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NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

TRADE & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SECTORAL FORMAT

DUBLIN CASTLE

8 JULY 2009

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The ninth North South Ministerial Council meeting in Trade and Business Development sectoral format was held in Dublin Castle on Wednesday 8 July 2009.
2. The meeting was attended by Mary Coughlan, TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment and Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development. The Tánaiste, Mary Coughlan chaired the meeting.

PRESENTATION

3. Ministers received a presentation from Mark O'Kane, Managing Director, Marlborough Engineering Belfast and Martin McVicar of Comb lift Ltd., Monaghan, participants in InterTradelreland's Acumen programme. Marlborough Engineering employ 35 people while Combilift currently employs 155 people and exports 96% of what it produces to 50 countries worldwide.

STRATEGIC REVIEW

4. Ministers received a presentation from the Chairperson of InterTradelreland, Dr. David Dobbin, on a strategic review of the operations of InterTradelreland The main themes for InterTradelreland arising from the review are:
 - to increase economic outcomes to optimise the return on public expenditure through enhanced support in the public procurement market and facilitating new cross-border co-operation in sectors such as agri-food and renewables;

- to work in a more co-ordinated way with sponsor Departments and other economic development Agencies;
- to focus on activities offering the greatest economic benefit;
- the need to increase focus on business and client needs with greater clarity in ITI's work, marketing and communications.

PROGRESS REPORT

5. The Chief Executive, Liam Nellis, presented a progress report on InterTradelreland's work including:
 - £65.45m/€77.88m in business value generated in 2008 through InterTradelreland's business networks and firms engaged in its projects; and
 - 590 firms engaged in developing their competitiveness through InterTradelreland's initiatives in 2008

6. The Council discussed progress on InterTradelreland's Business Plan for 2009.

7. Ministers received a presentation from Aidan Gough Strategy and Policy Director, InterTradelreland, on InterTradelreland's Report on co-operation in the area of Science, Technology and Innovation. The report also identified a number of areas of potential increased co-operation such as;
 - Policy Coordination,
 - Research Pooling,
 - Expansion of the US-Ireland R&D Partnership,
 - Business-to-Business Innovation Vouchers,
 - New Market Opportunities from Technology Convergence,
 - New Market Entry Innovation Programme, and
 - Expansion of WITS Re-Enter Programme.

8. The Council noted InterTradelreland's Annual Review of Activities and Annual Accounts 2007.

NEXT MEETING

9. The Council agreed that its next meeting in Trade and Business Development sectoral format would take place in November/December 2009

Joint Secretariat
8 July 2009