

The 'Global Ireland' Policy platform, Small Island Developing States and the geopolitics of an interstitial Ireland

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Abstract: Through its Global Ireland strategy, the Government of Ireland (GOI) is projecting an ambitious foreign policy platform into the global commons. A range of policy modules have been developed and are being deployed discursively in specific targeted markets. It is an ambitious programme, for a small country. Common narratives of Ireland and Irish identity are being projected fuzzily, to best effect, in different regions. Commonly held policy narratives include i) Ireland as a networked member of the international economic order, ii) Ireland as a European Union member of long standing, iii) Ireland as an edge-island, iv) Ireland as an emigrant sending state with a widely distributed diaspora. Here, I find that Ireland successfully deploys these sometimes contradictory narratives from a deliberately interstitial foundation in space. The nexus of connection and separation is creatively deployed in these Irish policies and the GOI is seen to be performing a powerful political geography, as a result.

Key words: *Interstitial space, foreign policy, diaspora, Ireland*

Introduction

Ireland has a long history of adopting foreign policy positions that seek to impact positively on the experience of “those least able to act effectively” in international relations (Sharp, 1987: 56). Ireland’s historical ‘communaire’ strategy in European affairs and, in more recent times, its strong support for the workings of the rules-based international order, are but two established cases in point. It comes as no surprise therefore, to see Ireland’s recent reach-out into the global commons in ‘defense’ of the small independent state-based actor in general and of the Small Island and Developing State (SIDS) in particular. Specifically, in tandem with the standard set of regionally-focused policy modules, Ireland’s current *Global Ireland* suite of foreign policy strategies includes two

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geographically dispersed modules aimed at SIDS, globally – entitled i) *Ireland's strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States* (GOI, 2019) and ii) *Ireland's second strategy for partnership with small island developing states* (GOI, 2023)¹. There is nothing particularly novel in this. Lannon (2023) for example, charts the EU's currently general engagement with SIDS and firmly situates this orientation beyond a standard 'Post-Cotonou' construction of regional preferential trading relations, to the European Union's developing maritime, security and defense policy frameworks, worldwide². Many small places are now seen to be potentially significant actors in world geopolitics, certainly at a level far beyond their territorial footprint. However, Ireland is a new entrant into this realm and the 'Global Ireland' policy platform is an innovative Irish policy projection. This policy is predicated on the GOI's increasing understanding of the global character of Ireland's diasporic population and a concomitant need/ability to maintain a global outlook that, as then Tanaiste (deputy prime minister) and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney, states is inevitably "influenced by connecting with people and events around the world" (GOI, 2018a: 5).

This short commentary reflects on this national projection and considers how the GOI's current policy strategies seek to present a positive vision of Ireland to the benefit of other small island nations. Importantly, through this narrative creation, Irish policy is seen to situate the country in a deliberately interstitial geo-position³. Ireland is simultaneously imagined as i) a country of the global north, benefiting from its geographic proximity to major economic and political actors in the rules-based international economy whilst, at the same time, being articulated as ii) a separate and independent actor, performing

¹ Initially launched in 2018, with the stated aim of "doubling Ireland's footprint and impact by 2025", the Government of Ireland's Global Ireland strategy has been developed and strengthened over the past number of years, by the publication of a range of targeted regional strategies and updates (see <https://www.ireland.ie/en/global-ireland-strategies>).

² For clarity, the term 'Post-Cotonou' refers to the European Union's partnership agreement with 47 African, 16 Caribbean and 15 Pacific countries. It referenced a range of common principals across a number of priority areas of common interest. This agreement concluded in 2021 and was replaced with the Samoa Agreement, in 2023 (see, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/samoa-agreement>).

