



# **NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

## **FIFTH INSTITUTIONAL MEETING**

### **STORMONT CASTLE**

**11 NOVEMBER 2009**

### **JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ**

1. The fifth meeting of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) in Institutional format was held in Stormont Castle, Belfast on 11 November 2009.
2. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by the First Minister, the Rt Hon Peter Robinson MP MLA, the deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness MP MLA, Robin Newton, MLA and Margaret Ritchie, MLA. The Irish Government was represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin TD. The First Minister and deputy First Minister chaired the meeting.
3. Ministers had a broad discussion on practical mutually beneficial co-operation in the context of the current economic and budgetary challenges facing each jurisdiction.

#### **OBSTACLES TO CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY**

4. The Council noted and welcomed the continuing popularity of the Border People website [www.borderpeople.info](http://www.borderpeople.info) and the latest marketing strategy for the website which is targeting specific events in the border region.
5. The Council noted that a plan is in place to inform teachers about recent changes in pension arrangements for those teachers who wish to transfer to work in the other jurisdiction. As a first step an information seminar will be held with the main teachers Trade Unions and that the

information provided will be circulated to other government departments.

6. It also noted that the NSMC Joint Secretariat has facilitated a meeting between relevant departments to discuss access to welfare benefits for cross-border workers.

#### **EU MATTERS RAISED WITHIN NSMC**

7. The Council noted the work on EU related matters in the relevant NSMC sectoral formats since April 2009. This included developments in the Agriculture, Aquaculture and Marine and Special EU Programmes sectors.

#### **NORTH SOUTH BODIES ISSUES**

8. The Council discussed a range of issues relating to the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited (the Bodies) including the implementation of cumulative efficiency savings in their 2009 and 2010 budgets and agreed other cost saving measures.
9. The Council approved the 2009 Business Plan for the Special EU Programmes Body. The Council also agreed a process to bring up to date specific non pay terms and conditions of the staff of the Bodies.

#### **NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT NEW ACCOMMODATION**

10. The Council noted that construction work on new permanent accommodation for the NSMC Joint Secretariat in Armagh is proceeding on target and that plans are being made for an official opening in 2010.
11. The Council also agreed that, where practicable, future NSMC meetings will be held in the new accommodation, representing a more cost effective and efficient use of resources.

**Joint Secretariat  
11 November 2009**