed to discourage road use.

Ireland's key objective is to promote the development of a more professional and viable road haulage sector, by increasing cooperation with enforcement agencies in Britain, Northern Ireland and other European Union member states and reviewing national legislation to eliminate potential barriers to effective licensing and enforcement and to take account of changes in European Union law.

In **Rail transport**, the European Commission has proposed a new package of measures (the Second Railway Package) to revitalise the railways. Ireland's key objective is to create efficient, competitive railway services throughout the European Union to supplant, what is described by the Commission as fifteen systems, each compartmentalised and closed

in a national network. Ireland is broadly supportive of the package which includes proposals on safety, interoperability, liberalisation of rail freight and the establishment of a new European Railway Agency.

In **Air transport**, Ireland has been and will remain supportive of Commission initiatives such as the Single Sky (a unified Air Traffic Management System) which will improve safety, capacity and efficiency and which it is planned to be implemented by end 2004. Ireland's key objective is to continue to play a proactive part in the development of European Union and pan-European proposals for the future of Air Traffic Management, in particular the European Union's Single European Sky initiative.

A recent judgement by the European Court of Justice has reopened the debate on **European Union / US air transport policy**. It will be necessary to determine the appropriate access to Irish airports for all airlines providing transatlantic air services, in the light of developing European Union policy on Europe – United States "open skies".

Aviation security has taken on an added dimension since September 11th 2001. Ireland supports European Union proposals that comply with or exceed best practice in this area.

In **Maritime Transport** Ireland supports linking up intra-community maritime transport and progressing the community short sea shipping policy including the development of motorways of the sea. Ireland also supports harnessing the advantages of short sea shipping through the Marco Polo Programme to divert traffic from roads with more direct shipping links.

Energy

The European Commission's Green Paper on Security of Energy Supply (November 2000) outlined a strategy to bring together security of supply, economic growth, the liberalisation of markets and environmental protection. The Green Paper maintained that securing reliable, efficient and sustainable energy is vital for ensuring the sustainable development of the European economy. For Ireland, this is a challenging and vital task, given our very limited indigenous energy resources and our exposure to global trends in energy supply and prices.

The energy sector will need to play its part in complying with our Kyoto commitments to combat climate change. Completion and consolidation of the internal market in energy is also a key priority for Ireland. In this context, Ireland's objectives in the energy field are to:

- contribute to the final adoption in 2003 Internal Market in Electricity and Gas Package, which includes a measure aimed at achieving full liberalisation by July 2007 and a measure for dealing with the cross-border trade in electricity;
- ensure the achievement of significant progress during the Irish Presidency on expected proposals on cross-border trade in natural gas and security of gas supply;
- advance Ireland's interests in the negotiation of European Union legislative measures to develop sustainable and renewable energy policies which contribute to meeting our Kyoto Target, including inter alia:
 - the introduction of harmonisation measures to

- support renewable energy technologies in the internal electricity market;
- measures for the promotion of co-generation of heat and power, and
- proposals for minimum efficiency requirements for end-use equipment and energy demand management.

Social Cohesion and Protection

The Lisbon Agenda recognises the need to modernise social protection systems as a means of supporting economic development and advancing greater social cohesion. To help progress the Agenda, enhanced cooperation arrangements have been developed by member states at European Union level and applied to four policy areas: combating social exclusion, ensuring adequate and sustainable pension systems, supporting national systems for health care and long term care of the elderly and making work pay.

In this regard, Ireland has undertaken to set targets in National Action Plans aimed at significantly reducing the numbers of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2010. This is being done through the open method of coordination, which involves the definition of a set of commonly agreed objectives for the European Union as a whole, the development of the National Action Plans to meet these objectives and the monitoring of progress made through the plans. Although these are relatively new procedures, they have proved of great benefit to Ireland.

So far, Ireland has submitted a National Strategy Report on Pensions, focusing on agreed objectives in the area of adequacy, sustainability and modernisation, and member states are currently in

the process of formulating their second National Action Plan for social inclusion (due by July 2003). Cooperation has also occurred in the area of health care and long-term care for the elderly and further work will be progressed through 2003 on the issue of making work pay.

The objective for urban poverty, in the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, is tackling social exclusion in disadvantaged areas, with drug misuse being among the particular concerns. A related key target therefore aims at significantly reducing the harm caused to individuals and the community by the misuse of illicit drugs through a concerted focus on supply reduction, prevention, treatment and research. Where rural disadvantage is concerned, the objective is to tackle social exclusion in rural areas, notably by improving access to adequate services and infrastructure.

