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CIDSE Welcomes Scotland's 'World Leading' Climate Legislation

Scotland has laid down a challenge to the rest of the developed world by passing the most ambitious climate change legislation of any industrialised nation.

The Scottish Parliament unanimously agreed to cut the country's greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020, and at least 80% by 2050, following a huge push by Scottish campaigners including SCIAF, Scottish member of CIDSE, an international alliance of Catholic development agencies.

"The Scottish bill is setting a clear example and our campaigners will encourage decision makers in developed countries around the world to follow it," CIDSE Secretary General Bernd Nilles said.

The new Scottish legislation, which also includes counting emissions from aviation and shipping, sets an example to world governments ahead of UN climate talks in Copenhagen in December that strong action on climate change can and must be taken.

"Uniquely, Scotland's targets are guided by science as opposed to political expediency. They are based on what we have to do, rather than what we feel we can do. This is a positive and rational response to a global challenge, and we are calling on governments across the world to follow suit," Chris Hegarty, SCIAF's Advocacy Manager said.

Scotland's Climate Change Minister Stewart Stevenson said: "Climate Change is the most serious threat we face. The Scottish Government is responding with the most ambitious and comprehensive climate change legislation anywhere in the world."

CIDSE runs a joint Climate Justice campaign with Caritas Internationalis. Their national member organisations will be stepping up their lobby and campaigning activities at the national and international levels between now and December to raise ambitions for a fair and just climate change deal in Copenhagen, as climate change is having a devastating impact on poor communities in developing countries with increased droughts, floods, and changing seasonal weather patterns.

Leading elements of the bill include:

- At least a 42% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (based on 1990 levels);
- At least an 80% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (based on 1990 levels);
- Emissions from international aviation & shipping to be included from the start;
- Strong duty across the public sector to play a full part in tackling Scotland's greenhouse gas emission;
- Commitment to report annually on consumption-based emissions;
- Strong energy efficiency measures to tackle fuel poverty and save energy.

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1) The Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) is Scotland's leading international development organisation. It was set up in 1965 as the official international development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland. SCIAF works in over 20 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America helping people to work their way out of poverty, regardless of their race or religion. It provides emergency and development aid as well as campaigning for trade justice, debt relief, more and better aid, and to address climate change. www.sciaf.org.uk

2) CIDSE is an international alliance of Catholic development agencies. Its members share a common strategy in their efforts to eradicate poverty and establish global justice. CIDSE's advocacy work covers global governance, resources for development, climate change, trade & food security, EU development policy and business & human rights. www.cidse.org