

# Home News



representative group for nursing home operators, is supportive of it implemented as soon as possible. Photograph: Sasko Lazarov

## insists 'fair deal' scheme g home care on track

"Money which is now being diverted to other areas of health spending should be set aside to top up subvention payments of families who are experiencing difficulties in meeting the costs of paying for nursing home care," she said.

The Irish Senior Citizens' Parliament said it was opposed to the fair deal scheme as it eliminated the principle of free care for those who needed it.

"No other group of citizens are being asked to pay for their care. Why should older people have to pay for illnesses or frailty arising

from the wear and tear of growing older?" the group argued.

However, Nursing Homes Ireland, the main representative group for nursing home operators, is supportive of the scheme and wants it implemented as soon as possible.

"If the proposal is unworkable from a constitutional point of view, then it needs to be replaced by a workable proposal which is equitable and adequate, and this must happen soon," said the group's chief executive, Tadhg Daly.

## Minister urges focus on nuclear weapons

ADAM HARVEY

FEAR OF international terrorism has distracted from the "very great" threat of nuclear weapons, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern said yesterday.

Addressing a conference of nuclear disarmament experts at Dublin Castle, Mr Ahern said that the world's attention had been distracted by other crises. "In the past number of years, and in the aftermath of the cold war, such threats as international terrorism and climate change have often been seen as demanding more urgent attention than nuclear weapons, but the risks indeed remain very great," Mr Ahern told the conference of the Middle Powers Initiative. The initiative is

an international body opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Mr Ahern said the debate about nuclear weapons was returning to the forefront. "I therefore welcome the return over the past year of serious debate on nuclear disarmament, particularly in the nuclear weapons states." Mr Ahern criticised the recent lack of action on nuclear disarmament. In 2000, he said, nuclear weapons states agreed to 13 steps to begin cutting their arsenals.

"It is a matter of great concern and disappointment that the intervening years have seen little advance in the implementation of these 13 steps and indeed that some of the nuclear weapon states have called this commitment into question."