Education

Education, training and lifelong learning are increasingly acknowledged as crucial for the future of Europe and are essential to achieving the Lisbon Agenda goals. They are key factors for the development of a competitive European economy and for the welfare of all citizens. The European Union can play a role in encouraging best practice and agreeing benchmarks for progress with the member states.

The member states have agreed that they will cooperate to increase the quality, effectiveness, access and openness of education and training systems. This will be done by improving the quality of training for teachers and trainers, developing skills for the knowledge society, developing basic skills, ensuring access to information and communication technologies for everyone, increasing recruitment to

scientific and technical studies, improving foreign language learning and supporting active citizenship. A key focus of Irish policy is to prioritise education investment in favour of those most at risk.

Education plays a fundamental role in providing full access to life chances and in avoiding and breaking the cycle of disadvantage. In the education area the objectives in the National Anti-Poverty Strategy are:

- to ensure that all young people leave the educational system with an adequate education and related qualifications to support their full participation in the economy, in employment and in society, and
- to ensure that all those that have already left school have the opportunity to address any current lack of educational experience and related qualifications which affect their ability to participate fully in the economy, in employment and in society.

Key Targets are:

- halving the proportion of pupils with serious literacy difficulties by 2006;
- reducing the proportion of the population aged 16-64 with restricted literacy to below 10 to 20 per cent by 2007, and
- reducing the number of young people who leave the school system early.

Health Care

As with education and social protection, health care is and will remain predominantly a matter for member states.

During 2002 the European Union decided to establish a programme of action in the field of public health (2003-2008). The programme has three general objectives:

- improving information and knowledge for the development of public health;
- enhancing the capability of responding rapidly and in a coordinated fashion to health threats, and
- promoting health and preventing disease through addressing health determinants across all policies and activities.

These objectives will contribute to:

- ensuring a high level of human health protection in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities, through the promotion of an integrated and intersectoral health strategy;
- tackling inequalities in health, and
- encouraging cooperation between member states in the areas covered by the Treaty.

Work has continued on exchanges of information on health care and care of the elderly.

Patient mobility and other health considerations (including health competence) are being addressed with recommendations expected in late 2003.

The European Union is committed to establish a European Centre for Communicable Diseases by 2005 and to tackle issues relating to outbreaks of infectious diseases and resistance to antibiotics and to follow up on a children's environmental health initiative arising from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

Part V

The External Policies of the European Union

Context

The international climate for 2003 will continue to be affected by the ongoing instability and uncertainty arising from the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States and their aftermath. The commencement of military conflict, following the breakdown of diplomatic means to secure Iraq's disarmament and continuing concerns about future possible terrorist attacks and weapons of mass destruction will remain high on the agenda of the international community.

The new international situation confirms the need for concerted action by the international community to address and seek peaceful solutions to ongoing regional conflicts and in particular the conflict in the Middle East. The international environment continues to be marked by regional conflicts, human rights abuses, lack of sustainable development in many parts of the world, environmental degradation, imbalances in the flows of trade, technology and capital, pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and trafficking in illicit drugs and people. These issues cannot be addressed by countries acting alone within the confines of the nation state and require concerted and sustained action at the regional and global level.

Having just completed a two year term on the United Nations Security Council, Ireland remains committed to multilateralism as the only way a just and stable international order can be established and maintained. Ireland will continue to work, nationally and with our partners in the European Union, for the strengthening and revitalisation of the United Nations system so that it can implement the goals set out in the Millennium Declaration of September 2000.

Following the signature of the Accession Treaties in April 2003 our ten new partners will become

observers in European Union meetings, including on external relations issues. Moving from a Union of 15 to 25 countries will increase the European Union's weight and voice in the international arena and our new partners will bring their own perspectives and interests to bear in the development of the European Union's external policies in the years ahead.

In the European Convention the Union's external policies, including the principles, objectives and competences, will be reviewed. Ireland will be working to ensure that our priorities and interests are reflected in the outcome of the convention and the subsequent Intergovernmental Conference.

Throughout 2003, Ireland will be preparing itself for its Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2004. Our role begins with membership of the Troika in the second half of 2003, where, together with the European Commission, we will assist the Italian Presidency in the conduct of some political dialogue meetings with other countries and regions.

Policies

The Union's external policies comprise both *Community* policies that are implemented by the Commission, such as trade, development cooperation and humanitarian aid, and the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which is *intergovernmental* in character.

