



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



# Implementation of 'Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025' Report to Government – Year 2

May 2022



## Summary

2021 was the second year of implementation of the Government's Africa Strategy under the *Global Ireland* programme.



Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D. with President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, New York, September 2021. © DFA

It was another year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. 2021 began and ended with significant COVID waves across Europe and Africa. The pandemic had an impact across Ireland's partnerships with Africa, particularly in our development cooperation as the human and economic consequences of the virus eroded global progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Nevertheless, having adapted to new ways of political, economic and cultural engagement, and having reacted decisively in the early stages of the pandemic through our development cooperation, Ireland continued to advance the objectives of the Africa Strategy and there were some significant achievements in 2021.

- » **Trade** in goods increased in 2021 to a record level of €2.42 billion. Trade in services, now at an all time high of just over €4 billion, has been a particular success story, with growth in services exports to Africa of 300% in the ten years to 2020. With an increase of 8%, Irish agri-food exports to Africa performed remarkably well within a difficult international context affected by the pandemic. Ireland is one of the leading global exporters of dairy products to West Africa, while Irish spirits exports to Africa grew by a further 133% in 2021. The 7<sup>th</sup> Africa Ireland Economic Forum in June 2022 will be a timely opportunity to showcase the significant potential for growth in mutually beneficial trade and investment between Ireland and Africa.
- » **A new Embassy was opened in Morocco** in 2021 and the Government announced that a new Embassy would open in Senegal. These Embassies represent Ireland's first in francophone Africa. They will deepen our partnerships in the North and West Africa regions, provide new entry points to expand Ireland's trade with Africa, and serve as platforms for Ireland's contributions to the region, including through the EU, particularly on the complex security, humanitarian and development challenges faced by the Sahel.



Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney T.D., chairing the UN Security Council during Ireland's Presidency of the Council, September 2021. © DFA

- » **New and deeper political partnerships** underpin Ireland's wider strategic objectives in Africa in peace and security, trade and investment, and development cooperation. The President, Taoiseach and Government Ministers engaged on a range of African issues and with a variety of stakeholders across Africa in 2021. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney T.D., visited Kenya and Somalia in July and Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy T.D., visited Rwanda and Uganda in October.
- » As an elected member of the United Nations Security Council, Ireland played a leadership role in **contributing to peace and security in Africa** in 2021. Ireland worked closely with African partners on the Security Council, for example with Niger as co-penholders on the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel, as co-chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security, and as informal focal points on Hunger and Conflict. Ireland took on a leadership role on a number of Security Council agenda items in 2021, for example as Chair of the Somalia Sanctions Committee, and was at the forefront of efforts to address the conflict in Ethiopia at the UN Security Council.
- » Ireland became an Associate Observer at the **Community of Portuguese Language Countries** at the organisation's Summit in Angola in July 2021. This will deepen our political, trade and development cooperation links with Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and around the world.
- » Notable progress was achieved in 2021 in expanding **educational and research links**. Student numbers from Africa increased 5% in the 2020-2021 academic year to over 1,300 students. Education in Ireland organised six Education Fairs in Africa attracting over 22,500 students, almost double the 2020 number. Education and research links also grew through increased numbers of Master's-level Fellowships offered to African students by Irish Aid and through support by the Irish Research Council for African early-career researchers.
- » Ireland continued its support for innovation in Irish-African **private sector collaboration**, through the Africa Agri-Food Development Programme operated by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Foreign Affairs, and through the development of a new Tech Challenge Fund in South Africa.

- » Ireland worked with our African partners towards **achieving the Sustainable Development Goals** in the challenging context of the pandemic and record levels of humanitarian need. In 2021, Ireland allocated at least €100 million towards improvements in global health, including the response to COVID-19. Beyond financial support, Ireland donated over 1 million COVID-19 vaccine doses to COVAX in 2021, including 500,000 doses to Nigeria and 276,000 doses to Ghana. Ireland also donated 335,500 vaccine doses bilaterally to Uganda.
- » Significant progress was made in 2021 to strengthen **Ireland's leadership on climate action** and to support climate adaptation and resilience in Africa. At COP26, Taoiseach Micheál Martin committed to more than doubling Ireland's international climate finance to at least €225 million per year by 2025, calling for increased adaptation finance to Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan T.D., participated in the EU's negotiating team on issues including transparency and climate finance. Minister Coveney announced €2.1 million in support to a number of sustainable blue economy initiatives.
- » Ireland's Embassy network in Africa played a leadership role in galvanising political engagement with the **UN Food Systems Summit** in September 2021, which was addressed by President Michael D. Higgins and financially supported by Ireland. At the **Nutrition for Growth Summit** in December 2021, Minister of State Brophy pledged €800 million for global nutrition over the next five years.
- » In July 2021, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris T.D., and Minister of State Brophy announced a new €3.2m **Sustainable Development Goals Challenge Prize**. This collaboration between Science Foundation Ireland and Irish Aid supports academic researchers in Ireland and partner countries, including in Africa, to collaborate in the development of innovative solutions to health and well-being.
- » In October, the Government announced an **increased allocation to international development aid to over €1 billion** for 2022. This will help increase Ireland's investment in partner countries in Africa to recover from the impact of the pandemic and to respond to the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D., and Minister for Overseas Development Aid and the Diaspora, Colm Brophy T.D., with Sylvia Katete Gavigan, Honorary Consul of Uganda, as Ireland donates 335,500 COVID-19 vaccines to Uganda, September 2021.  
© Julien Behal Photography

- » Ireland supported a **more ambitious AU-EU partnership** in 2021. Minister of State Brophy represented Ireland at the second AU-EU Ministerial meeting in Rwanda, which was an important step in preparations for the 6<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit in 2022. Minister of State for Research and Development, Farm Safety and New Market Development, Martin Heydon T.D., participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Agriculture Ministerial Conference in June.
- » The EU's new **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation (NDICI)-Global Europe** instrument includes funding to 2027 of just over €29 billion for sub-Saharan Africa, and €19.3 billion for the EU's Neighbourhood, which includes a number of North African countries. Ireland engaged actively in Brussels and at country level in Africa in the development of EU development cooperation proposals under this instrument. We also supported a more targeted and coherent Team Europe approach to engagement with our African partners.
- » Ireland continued to expand and enhance our network of tax treaties in Africa, with the signature of a **Double Taxation Agreement** with Kenya, which is awaiting ratification. Ireland will continue to build on this commitment with treaty partners and to complete the ratification processes to give treaties effect in 2022 and beyond.

## Spotlight: Ireland's United Nations Security Council Membership

On 1 January 2021, Ireland began a two-year term on the UN Security Council that has put Ireland in a leadership role on African peace and security issues.

Ireland has worked very closely with African partners as a UN Security Council member. The three elected African members of the Council (A3) in 2021 – Kenya, Niger and Tunisia – have been key partners. For example, Ireland worked with Niger as co-penholders on the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), as co-chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Climate and Security, and as informal focal points on Hunger and Conflict. Cooperation with the A3 will continue in 2022 with the newly elected members, Gabon and Ghana, and through our ongoing engagement with Kenya. More broadly, Ireland's strong partnerships in Africa have informed our work on the Council and we will continue to listen to the perspectives of African governments, regional organisations and civil society partners across the continent.

Ireland has been actively engaged on the African files on the UN Security Council agenda. In May and October 2021, Minister Coveney addressed the UN Security Council during High-Level Debates on African peace and security issues.

In October 2021, Minister of State Brophy addressed the Council on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region. In 2021, the Council continued to function with a hybrid model working through both videoconferences and in-person meetings. Over the course of the year, the Council dealt with country-specific or regional situations in 115 meetings and 69 open videoconferences. 91 of these meetings related to Africa. Overall, in 2021, 57 Resolutions and 24 Presidential Statements were issued, with Africa-related situations accounting for 26 of those Resolutions and 11 of the Presidential Statements. 19 out of a total of 27 Resolutions adopted under Chapter VII concerned Africa.

In 2021, there were 6 Peacekeeping Missions and 5 Special Political Missions in Africa. Ireland has consistently worked with partners to ensure that these missions, which are considered among the highest risk of all UN Peace Operations, have mandates that are clear, credible, and realistic, and that they are adequately resourced. In 2021, the Security Council Permanent Representatives carried out a visiting mission to the Sahel. As co-penholders on UNOWAS, Ireland, together with Niger, led the drafting of two Security Council Presidential Statements on Peace and Security in West Africa. Ireland has taken on the role of Chair of the Somalia Sanctions Committee, which had a total of 6 informal and videoconference meetings. Ireland has been at the forefront of the Council's efforts to address the conflict in Ethiopia. In 2021, there were 9 meetings and one Informal Interactive Dialogue on Ethiopia, and Ireland led negotiations on two Council statements in April and November, calling for a ceasefire, humanitarian access and negotiations.

Ireland's Presidency of the Security Council in September 2021 was anchored in themes that Ireland has long championed in partnership with Africa, including peacekeeping, disarmament, and climate and security. The Taoiseach chaired a high-level meeting on Climate and Security. Minister Coveney presided over the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2594 on peacekeeping transitions, which was drafted and negotiated by Ireland and was co-sponsored by 97 UN Member States.

## Introduction

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*'Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025'* is a whole-of-Government roadmap facilitating the deepening of Ireland's political, economic, cultural and development relations with African countries.

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The key objectives identified to deliver on the ambition of Global Ireland and the vision for our relationships with Africa are as follows:

- 1 Ireland will build stronger political partnerships with African countries to address national, regional and global challenges.
- 2 Ireland will promote peace, security, and respect for human rights and the rule of law.
- 3 Ireland will support inclusive economic growth and deeper trade and investment relations.
- 4 Ireland will work with African countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on reaching those furthest behind first.
- 5 Ireland will promote and contribute to a more ambitious and effective EU partnership with Africa.
- 6 Ireland will pursue a collaborative 'Team Ireland' approach across all our work in Africa.

The first report to Government on progress under the Africa Strategy was published in May 2021 and highlighted a range of achievements in 2020, the first year of implementation.

