



INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

# Community Transformation

Strategic Framework  
for Action 2012-2015



Helping to tackle some of the  
most significant remaining  
challenges to lasting peace.



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### CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

As Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland (the Fund), I am delighted to introduce the Fund's Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015.

Delivering lasting peace on the island of Ireland is a slow process, extending over decades rather than years. While enormous progress has been made in recent years, much work is still required to address the sectarian tensions that remain between many Unionists and Nationalists in Northern Ireland.

A greater focus on community transformation rather than conflict management is now required to address some of the most significant remaining challenges to lasting peace.

The strategic framework places particular emphasis on delivering community transformation by engaging with individuals and communities that have not previously, or only partially, participated in peace building and community development activities.

I am confident that the strategic framework will provide the necessary momentum and focus for tackling some of the most significant remaining challenges and making the final push to positively transform community relations – particularly in those interface communities which continue to be affected by sectarian violence.

Positively influencing government departments and other funders of the need to work more collaboratively by sharing and linking initiatives in order to ensure they



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are complementary and thereby achieve positive and sustainable outcomes forms a major part of the strategic framework.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank our international donors – the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – for their very generous financial support and political encouragement.

The support and encouragement from our donors has enabled the Fund to underpin the Peace Process and assist the British and Irish governments in their efforts to deliver a lasting peace on the island of Ireland. Our interventions have had, and I hope they will continue to have, a very significant and positive impact on the lives of thousands of people living in hundreds of communities throughout the island of Ireland.



Dr Adrian Johnston  
Chairman



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On behalf of the Government of Ireland, I am delighted to welcome this strategic framework for action adopted by the International Fund for Ireland. Since it was established in 1986, the International Fund for Ireland has been an invaluable asset in its support for economic and social advance and for contact, dialogue and reconciliation between Nationalists and Unionists throughout Ireland.

Over the last 20 years, both parts of Ireland have achieved unprecedented levels of peace and reconciliation, due in no small part to the consistent international support of our friends and allies for peace in Ireland. The International Fund has been a key vehicle for this support, and has been a tangible demonstration of the generosity and friendship extended by the United States, the European Union, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

While much progress has been made, I am mindful that the scars left by decades of violence and alienation heal slowly, and that there is still much to be done in those communities that have not previously, or only partially, engaged in peace building and reconciliation activities. The period covered by the Strategic Framework for Action, 2012–2015, presents a further opportunity for the Irish and British governments, the Northern Ireland Executive and all the communities in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties to refocus their efforts to embed peace on the island of Ireland.

I fully support the Fund's decision to focus its latest strategy on bringing about a situation where residents will feel safe about the removal of Peace Walls, and on Peace Impact interventions in those communities suffering high levels of economic deprivation, in order to produce long-term positive impacts.

Guím gach rath ar obair an Chiste Idirnáisiúnta na hÉireann ar son síocháin agus athmhuintearas in Éirinn. [I wish the International Fund for Ireland every success in its work for peace and reconciliation.]

**Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade,  
Mr Eamon Gilmore, T.D.**



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The Fund's Strategic Framework for Action 2006-2010 very successfully developed and delivered a wide range of economic, peace building and reconciliation interventions which helped to underpin stable politics and promote economic and social advance.

I have noted, and I am fully supportive, of the Chairman's comments that a greater focus on community transformation is now required to address some of the most significant remaining challenges. I strongly welcome the fact that the Fund's Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 is clearly targeted at some of the most significant remaining challenges to lasting peace and a genuinely shared future.

I am very pleased that the strategic framework places particular emphasis on delivering real and meaningful community transformation in those parts of the community which continue to be affected by sectarian division. As indicated in the strategic framework, such interventions are critical to building a truly integrated, shared and peaceful society.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank the international donors to the Fund for their very generous financial support and political encouragement. The international dimension of the Fund has greatly facilitated its ability to transcend political disputes and tensions. I would also like to take this opportunity to formally thank the Board Members (past and present) of the International Fund for Ireland for the very significant amount of time and effort which they have put into providing a clear strategic direction for the Fund.

**Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,  
The Right Honourable Theresa Villiers, M.P.**



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### **The Government of the United States of America**

On behalf of the Government of the United States of America, I welcome the publication of the International Fund for Ireland's Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015.

The Fund was first established in 1986, and from that time the United States of America has been a constant supporter of, and donor to, the Fund. During its lifetime the Fund has developed and delivered a wide range of economic, peace building and reconciliation interventions that have successfully and positively impacted on the lives of thousands of people throughout the island of Ireland.

The Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 provides a focused and innovative approach for dealing with some of the most significant remaining challenges to lasting peace. The United States of America wishes the Fund success in the pursuit of its objectives as contained within the Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015.

**Daniel Hynes**

**United States Government Observer to the International Fund for Ireland**



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### **The European Commission**

The EU was a donor to the Fund from 1989 to 2010 targeting its annual contributions on cross-community and cross-border projects to foster the Peace Process and to bring about sustainable economic and social cohesion.