³ A varied literature exists in fields as diverse as organisational theory, gender studies, urban planning, political sociology and international relations but, I see the interstitial moment as an inherently spatial concept, at once encapsulating notions of the space that exists in-between dominant practices and constructions and the connections needed to bridge those 'gaps'. It has, unsurprisingly, gained some significant traction in geography. Political geographers have been deploying the concept to great effect in the study of many different intersectional moments. McGregor (2019) for example, is illustrative of many urban political geographers, finding traction for the idea in her consideration of the geographies of environmental activism in the city, whilst Rossi (2021), Muller (2020) and Kuus (2022) respectively deploy the idea at different scales – in the strategic study of Sino-Indian tension along the LAC, in a plea for a renewed recognition of 'the Global East' more generally, and at the training of diplomats in the EU. A particularly notable, and developing field of study seems to lie in the realm of island geographies. Maggio (2023) for example, deploys the concept in a treatment of some recent developments in the Kiribati archipelago. Simpson and Sheller (2022) use the concept to theorise how many new Island geographies are being created in-between borders to help undermine the dominance of sovereign territory and currency through the creation of physical, political and economic zones of ambiguity. Whilst, Kelman (2023) harnesses the concept to illustrate the inherently contingent geographies of islands, in general and Chandler and Pugh (2022) use the concept as a conduit into some innovative conceptualizations of Island Geographies more generally.

distance from ‘the core’ by virtue of its island-status and its historico-cultural experience of colonization, conflict/post-conflict and necessary out-migration. In short, it is the policy-construction of a simultaneously ‘core’ European state and a peripheral ‘Large Ocean State’ (LOS) in the ‘Sea of Islands’ – a site of geographical connection and separation, fuzzily enacted as neither wholly part of the global core or ‘cleanly’ peripheral to it. In this, the GOI is seen to be performing a powerful political geography and Ireland is imagined as an interstitial geopolitical moment, in itself. This enables it to develop a relational multi-position in the policy space, allowing for Irish agenda-setting strategy to be enacted beyond the country’s absolute location in the Global North (see, Vacheuz, 2011:343)⁴.

‘Global Ireland’ – Narratives of separation and connection

‘Global Ireland’ supports an ecosystem of related strategy positions. This ecosystem betrays some considerable ambition. It looks to “advance and defend (Ireland’s) interests and values internationally”, in an environment characterized by “increasing global interdependence and growing unpredictability”, by doubling “the impact (Ireland has) in the world” (GOI, 2018a: 10). A range of different issues-packages are discernible but, clear discursive understandings are presented and given different weight in different geographical contexts.

Roselle *et.al.*’s (2014: 71) conceptualization of ‘strategic narrative’ is a useful concept here. This analysis recognizes that foreign policy narratives of this nature tend to be structured on three levels – i) an upper-level world-view, or system narrative, ii) a mid-level policy narrative, iii) an operational issues narrative. Arceneaux (2021: 7) certainly wielded such a strategy when effectively unpacking the “formation, projection and reception” of Ireland’s 2020 campaign to gain election to the UNSC – a key subsidiary aim of the current *Global Ireland* platform.

Ireland’s foundational ‘upper-level’ narrative projects a globally-networked nation operating at the heart of an ordered, integrated, and inter-dependent international system. Global Ireland’s policy module that outlines the GOI’s current view of Ireland-Africa relations (*Global Ireland: Ireland’s Strategy for Africa to 2025*) is illustrative here when it pronounces that “an effective rules-based international order is at the heart of Ireland’s vision for a peaceful, prosperous planet (GOI, 2018b: 4). At this level of presentation, imaginaries of Ireland are well-anchored in the global north. Ireland’s most significant regional engagement with the European Union (EU) reinforces this primary orientation. Europe is presented as Ireland’s ‘normal and natural’ zone of activity. No ambitious policy projection is present, nor does it need to be. Instead, Ireland self-identifies as a “positive and constructive member state” making an already “strong contribution to the EU’s external policies” and mindful of its interests being “advanced and protected through a

⁴ See Kelman (2023) for a detailed consideration of ‘separation and connection in the interstitial island.

union of 500 million people rather than standing” by itself (GOI, 2018a: 27)⁵. Different narrative constructions are used in Ireland’s projection to different target markets but Ireland performs its EU identity throughout. As the *Global Ireland – Delivering in the Asia-Pacific Region to 2025* strategy module states –

“we will position ourselves as an economically advanced and agile, cultured, adaptive, innovative and creative country at the heart of Europe, in support of our efforts to be recognized as a great place to visit, trade with, invest in and study” (GOI, 2018c: 7).