## Progress

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2021 was the second year of implementation of the Government's Africa Strategy under the Global Ireland programme.

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It was another year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. 2021 began and ended with significant COVID waves across Europe and Africa. The pandemic had an impact across Ireland's partnerships with Africa, particularly in our development cooperation as the human and economic consequences of the virus eroded global progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Nevertheless, having adapted to new ways of political engagement, and having reacted decisively in the early stages of the pandemic through our development cooperation, Ireland continued to advance the objectives of the Africa Strategy and there were some significant achievements in 2021.

# 1

## Stronger political partnerships with Africa

Significant work was undertaken in 2021 to deepen and broaden political partnerships between Ireland and Africa. **A series of bilateral political engagements with African partners** took place over the course of the year. In parallel, Ireland worked closely with African partners in multilateral forums, particularly the UN Security Council, and through engagement with the African Union (AU).

Ireland's President and Government engaged virtually and in-person on a range of African issues and with a variety of stakeholders across Africa. President Michael D. Higgins addressed a UN Security Council High-Level Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict in June, calling on the Security Council to prioritise access to education in emergencies, including in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa regions. Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D. engaged with several African leaders on the margins of the UN General Assembly in September, including with leaders from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Senegal, Gabon and Nigeria.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney T.D., had an introductory call in April with the new AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, to discuss peace and security issues across the continent and to convey Ireland's strong support for the role of the AU. In July, **Minister Coveney visited Kenya and Somalia** for a series of high-level political meetings to better inform Ireland's work on the UN Security Council and deepen bilateral relations. In Kenya, Minister Coveney met key business, development and community partners, and the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); signed a Double Taxation Agreement, and launched three development programmes. In Somalia, Minister Coveney met senior Somali, EU, UN and AU officials as well as civil society activists. The visit also provided an opportunity to discuss key regional challenges, in particular the situation in Tigray and the north of Ethiopia.



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. meeting Prime Minister of Somalia, Mohamed Hussein Roble, on a visit to Mogadishu, July 2021. © DFA



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. meeting President Uhuru Kenyatta on a visit to Kenya, July 2021. © DFA

Developments in **Ethiopia** were also discussed in the margins of the UN General Assembly during Minister Coveney's meetings with Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, as well as the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, and Under-Secretary-General for Peacebuilding and Political Affairs, Rosemary Di Carlo.



Minister Colm Brophy T.D. meets with Uganda's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jeje Odongo, in Kampala, October 2021. © Kim Kinene

In October, **Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy T.D., visited Rwanda** to attend the second AU-EU Ministerial Meeting. Minister of State Brophy met with Ministers from some of Ireland's African partners, including Mozambique, Ghana and Djibouti, as well as Rwanda's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vincent Biruta. While in Kigali, Minister of State Brophy visited Vanguard Economics, a research and advisory firm focused on private sector development, trade and agriculture in East Africa.

Also in October, **Minister of State Brophy visited Uganda**, where he met the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jeje Odongo, for bilateral consultations and discussed challenges in relation to civil society space, evolving regional developments, and Ireland's support for the COVID-19 response in Uganda. Minister of State Brophy also met the First Lady and Minister for Education, Janet Museveni, and discussed Ireland's longstanding commitment to the education sector in Uganda. In November, at the 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), Minister of State Brophy met Malawi's Minister for Forestry and Natural Resources, Nancy Tembo, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) President, Gilbert Hounbo, to discuss cooperation on climate action for the most vulnerable.

In 2021, Ireland **opened an Embassy in Morocco**, which will also be accredited to Tunisia and Mauritania, extending Ireland's diplomatic representation in Africa. Since its opening, the Embassy has formed strong connections with the full range of local Ministries and authorities, has engaged in collaboration with EU and other partners, has enhanced our analysis and influence in the region, and has provided significant support to Irish nationals in need of consular assistance, particularly as a result of the COVID pandemic. In July, the Government announced the decision to open a **new Embassy in Senegal**. These new Embassies represent Ireland's first missions in francophone Africa and will deepen our political partnerships in the economically dynamic North and West Africa regions.



Minister Colm Brophy T.D. with Uganda's Minister of State for Health, Anifa Kawooya Bangirana, and WHO Country Director, Dr. Yonas Tegegn Woldemariam, at a vaccination site where COVID-19 vaccines donated by Ireland are being administered in the community, Uganda, October 2021. © Kim Kinene



Ambassador James McIntyre, Ireland's first resident Ambassador in Morocco, presenting credentials to Morocco's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nasser Bourita, October 2021. © Morocco's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates



Ambassador Sile Maguire and Team Ireland in Nigeria meet with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyema, in Abuja, November 2021. © DFA

In 2021, during the **60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ireland's Embassy opening in Nigeria**, a new Ambassador was appointed to Nigeria as Ireland's most senior ranking diplomat on the continent. Planning work continued on the construction of a new flagship Chancery for Ireland in Nigeria.

Representation in **countries of secondary accreditation** was progressed in 2021, with an Irish Ambassador presenting credentials in Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau for the first time. Ireland's Ambassador to Somalia, accredited from Nairobi, visited Somalia four times in 2021 for political

dialogues. Ireland's Ambassador to South Africa presented credentials to the President of Zimbabwe in April 2021 and subsequently held meetings with the Vice President and Minister for Health, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Minister for Women's Affairs; engaged with Heads of UN Agencies and International Financial Institutions on Zimbabwe's debt and macroeconomic challenges, and with civil society on human rights issues.

Ireland continued to expand its engagement in **francophone Africa** in 2021. Ireland's Special Envoy for francophone Africa and the Sahel, Ken Thompson, travelled in November to Gabon (an incoming UN Security Council member), Burkina Faso and Niger (a UN Security Council member at the time), where he met Government representatives as well as EU and international partners, NGOs and civil society organisations, and regional organisations. In 2021, the Special Envoy represented Ireland at a range of virtual events on the Sahel including meetings of the Coalition for the Sahel, the Sahel Alliance, the EU Sahel Special Envoys Network and the Sahel Special Envoy Global Network, as well as undertaking an extensive programme of meetings with high-level contacts from the EU, Africa and international organisations in the region.



Ambassador Ralph Victory, Ireland's first Permanent Representative to the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), presenting credentials to Executive Secretary, Zacarias da Costa, following Ireland's admission as an Associate Observer. © CPLP

Ireland became an Associate Observer member of the **Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)** in July 2021 at the CPLP Summit in Angola. Six of the CPLP's nine Member States are African. Associate Observer status will build on Ireland's strong political and trade relations and long-standing development cooperation with

a number of CPLP Member States, while expanding our links to all Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. On 14 December, the Government confirmed the decision to nominate Ireland's Ambassador to Portugal as Permanent Representative accredited to the CPLP.

2021 was the 16<sup>th</sup> year in which the Department of Foreign Affairs supported events to mark **Africa Day** in Ireland, which was again limited to a virtual celebration due to public health restrictions. DFA, in partnership with twenty-three local authorities and their community partners, hosted a diverse range of virtual activities, from storytelling to traditional crafts, musical performances to webinars. The Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and the Public Appointments Service organised a virtual event to promote the Civil Service as a diverse workplace with opportunities for people of African descent in Ireland. A video produced by DFA on the shared legacy of storytelling between Ireland and Africa was viewed almost half a million times on social media.

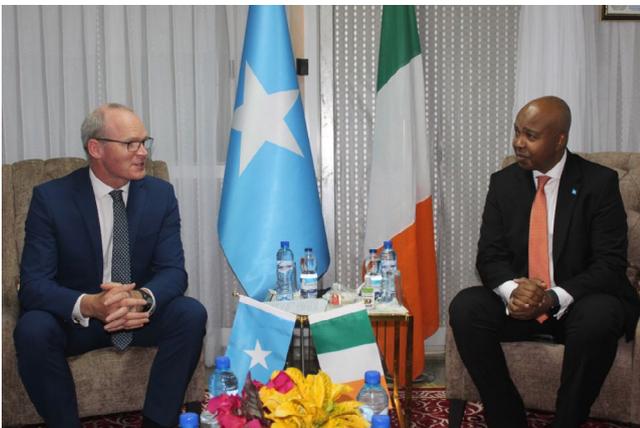


Minister Colm Brophy T.D. with the Mayor of South Dublin County Council, Ed Brophy, musicians Justine Nantale and Segun Akano, and children at a Yoruba storytelling workshop in Lucan, Africa Day 2021. © Mark Stedman

# 2

## Peace, security and respect for human rights and the rule of law

Ireland played a leadership role in contributing to peace and security in Africa in 2021, as an **elected member of the UN Security Council** and through the deployment of Defence Forces personnel and civilian experts to UN peacekeeping missions and to EU CSDP missions across Africa.



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. meeting then Foreign Minister of Somalia, Mohamed Abdirizak, on a visit to Mogadishu in July 2021.  
© Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Somalia

The UN peacekeeping missions in Africa to which Defence Forces personnel were deployed were MINUSMA in Mali, MONUSCO in DRC, and MINURSO in Western Sahara (until July 2021). Defence Forces personnel were also deployed with the EU Training Mission (EUTM) Mali and to the operational HQ of EU NAVFOR Med / Operation IRINI (Libya), while civilian CSDP experts served in missions in Niger, Somalia, Central African Republic and Libya. In December 2021, a two-year commitment to provide a Defence Forces' trainer at the UN Regional Service Centre in Uganda was approved by Government. The purpose of this deployment is to deliver Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) training to increase the capacity of African peacekeepers deploying to UN Peacekeeping Missions.

As a UN Security Council member, Ireland contributed to the mandate renewal processes of UN peacekeeping operations across Africa, securing important improvements in mandates for Western Sahara (MINURSO), Mali (MINUSMA), Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Sudan (UNISFA), South Sudan (UNMISS), Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) as well as the UN-authorized African Union-led mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Across these negotiations, Ireland's focus was to ensure that peacekeeping operations respond to needs on the ground, that mandates are clear, credible, and realistic, and that missions are adequately resourced to carry out their tasks. Across the Council and during these negotiations, Ireland also worked to ensure that resolutions – and the missions they mandate – incorporate what experience has taught us are key elements of successful peacekeeping: the protection of civilians; the promotion of human rights; and the full participation of women.

