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**In this edition  
Finland starts North South Project  
New Publications from UNRISD  
32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Social Welfare**

**Finland starts North South Project**

Finland is committed to strengthening the multilateral system. Maybe that is not news but it was heartening to hear this commitment at the Seminar “Globalization and Development Cooperation between North and South”. The expression of commitment was included in the speech by Ritva Koukku-Ronde Director General Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

The seminar was organised by the Finnish National Committee of ICSW and the Association of Social Policy and marked the commencement of the North South project between Finland and Tanzania. More of that later.

Ms Koukku-Ronde outlined her Ministry’s focus on extreme poverty. The Ministry seeks to strengthen national approaches to poverty reduction and enhancing the social aspects of development. She emphasised the need for coherence with civil society particularly at the national level. In speaking of aid effectiveness she spoke of ownership, partnership, effectiveness, complementarity and transparency.

Finland’s commitment to development cooperation is increasing. At the present rate of GDP growth, the government estimates that it will reach a development budget of 0.44 of GDP by 2007 and 0.7 by 2010. This will then mean that Finland has reached the target set by the UN.

Much has been written about the Poverty Reduction Papers process. Ms Koukku-Ronde described the Finnish approach which is to provide budget support based on the Poverty Reduction Papers. Targets are agreed to with the recipient governments and the donor community. Emphasis is placed on supporting capacity building.

Finland has been seeking ways to increase the effectiveness of its development policies. The method chosen is to direct the majority of its appropriations to bilateral development. Finland has long term commitments in Africa to Mozambique, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia and Kenya. In Latin America to Nicaragua and in Asia to Vietnam and Nepal. In