Networked connections in the global north continue to feature prominently in the mid-level policy narratives that focus on particular geographic markets, in the rules-based international economy. Key centres of global economic, political and cultural connection: for example, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, are commonly referenced here⁶. Whilst common language links exist, ‘Global Ireland’ seeks to leverage the presence of diasporic Irish communities and use this presence to gain traction for matters of interest to Irish national projection⁷. Members of the Irish diaspora are deemed to bestow real connective influence here and Ireland is imagined, in many ways, as an equal partner with these geopolitically significant state-actors. In this way, Irish national projection reinforces its core upper-level narrative, at this more regional scale. Ireland is presented as a potentially equal partner in the international realm, by virtue of its networked presence in the global North, the possibility of potentially strong trading links being fostered and the connections members of its diaspora foster, internationally.

Different connections are framed outside historically ‘core’ areas of Irish interest and Irish foreign policy projection pivots in place as it seeks to gain traction in a different type of geographical context. Core conduits of influence – possible economic relations and the diaspora – remain in harness but these are scaffolded differently as Irish national projection is refocused on ‘less powerful’ global contexts. Whereas Irish connections were anchored in narratives of the EU and the wider rules-based order when focused on potential markets in the global North, narratives of ‘edge-island’ and ‘separation from core’ are more commonly discernible in modules focused on countries in Africa, parts of the Middle East and Asia and, of particular relevance to this note, on the group of nations collectively termed SIDS. In particular, constructions of diaspora, as proactive conduits of connection to other ‘core’ contexts, are now replaced with a construction of diaspora as a reflection of geopolitical weakness and separation from those same *core* contexts and Ireland’s national presentation shifts, in space.

The SIDS are a new arena of Irish geopolitical projection and a very different imaginative positioning is discernible in the modules that outline Ireland’s reach-out

⁵ Albeit tempered by Ireland’s “traditional policy on Military neutrality” (Government of Ireland, 2018: 27).

⁶ Tangible outcomes include, the creation of a development officer post (Caribbean) to be situated in Miami and the opening of a new consular office in Wellington New Zealand (GOI, 2022: 25).

⁷ Ireland is, somewhat surprisingly, a relatively late entrant into the world of diaspora policy. But two major policy documents have been published – Global Irish – Ireland’s diaspora strategy (GOI, 2015) and Global Ireland – Ireland’s diaspora policy (GOI, 2020c). See Coakley (2024) for a fuller engagement with many of the complexities that come to light here.

to these geographical contexts. Overall, the *Global Ireland* policy platform does tend to present these connections in terms of an unreconstructed ‘development’ agenda but in equal measure, it dilutes its dominant construction of Ireland as an interconnected actor of the global north and increasingly harnesses a more complicated vision of simultaneous connection-peripherality as a base from which to deftly imagine Ireland as a thought/experience leader for countries currently grappling with geographical marginality. *Ireland’s strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States* tellingly includes the following leading statement –

“As an island people, at the edge of a continent, Ireland sees echoes of our own journeys of hope, emigration and struggle in those of the SIDS. These echoes include our missionary and wider diaspora, the historical complications of living under the shadow of larger powers, and our relative peripherality” (GOI, 2018d: 8).

Here, Ireland’s historical experience of geopolitical peripherality and separation from core is very deliberately intermeshed with the previously dominant vision of real-time functional connectivities with the global economy, harnessed in earlier modules. In this, Ireland is presented as being in the global core but importantly, not necessarily of the core. And, Ireland, to paraphrase McGregor (2019: 329) projects a discourse of its presence “in the cracks” of the global economy – simultaneously connected to, but separate from, dominant economic and geopolitical contexts, for consumption in the SIDS market. It is from this conceptually privileged position that Ireland seeks to present itself as a viable thought-leader for other, possibly less-well positioned small island states, globally. An intentional presence in, but simultaneous separation from, core is valorised in an effort to foster a connective stickiness with other island-sites, in the periphery. And, in this example at least, Irish foreign policy projection neatly illustrates the non-dichotomous nature of the closeness-distance nexus in the world of policy projection. Policy commitments are, at once, anchored in Ireland’s closeness to, and distance from, key economic/political hubs. For example, Global Ireland simultaneously commits to i) use Ireland’s geo-location to influence to champion the needs of SIDS at the level of the EU and to take a lead in the establishment of regional partnerships to assist with the needs of SIDS, whilst at the same time ii) harnessing its small-actor status to establish mechanisms that can help Irish people address the development challenges commonly experienced by SIDS.⁸ Interestingly, as with Ireland’s connections to other states in the global north, Global Ireland seeks to harness Ireland’s person-to-person connections and use the presence of an Irish diaspora as a base from which to connect outwards, away from its location in the Global North and towards these locations in the Global South.