In September, Ireland held the role of **President of the UN Security Council**, chairing meetings on African issues including the UN-led peace process in Libya, the situations in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia, as well as key thematic issues concerning the African continent such as peacekeeping, climate change, and conflict and hunger. Taoiseach Micheál Martin, Minister Coveney, Minister of State Brophy and other Government representatives travelled to New York for a series of engagements related to Ireland's Presidency of the Council. The Taoiseach chaired a high-level meeting on Climate and Security. Also in September, the Taoiseach addressed the 76<sup>th</sup> **United Nations General Assembly**, expressing support for African-led peacekeeping operations and calling for action to address factors underlying conflict.



*Ireland's Special Envoy for francophone Africa and the Sahel, Kenneth Thompson, meeting with President of the Commission of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Gilberto Da Piedade Verissimo, in Gabon, November 2021. © ECCAS*

During Ireland's UN Security Council Presidency, Minister Coveney presided over the **adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2594 on peacekeeping transitions**, which was drafted and negotiated by Ireland and was co-sponsored by 97 UN Member States, including all members of the Security Council, conferring on it the status of Presidential text. Ireland chaired meetings that resulted in the adoption of a resolution on Human Trafficking off the

coast of Libya and a Presidential Statement on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. As part of ongoing efforts to increase co-operation between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, Ireland and Chad – presidents of the respective Councils in September – held a discussion on the Programmes of Work.

Ireland was actively engaged on the Security Council files related to **West Africa and the Sahel**. As co-penholder with Niger on the UNOWAS file, Ireland led the drafting of two Security Council Presidential Statements on Peace and Security in West Africa. Ireland specifically sought to support UNOWAS work on climate and security in West Africa and the Sahel and in 2022 will work with UNOWAS, together with new co-penholder Ghana and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to host a regional conference on the links between climate, security and peacebuilding to be held in Dakar, Senegal. In October, Ireland's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, was part of a Security Council delegation that visited Mali and Niger. In Mali, Council members assessed the progress on Mali's political transition, while in Niger the focus of the trip was on the G5 Sahel Joint Force. This was the Council's first visiting mission since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.



*Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D. addressing the United Nations General Assembly, September 2021. © UN Web TV*



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. meeting Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Demeke Mekonnen Hassen, in New York, September 2021. © DFA

Ireland also worked closely with Niger as co-chair of the Informal Expert Group on **Climate and Security** and as informal co-champions and focal points on **Hunger and Conflict**. In December, Ireland and Niger tabled a Security Council resolution on Climate and Security. India and Russia voted against the resolution, while China abstained. 113 countries co-sponsored the resolution underlining the strong support from the wider UN membership for the Security Council to fulfil its mandate on this issue. Ireland will continue to press for a robust approach to Climate and Security across the entire Council agenda for the remainder of our time on the Security Council and also within the General Assembly. Ireland worked closely with Niger on this file, including through regular joint meetings with key stakeholders, and frequent informal exchanges. Ireland and Niger co-hosted the briefing on the bi-annual reports prepared by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). All 15 UN Security Council members participated constructively in these sessions. Ireland has also provided support for a dedicated Climate Security Advisor position with the UN to help address climate related security risks in South Sudan.

Addressing conflict and instability in the **Horn of Africa** accounts for one third of the overall agenda of the Security Council. In 2021, escalating conflict and political turmoil saw multiple additional meetings outside the regular schedule.

Ireland was at the forefront of efforts throughout 2021 to address the conflict in **Ethiopia** at the UN Security Council. Minister Coveney continued his outreach to key regional and international interlocutors, and Ireland led negotiations on two Council statements in April and November calling for a ceasefire, humanitarian access and an inclusive political dialogue. As well as our Security Council engagement, Ireland also continued to push for a strong and constructive EU response to the crisis. Ireland's Embassy in Ethiopia undertook a number of visits to regions affected by the conflict. The mission partnered with Destiny Ethiopia and the MIND Consortium to promote a more inclusive and credible National Dialogue to help prepare for national consensus on the country's future. Ireland also partnered with Conciliation Resources to support grass-roots peacebuilding and reconciliation in the Somali region.

In November 2021, the Government of Ethiopia informed Ireland that four of the six Irish diplomats serving at Ireland's Embassy in Addis Ababa would be required to leave the country. The Ethiopian authorities indicated that the decision to scale down the size of our Embassy was due to the positions Ireland had articulated internationally on the conflict and humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia. While Ireland deeply regretted this decision, our solidarity with and commitment to supporting the Ethiopian people remains strong; in 2021 Ireland provided almost €25 million to the humanitarian response in the country.

Ireland played an active role in the Security Council's engagement on **Somalia** during the year, addressing issues from piracy to the African Union Mission in Somalia, and serving as the Chair of the 751 Sanctions Committee. Minister Coveney's visit to Mogadishu in July informed Ireland's contribution to supporting a pragmatic and realistic Somalia security transition. On **Sudan**, Ireland championed civilian protection and the WPS agenda, including through oversight of three Council mandates and an ICC referral. The country experienced serious challenges during the year, not least as a result of the October 2021 military coup. With **South Sudan** the focus of three agenda items at the Council, Ireland also played a constructive role in discussions on the renewal of the South Sudan sanctions regime, as well as on the mandate renewals of the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Ireland has prioritised Protection of Civilians in the Council's engagement on South Sudan.

Ireland engaged on several Security Council files concerning **Central Africa and the Great Lakes region**, including items on the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Great Lakes region, and the UN Regional Office for Central Africa. In February 2021, the Political Director of the Department of Foreign

Affairs visited DRC, where she met the leadership of the UN peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, as well as civil society, women's groups and community leaders for an exchange of views on the future of the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC in the context of discussions about a transition plan for MONUSCO later in the year. In October, Minister of State Brophy participated in a high-level debate at the UN Security Council on the Great Lakes region and the Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement addressing drivers of instability in the region. In October and November, Irish diplomats participated in Sanctions Committee visits to CAR and DRC, where they held consultations with the CAR and DRC governments, and with representatives of the UN missions and civil society, and gained first-hand information on the effective impact of sanctions.

The **UN Sanctions Regimes** in respect of DRC, CAR and Mali were renewed in 2021, with new language related to the provision of humanitarian assistance inserted into the relevant resolutions. Ireland was part of a group of like-minded countries that supported these efforts, playing a central role in particular in the DRC renewal. These efforts tie into a horizontal priority across all sanctions work during Ireland's Security Council tenure to protect the humanitarian space in sanctioned contexts.



*Irish officials participated in a UN Security Council visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in November 2021. © DFA*

## Implementation of 'Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025'

In North Africa, Ireland reiterated its support throughout 2021 to the UN Mission in **Western Sahara** (MINURSO) and called for a political solution to the conflict. On 29 October, Council members renewed the mandate of the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 October 2022.

Under Ireland's Presidency of the Council in September, a Council meeting on **Libya** took place and included a briefing from Asma Khalifa, a young peacebuilder who briefed Council members on the role played by women, youth and civil society in building peace in Libya. The Council also renewed the UNSMIL (Libya) mandate until the end of January. The Security Council adopted Resolution 2598 on migrant smuggling and human trafficking off the coast of Libya on 29 September 2021. Ireland co-sponsored the Resolution, which was facilitated by co-penholders, France and Estonia. Other UN Security Council Resolutions related to Libya in 2021 renewed measures to prevent the illicit export of petroleum from Libya and to prevent the violation of the arms embargo on the country. Ireland's Embassy in Rome, which is accredited to Libya, works closely with UNSMIL, the EU Delegation to Libya, bilateral missions accredited to Libya and other international and non-governmental organisations to support peace and security in Libya, uphold and sustain the work of civil society, and ensure they have safe spaces in which to operate, and champion leadership roles for women in peacebuilding processes.

In **Mozambique**, Ireland continued to provide support for the Peace Secretariat and funding for the country's Peace Process, and remained engaged in coordinating the implementation of the Maputo Peace Accord – the framework for bringing lasting peace between the party in government (FRELIMO) and its rival since the Mozambican civil war, RENAMO. Positive progress was achieved in Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration, resulting in the demobilisation of 3,200 ex-combatants and the closure of 11 bases by the end of 2021. Ireland also played a key role in **responding to the crisis in Cabo Delgado** in northern Mozambique, where the security and humanitarian situation deteriorated significantly in the first half of the year. Ireland's Ambassador to Mozambique visited the region on several occasions in 2021. Ireland mobilised €6.4 million in humanitarian and recovery assistance in 2021 to meet the needs of Internally Displaced People and others



*Ireland's Ambassador to the African Union, Nicola Brennan, meeting the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Bankole Adeoye, in August 2021. © DFA*

affected by the crisis. Ireland also engaged closely on the development of an EU integrated programme on security, humanitarian and development in northern Mozambique, including the deployment of an EU Training Mission and provision of non-lethal support through the European Peace Facility (EPF). Ireland played a leadership role in drawing the attention of the Government of Malawi and other partners to a possible spill over effect in southern districts of Malawi from insecurity in northern Mozambique.

Ireland was fully engaged in work on the Security Council to **strengthen cooperation between the UN and the AU**, recognising the critical role of the AU in preventing and responding to conflict in Africa. In October, Minister Coveney participated in an Open Debate on UN-AU cooperation, underlining the importance of cooperation on issues such as climate change, strengthening peacekeeping and responding to crises. Council members adopted a Presidential Statement highlighting the growing contribution of such cooperation to resolving conflicts and other peace and security challenges in Africa. In September, Ireland's Embassy in Addis Ababa organised an event on the application of UN Security Council Resolution 2594 on peacekeeping transitions in Africa, with the participation of the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Office to the AU, as well as Permanent Representatives to the AU. In December, Ireland participated in the Annual Consultation Meeting

between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. In addition to discussing country specific aspects, the meetings also touched on financing for AU-led Peace Support Operations and enhancing co-operation between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council.

