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- US Ambassador Dan Rooney attends JBC Cross Border business meeting
- Call for creation of single coherent cross border economic programme

A cross border business network meeting organised by the Joint Business Council in Monaghan today was attended by Tom Noonan, President of IBEC, along with guest of honour, US Ambassador to Ireland, Dan Rooney.

Speaking at the event, Mr Noonan referred to the official structures for cross border economic co-operation which he described as unduly complex and lacking in terms of overall strategic direction. He urged the two Governments, in the context of the North South Ministerial Council, to strengthen the overall impact of cross border bodies and to work towards the creation of a single coherent cross border economic programme.

This, he said, could be achieved by incorporating major EU funding mechanisms such as INTERREG into this single coherent structure.

Mr Noonan said ‘Cross border co-operation has played, and can continue to play, a strong role in creating jobs and prosperity for communities on both sides of the border.’

However, he said, the effectiveness of these programmes is compromised by undue fragmentation and overlap, resulting in unnecessary duplication of effort.

The Joint Business Council, today called on the two Governments to publish without further delay, the outcome of the review of the work of the cross border bodies (including IntertradeIreland and Waterways Ireland) that was launched in 2007 and which remains unpublished.

Mr Noonan also paid tribute to the exceptional commitment of Ambassador Rooney to the process of reconciliation in Northern Ireland and he acknowledged the continuing efforts of the United States, as a global superpower, to support the development of competitive economies North and South.

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Note to Editors:

The IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council was established in 1991 by IBEC and CBI Northern Ireland. The mission of the Joint Council is to sustain and develop economic co-operation in the island of Ireland and to advance international competitiveness.