⁸ Specific actions in support of this reach-out include: i) the Ireland-SIDS Ocean Partnership programme – a long term research funding programme, ii) an expansion of Ireland’s UNV programme in the Caribbean and Pacific regions, iii) a postgraduate funding programme for SIDS professionals, iv) a series of insurance industry and telecommunications skills-sharing initiatives, and v) an experience-sharing programme aimed at sharing Ireland’s experience leveraging its diaspora for economic/development benefit.

Initially, *Global Ireland* deploys Ireland's status as a country of the global north and commits to use Ireland's 'good offices' to champion the needs of SIDS and, a very front-facing image of Ireland is presented for consumption in the space of international policy. For example, Ireland is seen to moderate a series of, what it somewhat-conceitedly terms, 'Ceili', where SIDS can come together and learn from each other. Importantly, these 'Ceili' take place "on the margins of major international processes" (GOI, 2019: 9). SIDS are brought together under the aegis of Ireland to learn from each other's experience. But equally, this is done in the most public of fora, where other international actors can see GOI taking a thought-leadership role in the realm of international affairs. The discourse is clear. Ireland may be a small territorial entity but it takes a lead amongst other small territorial entities. It is, without doubt, a grand geopolitical conceit. This is then supported by Ireland's activities participating in and coordinating major international initiatives that have traction with the SIDS, such as the SAMOA Pathway and the UN Steering Committee on Partnerships for SIDS and various nuclear non-proliferation/legacy activities. In effect, whilst they are presented as opportunities to assist other small island countries in the space of international affairs, these activities combine to produce a powerful public diplomacy project presenting Ireland as an active participant in this SIDS policy space and a 'natural' leader amongst small island nations – from its position of authority as an already networked state in the global north⁹. *Global Ireland* builds on this performance of dominance through its commitment to use "our place in Europe" (GOI, 2019: 10). Here, the GOI commits to using its position as an EU member to advocate for SIDS-specific development funding. Development cooperation is targeted in general, with especial mention given to i) the EU's 'post-Cotonou' agreement with the Africa/Caribbean/Pacific (ACP) countries and ii) the development of the EU's Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) instrument, as well as other funding mechanisms such as the EU Investment Bank. A range of more general engagements are presented as well. Similarly, Ireland's commitment to establish a series of regional partnerships operationalized around the needs of SIDS, sees the GOI commit to very particular tasks, in cooperation with key regional actors. For example, a clear issues-based narrative is discernible in Ireland's interactions with sites in the Caribbean. Here, the GOI commits to working in partnership with Caribbean states on issues as diverse as i) climate stress and insurance facilities, ii) the blue economy, and iii) gender and economic empowerment of women. In the Pacific realm, Ireland is set to focus on climate risk and resilience¹⁰. Whilst in Africa, Ireland commits to partnership on issues ranging from the social impacts of ocean acidification, food security and nutrition and business development platforms more generally and has, as a result, become an observer to the 'l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie' and an associate member of the 'Community of Portuguese Language Countries' (GOI, 2022: 25). These inputs, grouped

⁹ This can manifest in many different ways. For example, over 60 early-career professionals have benefited from post-graduate education opportunities in Ireland since 2020. Students from Fiji, Kiribati, St Lucia, Cabo Verde, amongst others, have all been funded to train in Ireland, under this scheme (GOI, 2023: 9).

¹⁰ See for example, Ireland's use of a 'Single-Donor Trust Fund' vehicle to fund multi-hazard analysis work in Tonga (GOI, 2022: 24).

under the first SIDS strategy headings 1-3 (GOI, 2019) are somewhat predictable and are broadly illustrative of many general discourses of North-to-South aid in response to climate stress and uneven economic development. But, far more illustrative activity-sets penetrate into the strategy under heading 4 – ‘our people’, and Ireland’s self-projection switches from ‘big-state’ enabler from the global north to fellow island-state with a concomitant experience of socio-political ‘smallness’ (GOI, 2019: 14). Capacity for the institution of peer-to-peer support networks is valorised throughout. Irish inputs in the tourism and telecommunications sectors of the SIDS are referenced but GOI’s meta-level message is clear – in committing to help leverage the learnings of Ireland’s recent reach-out to its diaspora for the benefit of SIDS with similarly dispersed populations.