The Fund has been deployed with extraordinary foresight and courage, contributing to improvements in people's lives on the island of Ireland, with consistent delivery of tangible results over a period of 25 years. Alongside the PEACE Programmes of the EU, the Fund has an unparalleled legacy in terms of reconciliation and peace building activities and will live on through the thousands of participants on both sides of the border.

The Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 addresses the remaining key challenges and rightly seeks to deliver meaningful community transformation by focusing on a limited number of key actions, such as the physical barriers to peace as well as the invisible barriers which still prevent some communities from fully engaging in the peace process.

The European Commission wishes the Fund success in its future activities and is confident that this strategic framework will allow the Fund to apply its experiences and proven expertise in areas where peace building, reconciliation and integration are needed most.

**José Palma Andres**

**European Commission Observer to the International Fund for Ireland**



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### **The Government of Canada**

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The Government of Canada has supported the International Fund for Ireland for more than 25 years. In this time, the Fund's careful and strategic approach to fostering peace and reconciliation has improved the lives and outlook of thousands of people and helped underpin the Peace Process.

In order to secure and sustain the remarkable progress that has been achieved, particularly in recent years, more work is now required in the areas identified by the Fund. The period covered by the Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 will be critical to addressing the remaining challenges to lasting peace, and the Fund is ideally placed to assist the British and Irish governments to address these remaining challenges.

The Board of the Fund has the support of the Canadian Government in the delivery of the Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015.

**Brian Doherty**

**Canadian Government Observer to the International Fund for Ireland**



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### **The Government of Australia**

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Australia welcomes the International Fund for Ireland's Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015. And in so doing, it congratulates the Board of the Fund for its foresight in its preparation.

Since it was established by the British and Irish governments in 1986, the Fund has delivered real and meaningful change through a wide range of innovation and well-executed programmes, and has been a strong force for peace. The Fund's vital interventions have improved the lives of thousands, built community capacity and mutual understanding, and helped sustain momentum for reconciliation and peace building activities.

The task of securing a lasting peace has changed in recent years and it is appropriate that the Board of the Fund has recognised this in the new strategic framework. The Government of Australia is confident that the Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 will make a critical contribution towards a lasting peace on the island of Ireland.

**Ruth Adler**

**Australian Government Observer to the International Fund for Ireland**



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### **The Government of New Zealand**

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The New Zealand Government welcomes the International Fund for Ireland's Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015.

Since its inception in 1986, the International Fund for Ireland has helped the people of Northern Ireland and the southern border counties to take confident and brave steps towards peace and reconciliation.

New Zealand is proud to have been associated with the Fund over its 25 years of innovative work across Ireland, directly benefiting communities and supporting the Peace Process. This new Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 will further embed the achievements made and meet the needs of those communities where peace remains elusive or fragile.

I commend the Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 and the focused efforts to promote social and economic progress and to encourage peace building and reconciliation.

**Lockwood Smith**

**New Zealand Government Observer to the International Fund for Ireland**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since it was established by the British and Irish governments in 1986, the Fund has successfully developed and delivered a wide range of economic, peace building and reconciliation interventions to underpin the Peace Process.

Thousands of individuals living in hundreds of communities affected by sectarian violence have benefited from the Fund's support.

Independent evaluations of the Fund's many successful interventions clearly indicate that it is possible to deliver real and meaningful change. The Fund will continue in its efforts to positively influence policy makers and other funders of the need to mainstream or further develop such interventions.

However, despite the remarkable progress made to secure peace on the island of Ireland, much work is still required in those communities that have not previously, or only partially, engaged in peace building and reconciliation activities.

This strategic framework has been specifically developed to deliver real and positive community transformation through peace building, reconciliation and capacity building interventions in those communities that have not previously, or only partially, participated in peace building and reconciliation activities. Such interventions are critical to building a truly integrated, shared and peaceful society.



## 2. THE CHALLENGES

Since 2006, there has been a growing awareness of the complexities and extended timescales for embedding peace on the island of Ireland. There is also a greater recognition of the distance that has yet to be travelled by many Unionists and Nationalists to build a truly peaceful and shared society. These factors together with the deteriorating economic situation in both parts of the island and increased paramilitary activity by those opposed to the Peace Process and political settlement all threaten the extraordinary progress that has been made.

- In 2011, Northern Ireland witnessed 124 shooting/bombing incidents which injured 80 people.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2009/2010, there were 3,289 recorded assaults on police.<sup>2</sup>
- In June 2011, large-scale disturbances in East Belfast resulted in three days of rioting.<sup>3</sup>
- The overall financial cost of division in Northern Ireland in 2011 was estimated to be £1billion (US\$1.6bn/€1.25bn).<sup>4</sup>
- Peace Walls (physical structures dividing interface communities) have increased in number and scale since the 1994 ceasefires.<sup>5</sup>
- In Northern Ireland 90% of social housing is segregated.<sup>6</sup>
- In Northern Ireland 94% of children are educated in single identity schools.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2011, youth unemployment in Northern Ireland rose to 19.1% and 30% in the southern border counties.<sup>8</sup>
- Paramilitaries are increasingly targeting unemployed young people.<sup>9</sup>



This strategic framework is aimed at helping the British and Irish governments and the Northern Ireland Executive in their efforts to embed the Peace Process, by tackling some of the most significant remaining challenges to lasting peace. In particular, this strategic framework places a focus on the very specific challenges associated with the removal or reduction of physical barriers (Peace Walls) and on working with communities that have not previously engaged in peace building and reconciliation activities.

