



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

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New building marks expansion for Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Micheál Martin TD and Mr Denis Rooney, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, today performed an important official opening of the New Building at the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, Co. Wicklow. The ceremony was attended by over 100 people with various links to the Glencree Centre.

The EUR 5 million capital building project, which has been jointly funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and the Office of Public Works, provides a state of the art reception and office area for the Glencree Centre. Today's expansion is part of a five-year strategic plan for the Centre, which will allow the peace-building work of the organisation to reach an ever greater number of people on the island of Ireland and beyond.

Speaking at the official ceremony today, Minister Martin said: "The Government is delighted to support Glencree's ongoing peace-building work in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties. Glencree is successfully sharing lessons learned in Ireland with conflict areas around the world. We commend their brave and innovative work that is so badly needed in the world today."

Denis Rooney, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland said: "We are delighted to have been able to provide financial assistance of some EUR2 million towards this development, as part of the Fund's Leaving a Legacy Programme. We very much share the aims of the Glencree Centre of ensuring that the lessons of peace-making in Ireland are shared widely for the

press release

benefit of people in areas of conflict around the world that are seeking to resolve their differences and secure peace for future generations.”

Chief Executive of the Glenree Centre, Dr. David Bloomfield, expressed his thanks to the IFI and OPW on behalf of the many individuals and groups who access services at the Centre, and told guests that the building represents a significant legacy from the International Fund for Ireland, which has provided much-needed funding to Glenree for its peace-building programmes.

Dr. Bloomfield said that the new building, designed to reflect the unique environment of the Centre and maximise the beautiful views of its Wicklow mountain location, will afford staff and volunteers at the Centre, a superb working environment and an attractive space in which to welcome visitors and programme participants.

The Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation has been offering peace-building programmes since 1974. It brings people together after violent conflict to help find constructive solutions through dialogue. The work of the Centre includes conflict resolution and media training. Glenree’s work extends across Ireland, north and south, and internationally.

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Notes to editors:

About the International Fund for Ireland

The International Fund for Ireland is an international organisation established by the Irish and British Governments in 1986 with the objectives of promoting economic and social advance and of encouraging contact, dialogue and reconciliation between unionists and nationalists throughout Ireland. Contributors to the Fund are the United States, the European Union, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Since its inception, the Fund has committed more than EUR803m/STG628m to a wide variety of projects in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties.

The Fund's budget for 2009 is EUR32m/STG25m. Funding priorities include grassroots level reconciliation and cross-community projects. In addition, the Fund seeks to address the root causes of deprivation in the most disadvantaged areas by using shared economic concerns as a platform for regeneration and cross-community activity. The Fund will also continue its pioneering work with children and young people throughout Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties.

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