Humanitarian aid

1995/0119(SYN) - 30/11/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

Adopting the report by Mrs SAUQUILLO PEREZ del ARCO (PSE, E), the European Parliament approved the proposal for a regulation with the following amendments: - humanitarian aid was defined as the immediate or long-term provision of any aid needed by the victims of natural disasters or man-made crises (floods, earthquakes, war etc.), including emergency aid (especially the construction of shelters and housing, food, medical relief etc.) and possibly including short-term reconstruction projects. It was to be provided without discrimination on the grounds of sex, age or religion and implemented directly or in consultation with multilateral organizations and NGOS. It should be possible to implement humanitarian aid where local authorities could not or would not guarantee the survival of the populations in question; - aid objectives were clarified: to create the conditions needed for subsequent cooperation aid, to ensure preparedness for risks of disaster, to take account of population movements within the country and to comply with current international conventions; - the participation of NGOs at all levels was strengthened: humanitarian aid was to be implemented by NGOs at the request of a Member State or a beneficiary country (the European Parliament clarified the eligibility criteria: properly constituted with head offices in a Member State, real capacity for the actions undertaken and knowledge of the local situation, impartiality); - the visibility of Community actions needed to be highlighted; - support needed to be granted to local aid structures and the capacity of organizations to intervene immediately needed to be strengthened; - the conditions for granting funding were to be laid down in a framework partnership contract to be duly complied with; - the European Parliament called for all actions implemented to be complementary to current action by other international organizations (United Nations, donor countries) and in close collaboration with the Council and the European Parliament itself. It asked to be notified of general aid guidelines and for the Commission to hold an annual meeting with all NGOs with a framework contract in order to study joint work strategies.