

will be uncontroversial. But the Cabinet also seems set to license any voluntary council, and that could have implications for press freedoms. Philip Watt, Director of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism, called at DCU for the Government not to license any council until its code of practice includes provisions that he considers desirable. Will other groups have other demands, some more reasonable than others, and how many of these may find their way into an ever more restrictive code of practice now or in the future?

Toulmin admitted that there is a problem with the term

‘self-regulation’. He said: “It stimulates suspicion everywhere. Critics see the ‘self’ and think ‘self-interest’. Journalists see the ‘regulation’ and think ‘interference.’”

Furthermore, Toulmin asserted that various safeguards which are built into procedures at the self-regulatory PCC, including involvement by members of the public, mean that “the PCC is a far cry from the way in which our detractors sometimes characterise us, as being in the pockets of the industry, or secretive, or dominated by editors at the decision making level.”

The NUJ is not part of the UK Press Complaints Commission but

is likely to be included in the envisaged Irish press council. The NUJ’s chief representative in Ireland, Seamus Dooley told the symposium at DCU that he does not unduly fear future horse-trading with government over the formation and constitution of any Irish press council.

Dooley pointed out that there are already deals done by senior politicians and newspaper management about media matters, and that there will be a continuing need for journalists and the public to be vigilant no matter what system of press regulation is in place.

Major development conference at DCU hears groundbreaking address

For years Ireland has prided itself on its tradition of overseas aid development. Internationally it has not gone unnoticed, as Peadar Kirby reports.

“Ireland is one of the few cases of developmental democracies we have, and its development experience may be of interest to many other countries,” said Thandika Mkandawire, Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), when he delivered the keynote address at a major development conference called ‘Linking the Local and the Global: Education for Development in a Globalising World’ in DCU on 23 March.

The conference was organised by the Centre for International Studies and sponsored by Irish Aid – the third in a series of third-level conferences sponsored by them since 2002. The 2006 conference brought together 130 scholars from Europe, North America and countries of the South, i.e. the Southern



Thandika Mkandawire, Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

hemisphere. Those present included most of the leading academics in Irish universities working on issues of international development. A new dimension this year was the grant of bursaries to speakers from countries of the South. Academics and civil society

activists from India, South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Malawi, Zambia and Pakistan were therefore able to present papers.

Having opened the conference, the Minister of State for Development Cooperation and Human Rights, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, was treated to Mr Mkandawire's insightful view of a 'Smart Ireland'.

"It is important that the acquisition and generation of knowledge about developing countries are given greater attention if the notion of a 'Smart Ireland' is to be extended to its role as an aid donor," said Mr Mkandawire.

Again and again during his visit to DCU – his first visit to Ireland – Mr Mkandawire emphasised that Ireland's development experience should be better known throughout the developing world.

Over the two days of the conference 70 papers were presented in 21 panels. Panel subjects ranged from development education to education in the South; from health to HIV/AIDS; from governance and globalisation to civil society; from information and communications technologies (ICTs) to the millennium development goals (MDGs); from agriculture to culture; and from the environment to conflict.

Mr Mkandawire's keynote address was particularly appreciated by participants as it delivered a courageous and groundbreaking critique of today's dominant approaches towards international development because they ignore the causes of poverty.

"They are focused on measuring things that people lack to the detriment of understanding why they lack them," said Mr Mkandawire. "Consequently, not much is said about such aspects as mutually self-reinforcing vertical and horizontal inequalities, and the impact of orthodox macroeconomic policies and the disequalising impact of market forces on poverty."

In a comment that was particularly apt for a largely Irish audience, he added: "If current poverty-reduction approaches have any historical antecedents, they resemble features of the Poor Laws under the Anglo-Saxon model – not a remarkably successful way of rapidly combating poverty."

Originally from Malawi, Mr Mkandawire called on scholars to forge a new development discourse because the major challenge today, he believes, is the edification of a social order that is developmental, democratic and socially inclusive.



Pictured (from l. to r.) are Dr Peadar Kirby, Director International Studies, DCU, Mr Thandika Mkandawire, Director, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and Mr Conor Lenihan, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Furthermore, he urged that development studies not be relegated to specialised institutes or area studies. "In a way development studies have lost some of their intellectual moorings by being excessively driven by the development establishment," he feared.

A consequence of this, he argued, is that valuable lessons from the experiences of developed countries have little resonance in developing countries, and vice versa. He therefore recommended that development scholars study not just poor countries but also the histories and dynamics of the interlinkages between the rich and poor countries and how they impinge on poverty.

Among the striking contributions to the conference was a paper by Prof Salim Rashid of the University of Illinois. Prof Rashid urged his Irish audience to study the works of George Berkeley (1685–1753), the philosopher and Anglican Bishop of Cloyne, whom he credits with being the world's first development economist, having anticipated the ideas that are today the mainstay of development studies.

Before the conference opened, DCU also hosted a formal meeting between the Minister of State and Mr Mkandawire, which was also attended by Paula Slattery, Head of the Multilateral Division at the Department of Foreign Affairs. The conference marked a new collaboration between DCU's Centre for International Studies and UNRISD, which has its headquarters in Geneva. The collaboration was marked by the announcement that UNRISD has adopted DCU Library as a depositary library for its publications in English.