Ireland continued its support to the **institutional reform of the AU Commission**, including through funding to its Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department. In 2021, Ireland also provided funding for the AU's new Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Centre in Cairo, Egypt. Ireland started a collaboration with UN Women on a project to be delivered in close partnership with the AU Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security to strengthen advocacy for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 in Africa, including through the African Women's Leadership Network.

Ireland has been a longstanding champion of UN Resolution 1325 on **Women, Peace and Security (WPS)**, a priority we share with the AU and many of our African partner countries. Ireland co-chairs the UN Security Council Informal Expert Group (IEG) on WPS, together with Mexico. In March 2021, on International Women's Day, Ireland and Mexico co-hosted an Arria-formula meeting on ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in UN-led peace processes. Kenya, Niger and Tunisia co-sponsored the meeting. In April, Ireland and Mexico hosted a meeting of the IEG on WPS in Mali. In June, Ireland co-sponsored a meeting that launched the Group of Friends of Women of the Sahel and explored how to strengthen an integrated approach to peace and security in the Sahel through a



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. and Irish officials meeting with Women, Peace and Security activists in Somalia, July 2021. © DFA

gendered lens. Ireland, Mexico and Kenya established a WPS Presidency Trio committed to mainstreaming Women, Peace and Security across the work of the Council throughout their presidencies. This initiative was carried forward by Niger, Norway, the UAE and Albania. During its Presidency of the UN Security Council, Ireland brought 17 civil society briefers to participate in Council discussions, including on Mali, Libya and South Sudan. 16 of these were women, a level recognised by UN Women as a new record for women's participation at the Council.

Ireland funds several partners working on WPS, including **promoting women's participation and ending gender-based violence (GBV)**. In South Africa, Ireland entered into a new strategic partnership with civil society and the South African Government to support the implementation of South Africa's first National Action Plan on WPS and to support the South African Presidency's advocacy at the AU on GBV. In Zimbabwe, Ireland entered two new partnerships on WPS and ensured a focus on women's leadership was included in the EU Country-Level Implementation Plan. In Sierra Leone, Ireland supported a project with the Mano River Union in close partnership with the Mano River Union Women Peace Network to create an enabling platform for women to network and share knowledge to promote peace and security ahead of the 2023 elections in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Ireland continues to engage with African partners on the **promotion and protection of human rights and the work of civil society** and to **support human rights defenders**. During his visit to Uganda in October, Minister of State Brophy met a broad range of civil society stakeholders and human rights defenders, and expressed Ireland's continued support for their work and for civil society in Uganda. In Tanzania, Ireland provided support to the Legal and Human Rights Centre, Frontline Defenders, UZIKWASA and BBC Media Action. Through continued support for the Ethiopia Social Accountability Programme (ESAP) and the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP), Ireland further strengthened the role of civil society in Ethiopia focusing on inclusive governance, gender equality and social accountability. Ireland also supports the work of the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), a coalition of women's rights activists working to advance the rights of, and address violence against, women and girls in the Horn of Africa. Ireland advocates for the protection and promotion of LGBTI+ rights through political dialogues with African governments, and supports local NGOs working to promote LGBTI+ rights.

Ireland delivered National Statements on Burundi, CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan at the **UN Human Rights Council** in 2021. Ireland also made recommendations at the UN Human Rights Council as part of the Universal Periodic Review processes for Eswatini, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone and Tanzania. The Ethiopia Human Rights Commission, was supported to undertake human rights monitoring and investigations, including the joint investigation in Tigray with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Ireland, in collaboration with UNDP, supported the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone to improve its policy and legal framework, strengthen public awareness and enhance its organisational capacity to deliver on its mandate of promoting and protecting human rights.

In 2021, **elections** took place in several African countries, including Uganda, Ethiopia, and Zambia. In Uganda, Ireland's Embassy participated in a joint diplomatic watch exercise with other EU Embassies to monitor polling stations on election day. Ireland provided institutional support to the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia and civil society observers for the national elections in Ethiopia in June, as well as support for voter education. In Zambia, Ireland provided funding to support the judiciary in preparing for possible electoral dispute resolution and the Irish Embassy took part in the EU Election Observation Mission. In Kenya, Ireland provided support and was engaged in preparations for upcoming elections in August 2022, including through participation in a planned EU Election Observation Mission. Ireland partnered with UN Women in Kenya to launch a project with the goal of amplifying women's voices and preventing violence against women in elections. This new partnership will target regions of the country that are known to have experienced election violence in the past. In 2021, Ireland also entered a new partnership with the Zimbabwe Institute supporting inter-party dialogue and strengthening political parties in preparation for the 2023 elections, as well as a new partnership, through UNDP, supporting the core Constitutional Commissions in Zimbabwe, including the Gender, Human Rights and Electoral Commission. Ahead of elections in 2023, Ireland worked with government and civil society organisations in Sierra Leone to promote women's participation in political, peace, cohesion and governance processes.

In 2021, Ireland **strengthened relations with key research organisations** working on African issues. In partnership with the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Ireland began an



*Ireland's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, on a UN Security Council visit to Mali, where Council members met with the Transitional Government of Mali, the signatory armed groups, representatives of civil society (including women and youth organisations), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Mali and head of MINUSMA, and representatives of the UN country team, October 2021. © DFA*

ambitious project examining the meaningful participation of women in Mali's peace and other political processes. Ireland began a new partnership in 2021 with Amani Africa, an Addis Ababa-based think tank that specialises in peace and security issues on the continent. In South Africa, Ireland's partnerships with regional think tanks, ISS and ACCORD, produced and disseminated research on gender, peace and security issues in South Africa and in the region, contributing to Ireland's impact on these issues locally, at a regional level and at the UN Security Council. In Sierra Leone, Ireland continued its two-year knowledge partnership with Sustainable Livelihood Research Consortium/Overseas Development Institute on social norm change to reduce teenage pregnancy. DFA continued its existing engagement mechanism with civil society in Ireland on UN Security Council issues through the Stakeholder Forum convened quarterly by the Institute of International and European Affairs.

Ireland continues to strengthen ongoing partnerships with a range of organisations working in **conflict prevention and peacebuilding** in African contexts. Support from Ireland to organisations such as Conciliation Resources, CMI and the Institute for Integrated Transitions facilitates progress in activities including mediation, local and national dialogues, and capacity building for civil society organisations. Support for the International Crisis Group's analysis in the Horn of Africa bolsters a regional approach to engagement on peace and security in the Horn. Through continued support for Interpeace, Ireland is contributing to the cultivation and support of youth leadership in the implementation and advancement of the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda in Africa.

## 3

## Inclusive economic growth and mutually beneficial trade and investment

The trade relationship between Ireland and Africa continues to grow strongly.



Guests at Bord Bia's 'Meet the Maker Lagos' showcase whiskey event, October 2021. © Bord Bia

While trade in goods dipped in 2020 due to the impact of the pandemic, trade in goods increased in 2021 to a record level of €2.42 billion (€1.86 billion in exports and €0.56 billion in imports). Trade in services has been a particular success story in recent years. Trade in services, now at a record level of just over €4 billion, has been a particular success story, with growth in services exports to Africa of 300% in the ten years to 2020. The ongoing expansion of Ireland's diplomatic footprint in the North and West African regions, including through new Embassies in Morocco and Senegal, will provide new entry points to further expand Ireland's trade with Africa.

In 2021, the value of **agri-food exports to Africa** increased by a further 8%, to €880 million, doubling in the space of a decade. Irish agri-food exports to Africa performed remarkably well in 2021 within a difficult international context affected by COVID-19, limited container availability and higher transport costs. Nigeria was Ireland's largest agri-food export market in Africa in 2021, accounting for 24% of the market share at €210 million. The second biggest export partner in Africa was Egypt, with €80 million of exports. South Africa, Senegal and Algeria made up the remaining top 5 export markets in Africa. The growth of Irish exports was particularly supported by dairy products. Ireland is one of the leading global exporters of dairy products to West Africa and dairy represents significantly the highest proportion of Irish exports to the region, followed by seafood, meat and livestock, and alcohol. Bord Bia's promotional campaign to mark World Milk Day in June reached over 3.3 million people in South Africa and over 1 million people in Nigeria, and secured new retail listings for participating Irish exporters. Bord Bia also organised an array of market insight activities to support Irish agri-food exporters to Africa.

There was a 133% growth of Irish spirits exports to Africa in 2021 in spite of the unfavourable conditions on the global market due to COVID-19 restrictions. In October 2021, five Irish spirits brands participated in *Meet the Maker Lagos*, a trade and media event showcasing Irish spirits in the Nigerian market. The strong growth of Irish whiskey in Nigeria opens the potential for growth in other West Africa markets, including Ghana. Irish whiskey has also recorded strong growth in South Africa and in numerous other African markets, led by Zambia and Kenya.

## Implementation of 'Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025'

Given the significant impact of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, **Enterprise Ireland** focused on bolstering opportunities with Irish clients and local stakeholders, forging new relationships between Ireland and African countries, providing new innovative technologies and ideas, and illustrating the importance the Irish offering brings to the region. For example, Irish FinTech offerings from remittance, payments and mobile banking solutions continue to add value to local markets, ensuring end users have the most innovative and cutting-edge technologies at their disposal to be competitive. Enterprise Ireland will continue to support client companies in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, engineering and aviation to access new markets and clients in Africa, to develop business networks and contacts, and to highlight opportunities in Africa for Irish companies.

The appointment of an **IDA Ireland** pathfinder in Africa in 2019 has proven very worthwhile. Since 2020, IDA Ireland has approved 3 investment projects by African companies in Ireland and is confident of more investments from Africa that will lead to further job creation in the coming years.

In line with the commitment to expand and enhance our network of tax treaties in Africa, the Ireland-Kenya **Double Taxation Agreement** was signed during the visit of Minister Coveney to Kenya in July and is awaiting ratification. Ireland will continue to build on this commitment with treaty partners and to complete the ratification processes to give treaties effect in 2022 and beyond. Minister Coveney's visit also provided the opportunity to formally launch the latest version of the Business Ireland Kenya (BIK) 'Doing Business in Kenya Guide', a resource for Irish companies, as well as a €100,000 project with TradeMark East Africa to **increase the number of women trading within the agricultural sector in Kenya**. Minister Coveney also witnessed the signature of a new contract between Irish company Davra and the Kenyan Senate.



