

A call from ATD Ireland
on the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2015

A short « To Do List » for all candidates to the next General Election

« Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Preamble - This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. »

These are the first words of the **2030 Agenda**, prepared with the support of the Irish Mission at the United Nations and adopted by the Irish State, as one of the Member States of the UN, on the **25 September 2015** in New York.

As we mark the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty, this 17 October 2015, ATD Ireland (www.atdireland.ie) takes this Agenda on board. It calls on all candidates to the 2016 General Election to prepare themselves to work towards the realisation of the 2030 Agenda and to play their part in combatting poverty and deprivation, both in Ireland and abroad.

As part of this preparation, we suggest here a « To Do List » ahead of next general election:

1 - Think Global Goals: We invite future candidates to study the content of the **2030 Agenda** and the commentary of Irish Ambassador Michael Donoghue about the spirit that guided its elaboration. If they are elected, we expect Dáil representatives to help put in place a national strategy for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Ireland and abroad.

2 - Think Human Rights: We invite future candidates to acquaint themselves with the ambitious Human Rights framework adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in **September 2012** and inspired, among others, by the report on Ireland of UN Special Rapporteur Magdalena Sepúlveda. This framework is « **The UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights** ». If candidates are elected, we recommend they use this framework as one of the key documents for the design of a long-term multi-dimensional consistent national anti-poverty strategy.

3 - Keep Promises: In **February 2014**, the Irish Constitutional Convention requested with a massive majority the strengthening of the protection of

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Irish Constitution. Having in mind the current dramatic housing crisis, and in support of the work of the Irish ESC Rights initiative, we invite future candidates to remember the 2014 decision and to ensure the new Government looks favourably on the Constitutional Convention's request.

In September 2015, Taoiseach Enda Kenny reiterated the Irish promise to achieve the UN 0.7% GDP target for development assistance. But no timelines were given to the commitment. We invite future candidates to suggest timelines and to keep promises.

4 - Look for Innovation: If eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is indeed the greatest global challenge, we must use all available expertise. For centuries a specific knowledge has been forgotten or under-estimated: the expertise of people who themselves face long-term and often generational poverty. We invite candidates to be creative and ambitious. Inclusion on all fronts is necessary for development, **especially design and decision-making inclusion**. Pilot projects should be supported that value, listen, empower people from the margins and that give them a genuine leading role in designing, implementing and assessing anti-poverty strategies.

5 - Go to Paris: The first people to suffer from climate change will be members of the world's poorest communities. We invite election candidates to take time in a few weeks go to Paris to the Climate Summit and to be informed by Irish and foreign leaders of the Climate Justice movements. We know it is of paramount importance for our common future that we take action on climate issues in a fair way that defends the world's most disadvantaged people. All election candidates should accept to be trained about these complex issues.

6 - Think '17': Could 17 October become an annual « check-up » appointment for the 17 Goals? As « eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge » in the 2030 agenda, why not decide that the UN Day for Eradication of Poverty becomes an annual date when Ireland looks at its progress regarding the implementation of this agenda! The '17' October for the '17' Goals. The new Dáil and new Government would certainly remember it!

7 - Stay Vigilant to the guiding principle 'Leave No One Behind': Many Irish and international NGOs and CSOs, and among them ATD, invested much time and effort to influence the draft of the 2030 agenda. Their voices have been heard. Heads of State accepted "leave no one behind" as a guiding principle for the 2030 agenda. However, we know that to "leave no one behind" is as difficult a challenge in the fight against poverty, as in the fight against climate change or when facing growing migration issues. It requires that the dignity of people living in poverty be respected and that their life experiences and unique knowledge be recognised.

We invite all future candidates to remain vigilant. They should let themselves be nourished by the thinking and lives of people and families living at the margins and especially in persistent and severe poverty.

ATD Ireland
17 October 2015
www.atdireland.ie