### 3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2012-2015

- To develop and deliver a range of interventions that tackle segregation, and promote reconciliation and integration in interface areas.
- To engage with individuals and communities that have not previously, or only partially, participated in peace building and community development activities.
- To promote economic and social advance in communities suffering from very high levels of economic and social deprivation.
- To build strong strategic alliances with other funders and government departments to ensure interventions are complementary and sustainable.
- To positively influence government departments, other agencies and other funders of the need to mainstream Fund interventions as appropriate.
- To share the experience and learning acquired by the Fund with other peace builders on the island of Ireland and in other regions emerging from conflict.
- To complete projects funded under the 2006-2010 Sharing this Space Strategy in accordance with agreed timescales.



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### 4. THE APPROACH

The work of the Fund to deliver real and positive community transformation in the period 2012-2015 will cluster around three key programmes:

#### **PEACE WALLS PROGRAMME (PWP)**

The strategic aim of the PWP is to develop and deliver a range of confidence and relationship building interventions within and between interface communities to help residents reach a position where they feel it is safe and appropriate to proceed with the removal of Peace Walls in their area.



The strategic objectives of the PWP are to:

- Encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between Unionists and Nationalists in interface areas.
- Facilitate dialogue (including conversations on dealing with the past), and/or mediation within and between interface communities to build greater cross-community cohesion and confidence.



- Build relationships and trust for peace building activities and establish a cross-community visioning process to build a shared future within and between interface communities.
- Engage with individuals and communities that have not previously participated in community development or peace building activities.
- Underpin the Peace Process and promote economic prosperity by creating the conditions where interface communities are content to proceed with the physical removal of Peace Walls in their area.
- Help interface communities to leverage additional funding for the physical removal of Peace Walls and any associated infrastructure and community regeneration needs when the required levels of confidence have been established.
- Improve the wellbeing and safety of local residents in interface areas by promoting economic and social advance.
- Provide a template for this type of intervention, which if successful could be used by others to deliver similar interventions when the Fund ceases to exist.



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### PEACE IMPACT PROGRAMME (PIP)

The strategic aim of the PIP is to build sustainable peace and prosperity in areas suffering from high levels of economic and social deprivation, where there are low levels of engagement in peace building and where the Peace Process has delivered limited benefits.

The strategic objectives of the PIP are to:

- Engage with individuals and groups that have not previously, or only partially, participated in community development and peace building activities in targeted urban and rural areas.
- Increase contact, dialogue, sharing and integration within and between communities; and support creative and innovative approaches to dealing with contentious issues.
- Build cohesion within and between communities to deliver improved relationships.
- Promote greater understanding and acceptance of diversity between communities, thereby reducing sectarianism, this may necessarily involve initial engagement with single identity communities provided it leads to cross-community engagement.



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- Target the engagement and participation of disaffected young people that are vulnerable and at risk of paramilitary involvement and unlawful activity.
- Underpin the Peace Process and promote economic prosperity by increasing the skills base within interface communities.
- Assist with the development of exemplar community organisations and the dissemination of best practice to other communities on the island of Ireland and other regions emerging from conflict.
- Encourage the involvement and participation of all residents from the target areas.



### COMPLETION & SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME (CSP)

The strategic aim of the CSP is to complete projects funded under the 2006-2010 Sharing this Space Strategy within agreed timescales and deliver a wide range of sustainable interventions that will continue to produce positive peace building and reconciliation impacts long after the Fund ceases to exist.

## 5. STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The Fund was never conceived as a permanent funding mechanism, and the Fund recognises that the levels of financial support which it attracted pre-2010 cannot be maintained.

The Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2015 is dependent on donor funding decisions. Whatever additional financial support donors decide to provide will enable the Fund to focus on delivering real and positive community transformation – particularly in those interface areas where sectarian violence has the potential to destabilise the Peace Process.

The Fund has a unique standing and is widely accepted within all communities, notably within areas regarded by government as those most difficult to reach. The international dimension of the Fund has greatly facilitated its ability to transcend political disputes and tensions. Its credibility and flexibility have facilitated, and will continue to facilitate, the Fund in accessing communities and constituencies that are currently beyond the reach of governmental interventions.

The major challenge for the Fund in the remainder of its lifetime is to assist the British and Irish governments by helping to address some of the most significant remaining challenges to lasting peace on the island of Ireland.



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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EUROPEAN UNION



CANADA



AUSTRALIA



NEW ZEALAND

The International Fund for Ireland is an independent international organisation, established by the British and Irish governments in 1986. The Fund's main objectives are to promote economic and social advance and encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between Unionists and Nationalists throughout Ireland. Donors to the Fund are: the United States of America, the European Union, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.