

ALD2/216/10/5/3

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“ P R E S S R E L E A S E ”

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Alliance demands more flexible approach from IDB

Alliance Leader, Dr John Alderdice, and Economy Spokesman Peter Osbourne, will this afternoon tell Economy Minister, Baroness Denton, that a more flexible approach is necessary if the IDB is to capitalize on the opportunities offered in the USA.

The meeting was arranged some time ago to follow up on a Trade and Investment Conference in Baltimore, which was organized by the Alliance Party, in cooperation with the Economy Minister of the State of Maryland, Secretary Brady, and supported by the DED.

Dr Alderdice who addressed the conference, and has since met with the John McGuickan, Chairman of the IDB, and Chief Executive, Bruce Robinson, has spoken critically of the IDB's approach.

In advance of the meeting he said:

"We will be presenting the Minister with a private paper outlining a number of our concerns, and asking for a rethink of the IDB approach. Some good work is being done, and some success is being achieved, but there is a rigidity of approach that one can often find in a civil service type organization, which is ill-fitted for the business world, and simply ensures that we will miss out on important opportunities.

The US administration has done a great deal to support trade and business development between Northern Ireland and the USA. Our direct experience to date has been that the IDB has a considerable way to go before it learns how to work with other people and achieve the benefits that this brings. There tends to be a staid plodding attitude, which lacks imagination, and fails to grasp creatively, and sometimes even to respond at all, to anything which is outside of a narrow purview."

