

PAPER NSMC TB 2 (09) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

**TRADE & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
SECTORAL FORMAT**

CLOGHER

16 DECEMBER 2009

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The tenth North South Ministerial Council meeting in Trade and Business Development sectoral format was held in Clogher, Co.Tyrone on Wednesday 16 December 2009.
2. The meeting was attended by Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Junior Minister Gerry Kelly, MLA and by Mary Coughlan, TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Minister Foster chaired the meeting.

PROGRESS REPORT

3. The Chief Executive of InterTradelreland, Liam Nellis, presented a progress report on InterTradelreland's performance and business activities including:
 - the generation of £61.2M/€78.5M business development value;
 - a total of 2801 firms utilizing InterTradelreland's Knowledge Resources; and
 - 328 firms participating on InterTradelreland's Programme/Networks.

Ministers also received a presentation from the Chairperson of InterTradelreland Dr David Dobbin on the Strategic Review undertaken by the InterTradelreland Board.

4. The Council discussed InterTradelreland's Business Plan for 2009 and noted that InterTradelreland had applied efficiency savings to the 2009 Budget in

accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. Ministers approved the 2009 Business Plan and recommended the 2009 budget provision of £10,781,550 for Inter*Tradel*Ireland.

5. Ministers noted Inter*Tradel*Ireland's draft Business Plan for 2010. The future plans of Inter*Tradel*Ireland as set out in the draft Business Plan 2010 include:
 - the increase of the Body's Return on Investment to 8:1;
 - the generation of £62M/€70M Trade and Business Development Value;
 - 500 new firms engaged in cross border business trade and business development; and
 - the creation of 125 new jobs

CO-OPERATION ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

6. Ministers received a presentation on Inter*Tradel*Ireland's Report on co-operation in the area of Science, Technology and Innovation. and noted a paper prepared by Inter*Tradel*Ireland on Co-operation on Research and Development. They welcomed the US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership approach aimed at increasing the level of co-operation amongst researchers across US-Ireland-Northern Ireland, including the developments to date.

Ministers noted that the paper outlines economic partnership, contains priority activities including the US-Ireland-Northern Ireland, R and D Partnership and the European dimension (FP7) and possibilities for both jurisdictions to work together to maximise drawdown of EU funds (not subject to match funding); They also noted opportunities for further collaboration including:

- Development of an early alert system for potential FP7 proposals;
- Identification of areas where both Northern Ireland and Ireland have shared interests and expertise;
- Utilisation of Inter*Tradel*Ireland's Research Connections Programme; and

asked officials to report progress to a future NSMC meeting.

7. The Council noted Inter*Tradel*Ireland's Annual Review of Activities and Annual Accounts 2008.

NEXT MEETING

8. The Council agreed that its next meeting in Trade and Business Development sectoral format would take place in Spring 2010.

**Joint Secretariat
16 December 2009**