Common European security and defence policy ESDP: rapid reaction facility

2000/0081(CNS) - 11/04/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to create a Rapid Reaction Facility (RRF) in the context of the EU's European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). CONTENT: The RRF will act as a complementary instrument to humitarian interventions and to other tools which can be deployed in a crisis or post-conflict situation, accompanying relief action and preceding rehabilitation and development. The Commission will set up a light structure in order to manange RRF in conjunction with the coordination mechanism linked to civilian crisis management tasks. In addition, current close coordination and interaction with the Situation Centre in the Policy Unit of the Council Secretariat will be reinforced. Actions undertaken within the framework of existing Community programmes will be managed by the structures already in place for them, but the RRF and the Commission's crisis management unit will facilitate early intervention and overall coherence. To this end, the Unit will also liaise closely, at all stages of crisis management, with ECHO, taking full account of its need for operational autonomy. The draft CFSP is complementary to the CFSP budget line which supports strictly diplomatic or security action in the field of crisis prevention and management as well as in areas like non-proliferation and disarmament. Against this background, the proposed Regulation is based on Article 308 (ex-235) of the EC Treaty. Its scope covers any Community intervention related to security crisis, flanking or supporting EU activities in the areas of ESDP. Support under the draft proposal will take the form either of 100% subsidy, or financing in combination with other sources of public money. Implementing partners eligible under the terms of the Draft Regulation may include national governments and their agencies, regional and international organisations and their agencies, non-governmental organisations and public and private operators with appropriate specialised expertise and experience. Framework agreements will be concluded with pre-identified operators and will be complemented by rapid, ad hoc financial contracts as soon as the need for a specific service arises. Interventions covered by the draft RRF will be the responsibility of the Commission. The Commission will be assisted by an Advisory Committee (Crisis Committee) composed of representatives of the Member states and chaired by representatives of the Commission. The Committee will be consulted before any decision to intervene in a crisis situation. It is essential that the Committee procedure does not unduly delay or otherwise restrict decisions to intervene through the RRF in specific crisis situations. Therefore, its rules of procedure will: -establish simple and rapid decision-making procedures -allow flexibility over implementation -establish modalities for reporting on the outcome. The Commission will report on interventions and provide regular information to the EP and to the Council. Single interventions to be funded by the Facility cannot exceed EUR 12 million. THe implementation period of any intervention may not exceed nine months. For contributions in excess of EUR 5 million, the Commission will be required to consult the Advisory Committee. Below that amount, the Commission shouldhave the authority to take decisions without prior consultation. In such circumstances however, it will nevertheless inform the Committee of the decision taken.