

**Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile**

**Irish Federation of University Teachers**

**PRESS RELEASE – 16 March 2009**

**IFUT RESPONDS TO REPORTS OF JOB LOSSES IN UNIVERSITIES**

IFUT General Secretary, Mike Jennings, said any rationalisation of higher education would only work if it emerged from a sincere and constructive engagement with all of the stakeholders, particularly the university staff who are represented by IFUT.

“Rationalisation could be a good thing if it were genuinely aimed at bringing about improvements in the education system. However, any programme of rationalisation which is only a flag of convenience for cost cutting will generate only conflict and acrimony”, Mr Jennings said.

Recently the Minister for Education set up a Review Body to draw up a Strategic Review of Higher Education. Ominously, this body does not have a single member who is a serving Lecturer in a university.

Any top-down rationalisation which is imposed by diktat and without agreement simply will not work. The Government should learn from the decentralisation farce and recognise that better, more intelligent, more workable outcomes are achieved when the people directly involved are fully and genuinely consulted and listened to.

Brian Cowen has said that he believes in Social Partnership. It is time for Batt O’Keeffe to demonstrate that he shares this view.

Finally, IFUT reiterates its position that no compulsory redundancies in the higher education sector will be acceptable.

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