Humanitarian aid: aid to uprooted people (refugees, displaced persons) in Asian and Latin American developing countries

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Displaced persons and refugees are counted in their millions. The Commission proposal aims to implement a programme of support and assistance to uprooted populations (refugees, displaced persons, returnees) in developing countries in Latin America and Asia over a period of five years (1995-2000). This aid falls between emergency humanitarian aid in crises and the implementation of long-term rehabilitation or development cooperation aid. The rapporteur, Mr Richard HOWITT (PSE, UK), approved this position but tabled several amendments seeking to clarify certain definitions and stipulate which projects should be supported by the Community. Beneficiaries: uprooted people from or provisionally settled in the developing countries of Asia or Latin America, i.e.: - refugees as defined in the 1951 convention on the status of refugees; - displaced persons who are displaced within their own country; - returnees who, having fled their country of origin, then decide of their own free will to return; - displaced persons and returnees who, having fled their place of origin but remained within their country of origin, decide of their own free will to return to their home area. Aid should also be available for: - the local population of host countries which contribute social, economic and administrative resources; - demobilized armed forces and their families; - persons in need of international protection because of a serious threat to their life, liberty or security as a result of persecution, armed conflict or serious public disorder. Operations supported by the Community: - aid for subsistence, upkeep and settlement of refugees and displaced persons in the host country; - aid to the local population in the host area; - aid for voluntary repatriation, including independent monitoring and accompaniment; - aid for the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons in their places of origin or settlement in another place of their choice, including possible resettlement in a third country; - assistance for temporary or final settlement of displaced persons in other regions within their own country; - aid for economic integration in the host country; - aid for socio-economic development and social reintegration, including conciliation/mediation support in the areas to which refugees return; - aid for rehabilitation and development programmes, including food self-sufficiency, the provision of shelter, sanitation, drinking water, education and basic infrastructure; - support for demilitarization initiatives, including demobilization and reintegration of former armed forces into civilian life; - aid for mine-clearance operations; - aid for operations which provide legal advice and support to displaced persons to reclaim their property rights; - operations to reverse environmental damage caused by large population displacement; - specific programmes for women and to promote family unity, including family tracing and reunification programmes; - aid in respect of the legal resolution of human rights violations against displaced persons. Means deployed: The means deployed could include studies, technical assistance, training and other services, supplies and works, audits and evaluation and monitoring missions. Funds could be provided for the preparation of studies, using experts from the recipient country. The cost of preparatory studies should not exceed 3% of the total cost of the operation.