With a view to improving the functioning of the Council in the run up to enlargement, the Seville European Council in June 2002 decided on the creation of a new General Affairs and External Relations Council which deals with the Union's external action. Ireland believes that closer integration of the full range of the European Union's external policies is essential as a means of ensuring

that the Union's external actions are effective. Ireland supports a balanced approach to the integration of the Union's external action that takes account of the aims and competences of the full range of policies involved. We will continue to pursue this view at the European Convention and at the Intergovernmental Conference following it.

Issues and Challenges

Ireland will continue to pursue its foreign policy interest and priorities through active participation in the formulation and conduct of the European Union's external relations.

In particular Ireland will work with our European Union partners to strengthen and revitalise the **United Nations** system, and continue to promote the United Nations' place at the centre of the multilateral system. The goal is to further develop and deepen EU-UN cooperation, particularly in the field of conflict prevention. Following the failure to find a peaceful solution to the disarmament of **Iraq** and when the war is over, the United Nations is likely to play a major role in providing for the humanitarian needs and the reconstruction of Iraq.

Relations with the **United States** remain of central importance in addressing many of the most pressing international crises. The European Union will continue to enhance dialogue and cooperation with the US.

Cooperation with the US is particularly important in the efforts to resolve the conflict in the **Middle East**, where the European Union, the United States, the United Nations and Russia are working together in the "Quartet" to bring the parties back to the negotiating table. Ireland together with its European Union partners will maintain maximum focus and effort in the coming weeks and months.

The European Union's ability to resolve and prevent conflict in recent times is best demonstrated in the **Western Balkans**, which will continue to be a region for priority focus in 2003.

Relations with **Russia** will continue to develop with a new impetus as the European Union's borders move eastward with enlargement. In this context, the European Union's relationship with its new neighbours, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, will assume increased importance.

We will continue to work with our European Union partners in developing relations with **Africa**, with particular focus on governance issues, development and the promotion and protection of human rights.

As illustrated recently, the **Asia** region is subject to rapid change with potentially far reaching consequences. The region will continue to require increased involvement and attention from the European Union, particularly in developing capacity in security and counter-terrorism, and to promote governance and human rights. The situation in **North Korea** will be of particular concern.

Following the Second Summit between the European Union and the countries of **Latin America** and the **Caribbean** (LAC) in May 2002, the focus will be on further developing the bi-regional strategic partnership in advance of the third EU-LAC Summit in Mexico during Ireland's 2004 Presidency.

Cooperation against **terrorism** and on **non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament** will continue to be a key priority both within the European Union and with other states and regions.

Conflict Prevention

Conflict prevention has been identified as being at

the heart of the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy. Following the Gothenburg European Council in June 2001, conflict prevention is continuing to receive priority attention. A particular outcome to date has been more explicit 'mainstreaming' of conflict prevention in policy responses to unfolding international events. The General Affairs and External Relations Council now addresses conflict prevention themes at the outset of each Presidency and reports to the European Council.

European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)

Ireland continues to participate in the ongoing development of European Union military and civilian crisis management capabilities under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). This participation is based on the provisions of the Treaty on European Union. The development of ESDP is essentially focussed on a range of humanitarian, peacekeeping, and crisis management tasks, known as the "Petersberg Tasks". Participation in ESDP takes place within the framework of Ireland's commitment to the United Nations which plays the primary role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations is increasingly looking to regional organisations to undertake peace support operations on its behalf.

The European Union's first operation under ESDP, a police advisory and training mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (EUPM), took effect from 1 January 2003 and by agreement with the United Nations. A number of Garda officers are participating in this mission. The European Union has also expressed readiness to take over the current peacekeeping operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia (FYROM), as well as willingness to lead a peacekeeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina following the existing United Nations authorised NATO-led operation- SFOR. Progress has also been made on the issue of European Union access to certain NATO crisis management assets and resources (e.g., infrastructural and transport capacities) for European Union-led peacekeeping operations under the ESDP.

As confirmed in the national Declaration made by Ireland at the Seville European Council, in June 2002, a decision by Ireland to participate in a European Union-led military crisis management operation will be for sovereign decision on a case-by-case basis and in line with Irish constitutional and legislative arrangements. In accordance with the Defence Acts, Ireland's Defence Forces will only participate in United Nations authorised peace support operations.

Rapid Reaction Force and Civilian Crisis Management

Progress continues to be made towards the European Union's stated goal of having available, by the end of 2003, 50-60,000 persons to undertake the full range of humanitarian, peacekeeping and crisis management tasks ("Petersberg Tasks"). In this context, European Union military crisis management capabilities continue to be refined through a process of seeking to address shortfalls in achieving the agreed goals for the 'Rapid Reaction Force'. These issues will be considered at a Capabilities Conference to be held in the first half of 2003.

