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

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In adopting the report by Mr Richard HOWITT, the Committee on Development and Cooperation welcomed the fact that the Council had adopted those of Parliament's amendments at first reading that took account of ecological issues, the fight against sexual violence towards refugees and the provision of additional aid to local host communities. However, it believed that there were still a considerable number of omissions, in particular the lack of a clear commitment to tackle the specific problem of female refugees and the involvement of local people in the refugee assistance programme. As a result, the committee retabled amendments aimed at ensuring that the establishment of democratic structures and the promotion of human rights were an integral part of the refugee assistance programmes. It called for assistance to be targeted, in particular, at vulnerable groups including women, children, indigenous people, the disabled and elderly people. It also proposed that the Community should support projects covering mine clearance, the fight against sexual violence, the provision of basic healthcare (reproductive and psychological healthcare and treatment for women who have been victims of rape and the promotion of family unity including family tracing and reunification programmes). The Community should also support operations to help people reclaim land and property rights, the voluntary return of uprooted people and their settlement in their places of origin or in third countries.