



## **Mary Coughlan Minister For Social And Family Affairs Says Michael Ring Gets It Wrong Again**

Mary Coughlan Minister for Social and Family Affairs today rejected a Fine Gael claim that she was seeking to reduce payments for lone parents as "cynical scaremongering at its worst."

"This Government is committed to promoting family welfare generally and ensuring that the needs of families, particularly families on low incomes and lone parent families are met".

"Yesterday I launched a strategy for the development of Family Policy where I spoke of some of the supports in place for lone parents, and for protecting the family, supporting the stability of family life and preventing marital breakdown and addressing the effects of divorce on families, " added Minister Coughlan.

"Earlier this year I established and funded the Family Support Agency, provided 20million for the Families First initiative, on an ongoing basis I am supporting family services projects, a families research programme, a parenting awareness scheme, participating in an OECD review of Family Friendly Policies, and today held another public consultation in Kilkenny as part of the nationwide Family Consultative Fora, to name just a few areas where lone parents and families are a major feature of my social agenda, " added Minister Coughlan.

**Ends**

**25th September 2003**