Capabilities also continue to be developed in the civilian area. Quantitative targets having already

largely been met, attention is now focussing on qualitative aspects, including training of civilian experts.

Key Objectives in ESDP

In contributing to the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), Ireland's priorities will be to:

- ensure that the ESDP is fully situated within the broader context of the United Nations Charter and the primary role of the United Nations Security Council;
- facilitate Ireland's participation in ESDP consistent with Ireland's policy of military neutrality;
- maximise the role of conflict prevention;
- establish and consolidate effective partnerships in the conflict prevention/crisis management sphere between the European Union and relevant international organisations such as the United Nations, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, as well as with non-European Union member states;
- promote the development of European Union military and civilian crisis management capabilities in a balanced and effective manner;
- review Ireland's commitment to the Headline Goal (or Rapid Reaction Force), having regard to developments toward the objective of achieving this Goal by 2003 and including through our participation, together with the other European Union neutrals, in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Planning and Review Process (PARP);

- implement arrangements for EU-NATO cooperation in a manner which adheres to the relevant principles agreed at European Council level, including as regards the definition of the different nature of the two organisations, respect for the decision-making autonomy of the European Union and non-discrimination against any country, and
- keep public opinion informed of developments in European security and defence and on the rationale for Ireland's involvement.

Overseas Development Assistance

The European Union - the Commission and member states together - is by far the largest provider of official development assistance in the world. For example, the European Union provided €27 billion in 2000, representing more than 50% of all aid given by the Organisation for Cooperation in Europe (OECD) countries. The Commission on its own accounts for 10% of global Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and 20% of the combined European Union figure. The situation is similar for humanitarian aid.

Following the Monterrey Conference in March 2002 the European Union committed itself to a significant increase in ODA, rising from the current 0.33% GNP average by European Union member states to 0.39% by 2006. Ireland's contribution for 2003 is 0.41% GNP.

In addition to its position as the world's largest multilateral grant provider, the European Union is the world's largest single market and is the main trading partner of most developing countries.

Another unique feature of the Union as a development actor is that its development cooperation policy has the express political aim of contributing to the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, and of respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Under the EC budget, up to €7 billion per year is spent on development. EC aid (i.e. under the Treaty establishing the European Community where the Commission is responsible for implementing development policy) is administered by the Commission, and is funded either through the Community Budget or through the European Development Fund (EDF), a special fund outside the Community Budget financed by European Union member states for African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACPs). Ireland Aid contributes approximately €12 million per year to the EDF. Ireland contributes €50 million per year to the Community Budget.

In the context of the ongoing integration of European Union external policies Ireland will work to ensure that development goals should remain central to these external policies. At the European Convention, Ireland has been making the case that one of the principles of the Union's external action should be poverty reduction in low-income developing countries. Ireland will continue to argue that development cooperation should be defined as a distinct European Union policy area with its own specific objectives. These should be set out in the Treaties and given a legal standing similar to other areas of European Union external policy such as CFSP.

In the World Trade Organisation (WTO)

negotiations, Ireland will seek to ensure the effective participation of least developed countries in international trade. Ireland will also work towards improving coherence in these negotiations between development and other relevant policy objectives.

In relation to the European Union-African Caribbean and Pacific (EU-ACP) Agreement, known as the Cotonou Agreement, Ireland will advance negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreements which were launched in 2002 and are to be subject to evaluation in the first half of 2004.

In addition Ireland will work to achieve the following specific objectives:

- more poverty-focused allocation criteria across all EC Aid programmes;
- untying of member states' bilateral aid, on the basis of the Commission proposal of 2002;
- closer cooperation between the European Union, the Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund) and the United Nations in relation to poverty reduction strategy;
- ensuring that development objectives are given the highest possible priority in the restructuring of EC development assistance;
- a more effective European Union response to global humanitarian crises, and greater European Union support for United Nations-led responses;
- effective implementation of the European Union's policies and programmes aimed at the fight against HIV/AIDS Malaria and TB, and
- the development of new member states

participation in European Union development activities and meetings.

In 2004, during Ireland's Presidency of the European Union, we will work for an effective European Union contribution to major United Nations conferences including the 11th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the ten year review of the Barbados Programme of Action for Small Islands Developing States and the Commemoration of the 1994 Cairo Declaration on Population and Development.