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. launching the Business Ireland Kenya (BIK) 'Doing Business in Kenya Guide', a resource for Irish companies, at a business event in Nairobi, July 2021. © DFA

Following its confirmation as a member of the **African Development Bank** the previous year, Ireland, represented by the Department of Finance, took responsibility at the Bank for constituency coverage of Malawi, Gender and Debt. Through membership of the African Development Bank, and regular engagement with our constituency, Ireland continues to influence Bank policy in the areas of Gender, Debt and Climate. Ireland successfully participated in the 2021 Governors' Dialogue at the Bank's Annual Meeting which focused on the key challenges facing Africa as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In July, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue T.D., and Minister Coveney jointly announced a new call for applications to the **Africa Agri-Food Development Programme**, continuing the Government's support to Irish agri-food companies to leverage their agriculture expertise to partner with African companies in the development of sustainable local food enterprises. Projects in Rwanda, Tanzania and Ghana were approved for funding under this programme in 2021. The inaugural meeting of the Ireland-Africa Rural Development Committee (IARDC) took place in November. The IARDC is mandated to give strategic direction to and maximise the effectiveness of Ireland's agri-business and rural development initiatives in Africa and to promote Ireland-Africa two-way trade.

A pilot initiative to **support Irish-African private sector innovation** was progressed in South Africa in 2021 in a collaboration between DFA, Enterprise Ireland and the South African Department of Science and Innovation. The initiative will assist early-stage South African tech ventures to collaborate with Irish innovators and SMEs to realise their potential, grow their business and innovate to support socio-economic development.



Minister Colm Brophy T.D. visiting Kigali's Creativity Lab and meeting Rwandan national winners of the AfriCAN Code Challenge, which is supported by Irish Aid, October 2021. © DFA

In 2021, first trading started under the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**, which has enormous potential to advance economic integration in Africa and to boost EU-Africa trade. The EU is a strategic partner in supporting African economic integration and has committed to support the operationalisation of the AfCFTA under its new Global Europe financing instrument. Ireland has actively engaged in discussions at EU level on how these funds will be spent over the coming years.

Ireland continued to support **trade facilitation and inclusive economic growth in Africa**, including through partnerships with TradeMark East Africa and the International Trade Centre. TradeMark East Africa's work with the Tanzania Mercantile Exchange demonstrates how investing in automated trade systems has the potential to significantly increase farmers' earnings and to transform the agricultural sector into a more viable, inclusive option for sustainable livelihoods. In Tanzania, a new partnership was also launched with Sustainable Food Systems Ireland with the aim of greening the dairy value chain.



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. and Trade Mark East Africa Chairman of the Board of Directors, Erastus Mwencha launching an Irish Aid partnership with TradeMark East Africa to increase the number of women trading in Kenya's agricultural sector, July 2021. © DFA

Ireland's Revenue Commissioners and the Uganda Revenue Authority began high-level institutional cooperation beginning with the exchange of learning materials. Initial discussions between revenue authorities have also started between Ireland and Malawi. In Mozambique, Ireland successfully supported opportunities for women traders along the main corridor between Maputo and the South African border, commercial honey and coffee production for small-holder farmers in Gorongosa, as well as the launch

of a number of young 'greenpreneurs' with climate-smart business initiatives. In Zambia, the first Doing Business in Zambia guide was published as a tool for promoting trade and investment between Ireland and Zambia.

Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority and Nigeria Ports Authority continued their active engagement in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development **Port Management Programme**, which is supported by Ireland and benefits from the expertise of ports across the island of Ireland, including Belfast Harbour, Port of Cork and Dublin Port Company.

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar T.D., discussed global trade and economic recovery post-pandemic with the Director-General of the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)**, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, at a meeting of EU Trade Ministers in May. Ireland continued to promote African participation at the WTO through the Advisory Centre on WTO Law and support for trade officials from 15 African countries to serve at their countries' Missions to the WTO in Geneva under the French-Irish WTO Mission Internship Programme. Ireland also supported the WTO Standards and Trade Facility, which approved 7 project preparation and project grants promoting plant and animal health and food safety in Africa during 2021.



Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Leo Varadkar T.D., meeting the Director General of the WTO, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Brussels, May 2021. © DETE

## Implementation of 'Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025'

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, **student numbers from Africa** increased 5% in the 2020-2021 academic year to over 1,300 students. Market research undertaken in South Africa, Ghana, Tanzania and Ethiopia indicated significant potential for undergraduate student recruitment in a continent traditionally perceived as being postgraduate focused. Based on the research, Education in Ireland, which is managed by Enterprise Ireland, has developed country-specific West, East and Southern Africa strategic approaches, with ongoing awareness campaigns on social media promoting Ireland as an international student destination. The awareness campaigns have been followed by Virtual Fairs. During 2021, 18 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) participated in six West, East and Southern Africa Education Fairs organised by Education in Ireland. Over 22,500 students registered, almost double the 2020 numbers. In addition, Education in Ireland has put in place Education Pathfinder consultants in Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa to bridge the engagement of Irish HEIs with Higher Schools, Education Agents, Influencers and parents. A number of HEIs have initiated Trans-National Education partnership discussions with education institutions across Africa.

Ireland continued to increase the number of Master's-level **Fellowships** offered to African students in 2021, with fellowships taken up by 101 students from 21 African countries, including 4 African Small Island Developing States (SIDS), for the 2021-2022 academic year. In September, Fellowship students were welcomed to Ireland by Minister of State Brophy. Eligibility for the programme was extended to South Sudan in 2021. In South Africa, the Embassy implemented the redesigned Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme, which supports future South African leaders to engage in Master's level degrees in Irish universities. The new programme better targets women students and students from historically disadvantaged universities. Moreover, there are currently 24 early-career researchers of African nationality being supported by **Irish Research Council** scholarship and fellowship programmes, with an associated investment (including any partner co-funding) of €2.02m.



Ireland-Africa Fellows celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Dublin, March 2022. © Naomi Feehily



Ireland supports Africa Code Week to teach coding skills to young Africans. © Africa Code Week

In Egypt, the establishment in 2021 of the Research Centre for Irish Studies at the British University of Egypt and ongoing cooperation of Technological University Dublin and University College Cork with Pharos University and Future University of Egypt emphasises the potential for cooperation in the education sphere, also at a regional level.

Ireland supports **Africa Code Week** which is now active in 54 countries helping millions of young Africans to learn coding skills and training teachers on digital learning curricula. With Ireland's support, their women's empowerment programme has equipped almost 300 female African teachers with the skills and knowledge to successfully inspire, mentor, and prepare girls for the future tech workplace. Minister of State Brophy met Africa Code Week's local partner in Rwanda in October 2021 and awarded prizes to the national finalists at a ceremony in Kigali.

In Kenya, Ireland continued its significant support to the **Young Scientists Kenya (YSK) Initiative**. Due to the pandemic, YSK pivoted to an online model with 120 students participating from 22 counties and submitting 64 projects. Since its launch in 2017, YSK has reached almost 100,000 students and their teachers across all of Kenya's 47 counties. In July, Minister Coveney met a number of YSK 2020 winners and discussed the importance of STEM with YSK Patron, President Kenyatta, during his visit to Kenya.



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. meets winners of Young Scientists Kenya, which is supported by Ireland, July 2021. © DFA

The 7<sup>th</sup> **Africa Ireland Economic Forum (AIEF)** will take place in 2022, following its postponement due to public health restrictions in 2021. The AIEF is a centrepiece of Ireland's economic engagement with the countries of Africa and the 2022 edition will be a timely opportunity to showcase the significant potential for mutually beneficial trade and investment flows between Ireland and Africa.

# 4

## Work with African countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Ireland's international development policy, 'A Better World', continued to guide our engagement with African partners in 2021 to achieve the SDGs in the challenging context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Minister Simon Coveney T.D., UN Women Country Representative Anna Mutavati and OHCHR Senior Human Rights Advisor Li Fung launching Ireland's programme of support to UN Women in Kenya, July 2021.  
© DFA

Although the health impact of the pandemic varied from country to country, the impacts on socio-economic and human development caused by public health restrictions and economic disruption have been significant across the continent. The UNDP predicts that the long-term effect of the economic downturn caused by the pandemic will lead to an erosion of the gains made to human development over previous decades and will reduce the number of countries in Africa that achieve key SDGs. Gender equality, reduced humanitarian need, climate action and strengthened governance are the four policy priorities of 'A Better World' directing Ireland's development cooperation.

Women and girls have suffered disproportionately the negative social and economic impacts of COVID-19, amplifying pre-existing inequalities. Women are more likely to be unemployed, girls are more likely not to return to school and reports of gender-based violence (GBV) have risen. At the 2021 Generation Equality Forum, Ireland committed to increasing funding to feminist and women's rights organisations as part of our commitment to **advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls** in Africa. A new commitment was made to support the Girl Fund, in partnership with Plan International and Purposeful, with €150,000 per year. 14 of the 28 grassroots organisations supported are in Africa. Ireland committed to increase advocacy for and committed additional funding to ending GBV in emergencies and female genital mutilation (FGM). This included two specific new multi-year commitments agreed in 2021. In Ethiopia, Ireland launched a €10 million programme to end GBV and FGM. Ireland also strengthened our partnership with the International Rescue Committee with approximately €4.5 million from 2021 to 2023 to support their work in Africa.

Advancing gender equality is central to the work of Ireland's Embassy network in Africa. In Malawi, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Ireland supported partner organisations and research institutions to combat GBV. For example, in Tanzania, Ireland provided support to the UNDP-run Legal Empowerment and Access to Justice Project to strengthen the response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Zanzibar. In Sierra Leone, through UNWOMEN and UNFPA, Ireland supported the establishment of four Government One Stop Centres for survivors of SGBV and one call handler at the #116 SGBV helpline. Ireland also provided support to Sierra Leone's Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to implement the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy and to advocate for a Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Bill.



Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D. chairing a UN Security Council debate on climate and security during Ireland's Presidency of the Council, September 2021. © UN Photo

In Kenya, Irish funding helped TradeMark East Africa to support 60 women-owned SMEs through their Women in Trade work. The Embassy also supported the Kenya Private Sector Alliance to deliver mentoring sessions to mainly female-led SMEs focused on sustaining jobs, increasing revenues and protecting businesses. In Ethiopia, Ireland also supported the review of the National Women's Policy and, in collaboration with Save the Children, implemented a programme to bridge gender inequality and address socio-cultural barriers for women and girls in the Somali and Afar regions. In Uganda, Ireland championed a leadership role for women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes by supporting NGOs working to implement Uganda's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security at a grassroots level. Ireland provided funding in 2021 to the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) to support its work in increasing representation and leadership of women in political decision-making. The IPU published a report in November, in partnership with the African Parliamentary Union, on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Africa.

Significant progress was made in 2021 to strengthen **Ireland's leadership on climate action** and to support climate adaptation and resilience in Africa. At the UN General Assembly, Ireland together with Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, launched the Champions Group on Adaptation Finance. The Group aims to increase climate finance for adaptation and to improve the quality and accessibility of that finance. At COP26, Taoiseach

Micheál Martin committed to more than doubling Ireland's international climate finance to at least €225 million per year by 2025, calling for increased adaptation finance to Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. Ireland champions sustainable agriculture through ecosystem restoration, small-scale irrigation, improved crop seed varieties and improved access to weather information in Ethiopia, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Tanzania.

In 2021, Ireland continued to support the design and implementation of National Adaptation Plans in African countries through our funding partnerships and our participation in the bodies and processes of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Irish Aid funded the European Institute for Innovation and Technology Climate-KIC programme for a third consecutive year, supporting the Climate Launchpad competition for innovative and practical green business ideas in Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda. In Tanzania, Ireland advanced work on the blue economy and climate action through support to a new programme with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in collaboration with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association and Ocean Hub Africa. In Mozambique, in partnership with the Gorongosa National Park Programme, Ireland contributed to climate sensitive and resilience building initiatives, including building climate resilient community infrastructure and adoption by smallholder farmers of climate-smart agricultural practices.



Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan T.D. and EirGrid Chief Executive Mark Foley unveiling Ireland's 'Shaping our Electricity Future' roadmap at COP26, November 2021. © DECC

## Spotlight: Team Ireland's Climate Action

Team Ireland efforts were key to advance Ireland's work on **climate action** in 2021, including in our partnerships with Africa. There was strong Government representation at COP26.

An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, attended the World Leaders' Summit, outlining in Ireland's national statement the ways in which we are working towards achieving the Paris Agreement objectives. The Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan

T.D., led the Irish delegation, which was Ireland's largest ever, and participated in the EU's negotiating team on issues including transparency and climate finance. Ireland's delegation comprised members from a range of Government Departments, specialist agencies and entities, including Met Éireann, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

At COP26, Minister Coveney announced €2.1 million in support by Ireland to a number of sustainable blue economy initiatives. This included support for the IUCN for livelihood development in coastal communities in Tanzania as part of the Great Blue Wall initiative, and support for the World Bank's PROBLUE Trust Fund. Minister of State Brophy announced €2.5 million in funding by Ireland for the Least Developed Countries Fund and €1 million for the National Adaptation Plan Global Network.

In addition, the Department of Foreign Affairs actively engaged to ensure strong language on scaling up adaptation finance, a long-term priority for Irish Aid in Africa. The Department of Foreign Affairs also supported the participation at the Summit of youth delegates and gender equality advocates from Mozambique, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Burkina Faso, as well as the participation of a Government official from Malawi's Ministry of Energy.

Countries across sub-Saharan Africa continue to be impacted by unprecedented and overlapping disasters, widespread population displacement and food insecurity caused by flooding, desert locusts and the COVID-19 pandemic.

These resulted in **record levels of humanitarian needs** in 2021. The rise of hunger was most alarming in Africa - there were UN humanitarian appeals for sixteen countries in Africa – six of which called for more than \$1 billion in humanitarian aid (DRC, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan). Ireland worked closely with partners in Africa to address humanitarian crises. In line with Ireland's needs based approach, we continued to provide significant amounts of funding to the most severe crises. DRC, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia were amongst the greatest recipients of Ireland's humanitarian funding. We also continued to provide vital humanitarian assistance in protracted crises such as in CAR. As the situation in the Sahel deteriorated, Ireland also stepped up to support country specific and regional humanitarian responses.

In Uganda, which hosts the largest refugee population in sub-Saharan Africa with 1.4 million refugees, Ireland continues to work closely with the UN's World Food Programme and UNHCR, and Irish Aid provided funding of €3 million to support the refugee response with a focus on food and cash transfers, education, and combating sexual and gender-based violence. As a member of the Humanitarian and Resilience Donor Group in Ethiopia, Ireland consistently advocated for a scaled up response in Tigray and northern regions and compliance with humanitarian principles including for unimpeded humanitarian access and adherence to International Humanitarian Law. Ireland disbursed almost €25 million to partners operating in Ethiopia in response to the extensive humanitarian needs in 2021.

In Somalia, where the worsening drought has exacerbated existing humanitarian needs, Ireland's direct contribution to humanitarian projects in 2021 amounted to over €5 million, including €3 million to the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF), where Ireland is on the Advisory Board and is the 4th largest contributor. In Nigeria, Ireland provided €1 million to the Nigerian Humanitarian Fund, managed by UN OCHA, to focus on the humanitarian needs resulting from the Boko Haram insurgency in North East Nigeria. Ireland provided €500,000 to WFP for the provision of life-saving food for those most in need in Madagascar. Ireland also continued to support the Lake Chad Basin Regional Stabilisation Strategy through membership of the International Support Group.

Ireland's humanitarian assistance contributed to reducing people's need in sub-Saharan Africa by anticipating crises and acting early. Our funding supported actions to prevent and mitigate the impact of drought in Burkina Faso, Niger and Somalia as well as floods in South Sudan. This approach is faster, less expensive, more effective and most importantly, provides a more dignified response. Ireland advocated for protection and gender to be at the forefront of humanitarian responses – starting with the identification of needs and translating into actions that target the most vulnerable, including women and girls. The UN's Global Humanitarian Overview 2022 warns of unprecedented levels of humanitarian needs in Africa. Ireland will continue to provide predictable and targeted assistance to the most severe humanitarian crises in Africa.

## Spotlight: Ireland's Humanitarian Assistance to South Sudan in 2021

At the beginning of 2021, the UN estimated that there were over 7.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in South Sudan. Years of conflict, subnational violence, food insecurity, severe flooding and the COVID-19 pandemic had led to high levels of displacement and humanitarian needs.

Ireland responded with a comprehensive package of support of over €8.5 million to address the most pressing needs. This includes core and flexible funding of €5.5 million to key UN agencies who dedicated resources to the crisis in South Sudan.

We provided over €2.5 million to six Irish NGO partners who have a strong track record of delivering high quality humanitarian assistance in South Sudan. Our different funding schemes supported the NGOs to address both acute and chronic needs.

Through the Humanitarian Programme Plan (4-year funding), our NGO partners implemented programmes to address food insecurity, malnutrition and access to clean water. This multi-annual funding facilitates an approach that addresses underlying causes, builds local capacity and strengthens communities' ability to cope with shocks and stresses.

Our NGO partners responded rapidly to the devastating floods in Jonglei, Unity and Warrap states using Ireland's pre-positioned humanitarian funding. Emergency protection, shelter, health, water and cash were provided to over 20,000 people in the worst hit communities.

Ireland also provided funding to support critically underfunded areas of the response in South Sudan. The Mine Action Group (through a grant to the HALO Trust/ Mine Action Group consortium) received €330,000 for its critical demining work. The International Rescue Committee received €200,000 in support of its women's protection and empowerment programming, with a strong focus on the prevention and response to gender-based violence.

In 2021 Ireland was the eighth largest donor to the UN OCHA-managed South Sudan Humanitarian Fund, with a contribution of €2.5 million. The Fund allocated €62 million to provide protection, emergency health and education, water and sanitation and shelter to over 1.6 million people, predominantly women and girls. 71% was allocated to NGOs, including 23% to national NGOs.

Through Ireland's Rapid Response Initiative, Ireland deploys highly skilled and experienced individuals at short notice to assist in the work of UN Agencies. In 2021, two members of our Corps – an access officer and a communications expert - deployed with UNICEF to South Sudan. This type of expertise is critical to ensure that humanitarian assistance is delivered to those most in need, including in hard-to-reach areas.

**Strengthened governance** is central to our work across Africa with relevance to political and development objectives. In 2021, Ireland monitored the impacts of COVID-19 and other shocks on governance in African countries, and spoke out against restrictions on civil society space and human rights defenders. Ireland also continued to develop its Whole-of-Government Domestic Resource Mobilisation (DRM) initiative, both in partner countries such as Uganda and Malawi, and multilaterally where Ireland is a supporter of the Addis Tax Initiative 2025 and an active member of the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF). Ireland partners with Irish Rule of Law International (IRLI) to support access to justice for marginalised groups in South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania. IRLI is a whole-of-Ireland organisation that harnesses the expertise and knowledge within the Irish legal community to provide pro bono legal support, advice and technical assistance to developing countries. Through our partnership with IRLI, we have strengthened Ireland's support for rule of law issues in South Africa, Malawi and Tanzania; and most recently in Zambia, where we are developing a new programme. IRLI has a strong focus on human rights, women's rights, and addressing gender-based violence.

Responding to the pandemic's impact in Africa continued to be a major focus for Ireland in 2021. Across Africa, Ireland has played a **significant role in the coordination of the international community's response to COVID-19**, including mobilising Irish Health Service Executive expertise in Ethiopia and Mozambique. Ireland has been a strong supporter of a coordinated, global response to the pandemic and an early supporter of the COVAX global vaccine initiative. Support for COVAX continued into 2021 with a contribution of €7 million, part of Ireland's contribution to Global Health of over €100 million in 2021. In September, Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly T.D., and Minister



Over 1 million doses of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines arrive in Ghana from the Governments of Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg and Germany through the COVAX facility, December 2021. © DFA

Coveney announced that Ireland would donate at least one million COVID-19 vaccines to COVAX. This was followed by a bilateral donation of 335,500 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Uganda in October and 500,000 doses to Nigeria through COVAX in November. In October, during a visit to Uganda, Minister of State Brophy announced €2.4 million in funding through the WHO to support vaccine rollout and the COVID-19 response in Uganda.

