

# Small nations and international relations: Ireland's approach to foreign policy

## Reflection by Jayden Hooper.

Joe Hackett, the secretary general of Ireland, emphasized several common values that Ireland shares with New Zealand. In the dialogue, the main ideas discussed were the Russian invasion of Ukraine, climate change and the European Union. So how does New Zealand interact with Ireland on the key concepts?

Russia's attack on Ukraine broke international humanitarian laws. Joe Hackett mentions that Ireland's second most significant value is Human Rights. With their shared values, New Zealand and Ireland have responded in many vital ways. Of the most substantial:

- Ireland made an initiative to offer unoccupied homes for temporary stay to people fleeing the war in Ukraine.
- New Zealand seized its free trade agreement with Russia and applied tariffs of 35% on all imports from Russia. Exports have been suspended, including engines, machinery, and other potential military-related goods.
- Ireland has contributed **€77 million** to non-lethal support to Ukraine.
- New Zealand has supported the Ukraine military with over **\$22 million** for non-lethal defence.

Climate change brings similar problems for both Ireland and New Zealand. Joe Hackett states a pressing need for mitigation, adaption, agriculture and a focus on the significant effects in Africa.

Agriculture brings nearly a third of Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions, similar to New Zealand's. Joe Hackett says Ireland is funding **€7 million** into agriculture, and a second round of funding will be due to come in the next year. More discussion on agriculture will fall on Saint Patrick's day held in New Zealand.

Relating this to a previous speaker event on gender and climate change, it would be good to see an effort to bring more support to girls and women to deal with this issue

indirectly. There was no mention of gender and support for girls and women at this event.

Joe Hackett states that the European Union is why Ireland transformed from one of the worst economies in Europe to one of the healthiest. It gave Ireland confidence in having a global presence. Acknowledging that the Russian and Ukraine conflict has weakened Europe, Joe Hackett claims the European Union has made a remarkable transformation for Ireland and urges New Zealand to continue a strong relationship with them. Since Ireland shares the same values as New Zealand and has a strong relationship with the European Union, it would make sense for New Zealand to keep a strong relationship with them both.

With one in six New Zealanders eligible to claim Irish ancestry, Ireland has had a clear, long-lasting relationship with New Zealand since the treaty of Waitangi. Continuing to have a strong relationship with Ireland and the European Union is likely a favourable decision for New Zealand and its people.