There is nothing particularly new in this. Diasporic engagement is commonly seen as a viable tool in the service of a country’s foreign policy – especially between sending and receiving states (see Baser and Feron, 2022: 228). This is certainly the case here. Significant traction has been given to an Irish diasporic consciousness in the 20 years since Hickman (2002: 8) recognized that diasporic literature was mostly focused on historical studies at the level of the city and the region. Here, Irish diasporic presence is engaged for the purposes of ‘home-state’ policy in general and for the purposes of enhancing state-to-state relations between Ireland and the SIDS, in particular. Diasporic experiences are not central to this impulse. Ireland’s SIDS strategy (2019, 14) for example, explicitly identifies the presence of Irish-born people as a mechanism that reinforces “the affinity that exists between Ireland and SIDS”. This is entirely in keeping with much of Ireland’s current foreign policy posture in the current integrated world system. As McWilliams and Murray (2018: 2) state, diasporic connection is “a crucial lever of soft-power in a rapidly globalizing and globally dependent political future”.¹¹ Diaspora is harnessed, not for its own sake, or on its behalf, but as a mechanism that allows for Ireland’s foreign policy platform to be presented to the states that act as hosts to that same diaspora. Downstream benefits may surely accrue for members of this ‘global family’ but these future dividends are not the primary distillate of this out-reach. Ireland’s diasporic communities are identified, in specifically identified target markets, and the GOI simply hopes to use their presence as a conduit into the conscious thought of local policy makers in a range of geographically distant but potentially fruitful locations in the global south. Ireland is not seeking to transnationally govern ‘Irish’ communities in far-flung locations but use their presence as a channel of extra-territorial influence in international affairs.

Parallel emphases are to be found in many of the GOI’s current regional foreign policy strategies. Both GOI’s (2020a) ‘*Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean*’ (to 2025) and its (2020b) ‘*Delivering for the Pacific Region*’ strategy place great emphasis on the leveraging of diasporic connections, which in turn are deemed to hold the key to significant soft-power projection, regionally.

¹¹ Interestingly, the evocation of a ‘global Irish’ consciousness is by now an almost ubiquitous part of public discourse in Ireland. For example, Ireland’s most recent citizenship ceremony, entitled ‘Ireland’s Summer Citizenship Ceremony, 2023’, was reported in Ireland’s national media under the headline – “New Irish Citizens glad to be part of a global family” (www.RTE.ie, accessed Monday 19th June @ 19.25).

Commentary: Ireland's SIDS policy and a micro-power of the Interstitium

The Global Ireland strategy platform contains some complex policy-projection. The platform is presented in the most altruistic of terms, focusing on the difficulties SIDS encounter in the areas of i) climate stress, ii) economic development, and iii) social policy and pointing to Ireland's ability to assist in these areas¹², but it demonstrates how the GOI is unselfconsciously reaching out for its own purposes. Indeed, whilst public-facing documents are careful to present a discourse of international fellowship around shared issue-narratives, governmental review documents can be quite explicit about the hoped-for outcomes of the SIDS programme. For example, the GOI's (2022) headline review deems it to have been successful in its operationalization of Governmental objectives. They particularly find that the SIDS programme yielded positive outcomes for Ireland's recent campaign to be elected to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and go on to find how "Ireland's standing with the SIDS on key issues has also helped facilitate support from SIDS for Ireland's priorities" (GOI, 2022: 9). Further evidence of impact is constructed out of the fact that Ireland has been tasked with leveraging its good standing with the SIDS in support of the wider EU group's strategic narrative on the current Russia-Ukraine conflict (p.29) and out of the fact that some SIDS, such as Fiji, have begun to seek closer ties with Ireland, in response to Brexit (p.25).

