Civil protection: mechanism for the coordination of intervention in the event of emergencies

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PURPOSE : to present a proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Community mechanism for the coordination of Civil Protection intervention in the event of emergencies. CONTENT : the general purpose of the mechanism will be to provide support in the event of emergencies and to facilitate coordinated assistance intervention. Within the mechanism the Commission will facilitate the mobilisation of intervention teams, expertise and other intervention support. Such resources, which can be mobilised immediately and made available, can be requested through the competent Commission services and the Civil Protection network of Member States' contact points. Four major elements have been identified which appear in order to achieve the aims of an improved mechanism, namely: - pre-identification of intervention resources: the aim is to identify in advance the intervention teams available within the Civil Protection services of the Member States at very short notice and which could be mobilised; - training programme to improve response capability: the aim is to set up a training programme to improve the ability of these teams to work jointly and to promote optimum complementarity between them; - assessment and coordination teams: this aims to establish the capability to mobilise a small assessment and coordination team and dispatch it to immediately to the scene in order to improve on-the-scene-efficiency and coordination and determine which resources are most appropriate for dealing with the emergency as well as to liaise with the competent authorities of the country requesting assistance; - establishment of a common emergency communication system: the aim being to develop a common operational emergency communciation system between the Civil Protection administrations of the Member States and the relevant services of the Commission. The above mentioned intervention teams would be the core component of the mechanism. However, in emergencies there is always a substantial need for flexibility, and so Member States and third countries should also be given the possibility of requesting other support involving specialised personnel and specific equipment needed to deal with the particular emergency.