



PRESS RELEASE

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CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION CRITICISES IRELAND'S PROGRESS ON UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Coalition 2030 Challenges Government's First Progress Report to UN Body

Coalition 2030, an alliance of over 100 Irish civil society organisations and networks, today expressed concern that Ireland is falling behind on its commitment to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The coalition outlined its concerns in a report published as the Irish Government prepares to present its first progress report on the SDGs at the United Nations in New York on Tuesday (17 July).

In its report, Coalition 2030 acknowledges the tremendous role played by the Irish Government in getting global agreement on the SDGs and the progress it has made to date to map progress towards the goals. However, Coalition 2030 warns that there are significant gaps in the Government's National Implementation Plan for the SDGs launched by Minister Denis Naughten in April.

Speaking in New York, Suzanne Keatinge, CEO of Dóchas, the Irish association of non-governmental development organisations said, "Much greater urgency and political leadership will be required if we are to ensure the transformative change that the SDGs envisage by 2030. The Government needs to develop a realistic costing and prioritise targets and outcomes, but also involve all stakeholders, particularly civil society, in that process. Only then will we meet the ambition of the SDGs which is to make sure that the needs of the poorest and most marginalised in society, at home and abroad, are met sustainably and for future generations."

In its independent report, Coalition 2030 calls for greater focus on developing national policies to support the implementation of the SDGs, "Arguably the greatest threat to Ireland's implementation of the SDGs is a pronounced lack of policy coherence. Greater focus has to be placed on the inter linkages between the 17 Goals which makes them so transformative. This issue is particularly manifest in Ireland's poor performance in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and failure to stem the downward spiral in Ireland's biodiversity. As part of the National SDGs Implementation Plan, the government, in consultation with the National Economic and Social Council, should strengthen a whole-of-government approach to the SDGs," said Michael Ewing from the Environmental Pillar, an advocacy coalition of 29 Irish environmental NGOs.

Also commenting on the report, Dr Sean Healy, CEO of Social Justice Ireland said, "Ireland's performance on the Sustainable Development Goals is particularly bad on environment and inequalities. This emphasises the need for Government to put these SDGs at the centre of policy formation across the board. Much of what Ireland is doing is damaging people, the economy or the environment. Ireland needs much more committed action to build a future consistent with the SDGs."

David Joyce from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions added that "Ireland as one of the richest countries in the world had to do better and move faster than most in meeting SDG targets. Ireland has the potential to be the best performer on every single goal, showing that it is possible to

combine economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The report being delivered to the UN this week shows we have a long way to go in terms of leaving nobody behind. “

Valerie Duffy, Development Education Coordinator at National Youth Council of Ireland said, “To achieve the SDGs we also need education for transformative change. We need education that enables all people to participate meaningfully, to critically engage in sustainable development, and to imagine and create new futures. This is a central part of SDG 12, which is under review at this year’s High Level Political Forum. Goal 12 requires Member States to mainstream Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development.”

Ivan Cooper, Director of Public Policy at The Wheel, the national association of charities said, “Dialogue with stakeholders is absolutely essential and we need everybody working together all the way from the State down to the grassroots movements if we are to achieve these goals.”

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals, which reflect the totally intertwined economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. All UN member states committed to using them to frame their national agendas and political policies to reach the targets by 2030.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are therefore an essential framework to guide the future direction of Irish domestic and foreign policy, as well as the development of a healthy and sustainable society and economy in Ireland.

Coalition 2030’s report is available at www.ireland2030.org/report-2018/

#Agenda2030

ENDS

A spokesperson from Coalition 2030 is available for comment. Contact Gert Ackermann on Tel: 086 176 9287 or email gert@wheel.ie

NOTE TO EDITOR

- The Government will be presenting its Voluntary National report before the United Nation’s High Level Political Forum on Tuesday, 17 July 2018.
- In April this year, the Government set out its plans in the National Implementation Plan, spearheaded by the Department of Communications & Climate Action (DCCA).

ABOUT COALITION 2030

Coalition 2030 is an alliance of over 100 civil society organisations working together to ensure Ireland keeps its promise to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), both at home and abroad.

The coalition is made up of both international and domestic NGOs along with youth organisations, environmental groups, academics, and trade unions. Its member organisations work in a broad variety of areas – from humanitarian relief to labour rights and environmental sustainability – in Ireland and in over 50 countries around the world. This diverse partnership has come together in the belief that Agenda 2030 – the global development plan agreed in September 2015 at the United Nations – must be fully implemented and its promises kept.

For a list of Coalition 2030 members see: <https://www.ireland2030.org/coalition-2030-members>