In this, GOI is engaging in a performance of scale. Although Ireland is a territorially-small state-actor, the GOI has carefully positioned itself at the intersection of a number of cross-cutting spatial discourses. Ireland is presenting itself primarily as a small island nation, located at the edge of a powerful territorial entity (the EU) but it is equally cognizant of its position on a maritime fringe and articulates a 'land-to-sea' transition in many geopolitical contexts. Ireland's real-world footprint may be small and Ireland may indeed be categorized as part of the still dominant global north, but its edge-location on the Atlantic fringe bestows a connective strength outwards, beyond its borders. Ireland may be a small open EU-member economy, but location 'on the edge' provides for a forward-facing connectivity away from the economic behemoths of the global north and towards other small economies/states in the global commons. It is, in this regard, potentially seen as a networked maritime nation, defined as much by its outward connections to other small places as it is to its immediate partners in the EU and the global economy.

Overall, whilst 'small' is most commonly constructed as being "synonymous with vulnerability" (Connell and Corbett, 2016: 584) in the international system, the GOI's current foreign policy platform valorises this aspect of its geography and elevates it through a series of narrative constructions designed to present the specificities of its place as a strategic narrative in international relations. In effect, rather than simply adopting issues consonant with the interests of small nations, Irish foreign policy projection uses the country's small size and peripheral location and rearticulates both as sources of strength in the world system. Its small size is reimagined and presented as a source of

¹² Most obviously operationalized through a programme of devolved financial supports designed to assist with small-scale development projects and training opportunities given to local 'fellows'.

power, interstitially, beyond the territorial boundary.¹³ This strength, in turn, is packaged in the 'softest' of terms, but in the service of current Irish policy. This foreign policy is then presented, via Ireland's maritime connections, for consumption in targeted markets. It is more than facile place-based marketing. Rather, the seeds of a strategic narrative are sown not on Ireland but on the shores of small island states, most commonly in the global south, where Ireland self-presents as a 21st century 'natural thought-leader'. This narrative is not simply based on a common issues-narrative, but on the back of a spatialized construction of experience and the natural authority that arises from this experience in specific target markets.

Whilst its real-world footprint is undeniably small, the GOI SIDS policy platform is illustrative of this foreign policy posture and Ireland's *Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States* sets out to chart a far-reaching course of global connection for a somewhat hubristically self-characterised "island at the centre of the world" (GOI, 2018a: 9). A none-too-subtle narrative of small-size and 'earth-bound' weakness is initially presented for consumption, only for this weakness to be overcome by the enabling influence of the sea. In this, Ireland is firmly imagined as a small island state, situated at the centre of a matrix of similarly small maritime-facing states, spanning the globe. It is, by any measure, a grand-conceit. But, it is one that the GOI is intent on pursuing and the discursive construction of Ireland, as a small island nation is set. Importantly however, this position is set, not as a site of weakness and marginality but as a site of communal strength fostered through partnership with other small states. The prominence given to Michael D Higgins' categorization of the globe as "*a gathering of Islands and connected seas that share the challenge and the possibilities of releasing the potential of a common humanity shared with nature*" is particularly illustrative, as is his follow-on, where he describes humanity as "*one land and one ocean ... that transcends all barriers and boundaries*" (GOI, 2019: 3). International affairs may indeed develop between territorially-based sovereign states but, in Ireland's view, the connected world system has a maritime footing. And, together, the SIDS (with Ireland counted amongst them) can "generate positive change" and "reinforce the multilateral system" in which they operate (GOI, 2019: 16). There is a highly developed literature (see Cohen, 2013) that charts the role that non-state actors play in this type of project, but here Ireland's diasporic outreach is formulated at the national scale and projected outwards, extra-territorially, in the service of a clear national narrative construction.

¹³ See Baser and Feron's (2022:227-228) treatment of Turkish diaspora engagement and its attendant rescaling of Turkish processes, for a wider consideration here

Conclusions

A clear spatial conceit is evident in these strategies. But, a palpable geopolitics emerges. Ostensibly antithetical narratives are conjoined and presented simultaneously to maximize Ireland's geostrategic options, and the meta-geography of Ireland's global posture begins to emerge. In this, Ireland is performing a political geography far beyond its historical tendency to deploy the hackneyed 'Island of saints and scholars' narrative. Fertile grounds of further study exist as Ireland pursues this geopolitical agenda at a moment of potentially significant change in a re-orientating global economy.

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