In Mozambique, the **Health Service Executive** worked closely with the Mozambican health authorities to support COVID-19 specific measures in hospitals. Ireland delivered a major €8 million grant to Mozambique's health sector, critical for the sector's COVID-19 response. Ireland also continued its leadership role in co-chairing, with the UK, the high-level **International Community Crisis Task Force** in response to COVID-19 in Mozambique and to the humanitarian crisis in Cabo Delgado. Ireland has worked closely with the UN and other partners in Mozambique, including by supporting the establishment of a Protracted Crisis Unit at the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator. Ireland also continued its support to the Clinton Health Access Initiative, to provide maternal, newborn and child health in Mozambique.

Ireland's development cooperation responded to the **indirect impacts of the pandemic** in 2021. For example, in Uganda, which experienced the longest period of school closures in the world, Irish Aid funding of €1.8 million was provided through UNICEF to support preparation for school reopening. In Tanzania, a five year Memorandum of Understanding for the Government's Health Basket Fund was signed, enabling continued support for 5,800 local health facilities, including in hard-to-reach areas and Ireland supported Tanzania's Productive Social Safety Net Programme. In Malawi, Ireland provided support through UNICEF to strengthen the health sector's capability to handle a surge in cases and to handle vaccination against the virus. Some of this investment, particularly to Emergency Treatment Units, will have long-term benefits for the public health system. Also in Malawi, Ireland continued to be a significant player in the country's Social Cash Transfer Programme and building on this, with Irish support through UNICEF, Malawi has established a solid foundation for an adaptable and scalable social cash transfer programme. Through this responsive system and with Irish financial assistance, Malawi delivered COVID-19 social cash transfers to 23,000 households. In Sierra Leone, Ireland actively participated in the COVID-19 National Health Response (NHR), significantly contributing to the Food and Nutrition Pillar.



President Michael D. Higgins addresses the UN Food Systems Summit, September 2021. © Maxwells Photography

In September, Ireland participated in the **UN Global Food Systems Summit** in New York, joining almost 150 countries to endorse a global shift to sustainable food systems to withstand the climate crisis, hunger, poverty and inequality. The Summit is a key part of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs and Ireland was among the first to call for this high-level event. In 2020, the Government announced €1 million in support to the Summit. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine convened a series of four National Dialogues on Ireland's Food System as part of Ireland's engagement with the Summit. President Michael D. Higgins addressed the opening session of the Summit, outlining how sustainable food production could offer opportunities for farmers, particularly in Africa, to diversify and improve their livelihoods and the diversity of their diets. Ireland's Embassy network in Africa played a leadership role in galvanising political engagement in advance of the Summit. Ireland supported Sierra Leone's National Food Systems Dialogue, which culminated in a report on the way forward to tackle the problems of food and nutrition insecurity in the country.

Following on from the Food Systems Summit, Minister of State Brophy attended the **Nutrition for Growth Summit** hosted virtually by Japan in December. This flagship event convened a cross-section of stakeholders to announce financial and policy commitments and chart the path toward 2030 with concrete recommendations to the global community. Ireland made three substantial commitments with respect to refocusing attention on acute malnutrition, assisting countries to transform their Food Systems, and pledging €800 million for global nutrition over the next five years.



Irish Ambassador Mary O'Neill meeting Country Director and Representative of the UN World Food Programme in Tanzania, Sarah Gordon-Gibson. Ireland supports the World Food Programme in Tanzania to provide emergency food assistance for 235,000 refugees and to support 21,000 smallholders through the scaling-up of the Sorghum Climate Smart Programme. © DFA

In March, Ireland assumed a seat on the **Executive Board of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**. Minister of State Brophy announced €12.5 million in funding to 2024 in support of IFAD's work with farmers to improve food systems for rural communities in developing countries. With Irish assistance, 151,000 farmers in Malawi benefitted from technical support and 1,000km of farm roads were improved through the joint programme of support to the agricultural sector. Industrial hemp research has been boosted and will contribute towards improving the overall value chain and open up new commercial opportunities. Similarly, briquettes for use in domestic energy-saving cooking stoves have been developed using sustainable biomass materials.

Ireland increased funding for **education** in 2021, delivering on the commitment to allocate €250 million of ODA to education by 2023. In May, Minister of State Brophy pledged €60 million for the Global Partnership for Education. €10 million of this was earmarked to support girls' education. With 3 out of 5 Africans under 25 years old, education and investing in human capital has the potential to deliver huge impact. 87% of children in sub-Saharan Africa are 'learning poor' and COVID-19 disruptions have likely exacerbated the learning crisis and the number of children out-of-school, especially girls.



Minister Colm Brophy T.D. with Minister of Karamoja Affairs, Dr. Mary Goretti Kitutu Kimono, watching a student display at the Comboni Vocational Training Institute, Karamoja, Uganda, October 2021. © Kim Kinene

Girls' education is a priority for Ireland's international development cooperation. Before the pandemic, 52 million girls in sub-Saharan Africa were not in school. Through our partnerships in Africa, Ireland supports girls to reach their full potential, and through them, to lift households, communities and countries out of poverty. In Sierra Leone, Ireland worked with the World Bank, EU and UK to support about 2 million children access quality education. Ireland also worked with UNICEF to conduct research and strategy development actions to reduce the number of out-of-school children, especially girls. Ireland's support, through NGOs such as Plan International, World Vision and Education Cannot Wait, and the global fund for education in emergencies is ensuring that children caught up in conflict and other emergencies can continue their learning. In 2021, Minister of State Brophy pledged an additional €5 million to Education Cannot Wait, bringing Ireland's total commitment since 2019 to €11.85 million.

In July 2021, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris T.D., and Minister of State Brophy announced a new €3.2 million **Sustainable Development Goals Challenge Prize** as part of Ireland's efforts to enhance the contribution of research

to the SDGs. The programme, a partnership between Science Foundation Ireland and Irish Aid, supports academic researchers in Ireland and partner countries to collaborate in the development of innovative solutions to health and well-being, including infectious and non-communicable diseases, health systems strengthening, maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health. It also supports solutions in areas such as malnutrition and water sanitation. The programme will support research groups to develop sustainable solutions that will address challenges in selected countries where Irish Aid works; in Africa, this includes Ethiopia, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

Through the Programme Grant II and Civil Society Fund schemes, Ireland has supported a wide range of **civil society organisations** working in Africa. This support has enabled strong partnerships between Irish NGOs and African communities, civil society and governments, as they work together towards achieving the SDGs. It has delivered results in improved health and education outcomes, support for climate adaptation, increased agricultural yields and job creation. It also delivers important benefits in terms of promoting human rights, gender equality and civil society space.

# 5

## A more ambitious EU partnership with Africa

The EU attaches a high priority to its partnership with Africa and Ireland remains actively engaged in making this partnership more ambitious, effective and beneficial for both sides. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed efforts to strengthen the partnership, but there was significant progress in 2021.

The EU-Africa partnership was discussed in March 2021 at the 18<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy, attended by an Oireachtas delegation. EU parliamentarians called for a true partnership between the EU and the AU, with a focus on increased coherence across EU policies, the results-oriented transparent allocation of EU resources, and a reinvigorated political alliance going beyond traditional development and humanitarian cooperation.

In May 2021, EU Foreign Ministers discussed the EU-Africa partnership at their informal Gymnich meeting, attended by Minister Coveney. In June, Minister of State for Research and Development, Farm Safety and New Market Development, Martin Heydon T.D., participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Agriculture Ministerial Conference and delivered a speech on agricultural research and innovation. In September, Taoiseach Micheál Martin participated in an informal working dinner on the EU-Africa partnership with a select number of other EU and African leaders, hosted by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel.

In October 2021, Minister of State Brophy participated in the **second AU-EU Ministerial Meeting**, which was held in Kigali, Rwanda. Ministers from Africa and the EU discussed the AU-EU strategic partnership with a focus on peace, security and governance, and on boosting investment in human and economic development. The Ministerial was an important building block to prepare for the 6<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit, scheduled to take place in Brussels in February 2022 following its postponement in 2020 due to the pandemic. Ireland actively engaged in discussions at the Foreign Affairs Council and European Council in December 2021 that discussed EU priorities and joint initiatives to be adopted at the Summit.



Minister Colm Brophy T.D. meeting Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vincent Biruta, who hosted the AU-EU Ministerial Meeting in Kigali in October 2021. © Rwanda Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation



AU-EU Ministerial Meeting, Kigali, Rwanda, October 2021. © EEAS



© Global Europe

Ireland continued to work to ensure coordinated and coherent approaches across the various EU-Africa frameworks for cooperation, including in the process of agreeing a successor to the **Cotonou Partnership Agreement** with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. Ireland engaged proactively throughout 2021 on EU development programming under the new **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation (NDICI)-Global Europe instrument** and planning of flagship **Team Europe Initiatives** to boost the impact and profile of the EU's engagement in Africa. NDICI-Global Europe includes funding of just over €29 billion for sub-Saharan Africa, and €19.3 billion for the EU's Neighbourhood, which includes a number of North African countries, under the 2021-27 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). In 2021, Ireland influenced the development of Multi-annual Indicative Programmes for NDICI-Global Europe funding in Africa through active engagement in Brussels and at country level in Africa.

NDICI-Global Europe's development finance component is the European Fund for Sustainable Development + (EFSD+) which has an overall budget of €54 billion over the 2021-27 MFF period. This instrument will be critical in leveraging the private sector finance and role of Development Finance Institutions in furthering their development impact in Africa. As part of the revised European Financial Architecture for Development, Ireland welcomed the launch of the European Investment Bank's (EIB) Global branch in January 2022. Ireland, represented by the Department of Finance at the EIB, continued to advocate for a focus on Least Developed Countries, SIDS and fragile states.

