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Director-General
Directorate-General Environment
Commission of the European Union
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels

9 July, 2003.

**Re: European Court of Justice Judgment in Case C-316/00,
Commission -v-Ireland**

Dear Director-General

I have been asked by my authorities to refer to your correspondence of 25 November 2002 in the above matter and to enclose a detailed statement regarding the measures taken by Ireland to comply with the judgment in Case C-316/00, concerning Ireland's implementation and transposition of Directive 80/778/EEC on the quality of water for human consumption.

At the outset, I wish to emphasise my authorities' commitment to take all necessary actions to comply with the judgment, which has been carefully considered. My authorities met informally with Commission representatives on 28 February 2003 on the matter and both sides found the meeting to be positive and constructive. The intention of this correspondence is to address Ireland's response to the judgement in accordance with the framework agreed with the Commission at that meeting. A copy of the speaking note used by my authorities at the meeting is at **Annex 1** to this correspondence.

The Commission will generally be aware from Ireland's Defence and Rejoinder of the numerous measures which have been put in the place to tackle and resolve deficiencies in its drinking water supplies. Such measures include:

- Major and record investment under the National Development Plan/Water Services Investment Programme/Rural Water Programme.
- The utilisation of Environmental Protection Agency reports to target investment.
- Preparation of Rural Water Strategic Plans for all counties.
- A National Source Monitoring Programme for the 750 group schemes using a private source and serving 50 persons or more.

- 100% grants for treatment/disinfection equipment for group schemes.
- Piloting of new treatment technologies and use of DBO contracts for the group scheme sector.
- Introduction of a Quality Assurance Scheme, based on the HACCP model, and a Charter of Rights for the group scheme sector.
- Source protection measures.

With regard to these measures Ireland notes that the Advocate General's Opinion given in April 2002 made reference to the appreciable initiatives which have been put in place to promote the quality of drinking water in rural areas (para 29).

Ireland has now put in place a three-pronged national strategy to remedy deficiencies in its drinking water supplies. Ireland will report to the Commission at regular intervals on implementation of this strategy. The strategy incorporates legislative, operational and investment facets. The initiatives and measures being taken by Ireland under this strategy are detailed in the enclosed Statement. Ireland assures the Commission that the implementation of this strategy will bring closure to the problem of the failure of supplies, in particular group water supplies, to meet the microbiological standards specified in Directive 80/778/EEC. In addition, the Commission has specifically sought information in relation to source protection measures and my authorities' response in this regard is set out in the enclosed Statement.

My authorities believe that the enclosed Statement represents an integrated and coherent approach to meeting Ireland's obligations resulting from the Court's judgment. These measures are designed to achieve necessary water quality objectives within a realistic timeframe rather than setting unattainable and very short term goals. Our reporting will demonstrate the systematic and progressive attainment of the objectives set out.

My authorities are available for discussions if required and wish to extend an invitation to Commission representatives to view progress on the ground at first hand.

Yours sincerely,



pp.

Counsellor