In 2021, Ireland supported a more targeted **Team Europe approach** to engagement with African partners. Ministers and officials engaged with EU Member States on EU-Africa relations and African issues, including with Germany, France, Finland, Portugal, Sweden and Slovenia. African



Minister Simon Coveney T.D. meeting the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, Annette Weber, September 2021. © DFA

files were also discussed throughout the year at several European Council meetings, Foreign Affairs Councils, meetings of EU Development Ministers, COREPER II and Political and Security Committee meetings as well as weekly meetings of the Africa Working Group (COAFR) and the Working Party on Development Cooperation and International Partnerships (CODEV). In 2021, Ireland actively contributed to the development of a new EU Sahel Strategy and a new EU Horn of Africa Strategy, providing the strategic framework for the EU's engagement in two key regions of Africa.

In September, Minister Coveney met the new EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, Annette Weber, to discuss developments in the region; DFA officials continue to engage with EUSR Weber on the ongoing and overlapping challenges in the Horn of Africa. Ireland also continued to enhance engagement with the EU Special Representative for the Sahel. In 2021, Ireland's Special Envoy for the Sahel held bilateral meetings with the outgoing EU Special Representative for the Sahel, Angel Losada, and the newly appointed EU Special Representative, Emanuela Del Re, as well as attending the Working Group of EU Sahel Special Envoys.

In 2021, Ireland continued to engage proactively in **EU peace and security activities in Africa**, contributing 20 Defence Forces personnel to the EU Training Mission in Mali and three naval personnel to the Operation HQ of Operation IRINI. Ireland also funded five Irish experts in civilian CSDP missions in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and three civilian experts in the EU's capacity building mission in Somalia. The opening of new Embassies in Morocco in 2021 and in Senegal will support Ireland's active contributions to the EU's engagement in the region, particularly in the Sahel, which is a region of high priority to the EU faced with complex security and humanitarian challenges.

# 6

## A strong Team Ireland approach will increase our impact

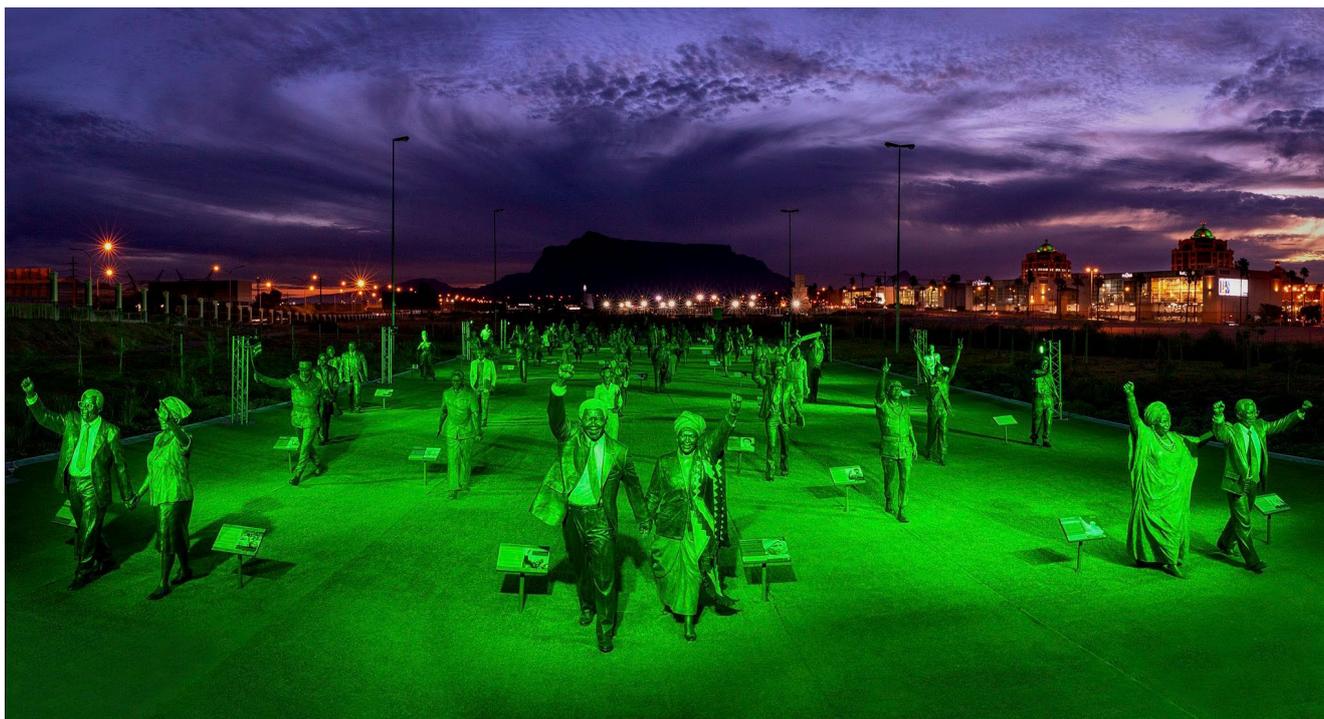
Team Ireland worked effectively together in the delivery of the Africa Strategy in 2021, from supporting the COVID-19 response to vaccine donations, advancing Ireland's work on climate action in Africa, trade promotion, supporting private-sector collaboration and supporting peace and security on the continent.

In 2021, Ireland opened a **new Embassy in Morocco**. The Government also **announced in July 2021 that a new Embassy would open in Senegal**. The new missions will enable Team Ireland to deepen engagement in the economically dynamic North and West Africa regions and provide important entry points for enhancing access to emerging markets in these regions. The opening of an embassy in Dakar will provide the opportunity for an enhanced regional development programme, building on the intersections between Ireland's peacekeeping and conflict resolution work, political engagement, development cooperation and humanitarian action, to address the root causes of instability in the region. Work has also continued on the development of a new flagship Chancery in Nigeria. At the same time, work is ongoing in existing missions to expand our partnerships and links with Africa. For example, in Egypt, the Embassy has played a role in securing a direct air route between Cairo and Dublin, postponed from June 2020 to June 2022 by the pandemic.

Although the pandemic restricted in-person cultural events again in 2021, Team Ireland delivered a successful **St. Patrick's Day** programme across Africa. Tourism Ireland's Global Greening initiative saw a record number of famous landmarks around the world go green, including new sites in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa. Team Ireland's 'Virtual Ireland House' hub enabled a diverse global audience to experience and share in the collective celebration. 2021 also witnessed the **largest St. Brigid's Day celebrations in Africa to date**, including the first celebration in Ethiopia, with the theme of 'women as agents of change'.



© Dakar Logo



South Africa, Egypt, Mozambique and Kenya were among the African countries that turned landmarks green for St. Patrick's Day as part of the 2021 Global Greening. © DFA/Tourism Ireland

**Bloomsday** was marked across the African continent in 2021. The Bloomsday short film, *Opening Ulysses*, generated a digital reach of over 17 million and featured contributions from Ireland's Embassies in Kenya, Nigeria and Malawi. Ireland's Embassy in Mozambique collaborated with Dom Junior, a local rapper whose work frequently addresses social issues, to create "Bloomsday Song", a piece celebrating Mozambican and Irish culture and creativity.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present challenges for our people in Africa throughout 2021. Ireland's Embassy network responded to a significant number of consular queries for assistance and up-to-date travel advice. In December, following the suspension of flights into Morocco linked to the discovery of a new Coronavirus variant, DFA facilitated the repatriation of Irish, EU and UK citizens from Morocco to Ireland. In Ethiopia, the Embassy assisted with a number of consular cases related to the conflict in the country and the government's introduction of a nationwide state of emergency. In the first six months of the year and at the end of the year, Ireland's Embassy in South Africa dealt with a very significant increase in visa demand following the introduction of visa requirements for the region on public health grounds. The identification of the Omicron coronavirus variant in November 2021 and the resulting travel bans required the activation of the Embassy's crisis plan to provide support to approximately 250 Irish visitors who experienced significant travel disruption.

## Spotlight: Ireland's Diaspora in Africa

In January 2021, Ireland lost an inspirational member of the Global Irish community when Fr. Michael Kelly passed away in Zambia at the age of 91.

From Tullamore, and educated at UCD, Fr. Kelly had lived in Zambia for over 50 years. There he worked as a secondary school teacher, becoming headmaster, before moving into academia, including a time as Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zambia. Fr. Kelly was perhaps best known for his advocacy on HIV and AIDS, and he was a strong and articulate proponent for human rights. As an academic, writer and educator, and through his work with Irish Aid and several multilateral organisations, Fr. Kelly made an immense contribution to improved health outcomes for many people in sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2012, Fr. Kelly received the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad from President Higgins. In 2018 he received the Order of Distinguished Service Award from President Lungu of Zambia, in recognition of



Fr. Michael Kelly. © DFA

his contributions to the promotion of education and social justice, and his advocacy on HIV/AIDS. In 2020, his image featured on a stamp by An Post as part of their series celebrating the achievements of the Irish abroad.

The Father Michael Kelly HIV and AIDS Lecture, initiated in 2006, is held annually to coincide with World AIDS Day on 1 December to provide a platform for debate on the global AIDS pandemic. In December 2021, academics, activists and diplomats who had been influenced by Fr. Kelly paid tribute to his work in de-stigmatising attitudes towards those living with HIV/AIDS.

Fr. Michael Kelly left a lasting impact in Ireland and Zambia and his work provided an example of how members of the Irish diaspora contribute to improving the world in which we live. The contribution of Irish Missionaries in Africa was further recognised in 2021 when Br. Colm O'Connell and Sr. Orla Treacy received Presidential Distinguished Service Awards for their outstanding contribution to the lives of people in Kenya and South Sudan respectively.



President Michael D. Higgins presented Presidential Distinguished Service Awards to Br. Colm O'Connell (Kenya) and Sr. Orla Treacy (South Sudan) in December 2021. © Maxwells Photography





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