Basic information

2001/2155(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Humanitarian aid and ECHO. Annual reports 2000 and 2001 **Subject** 6.50 Emergency, food, humanitarian aid, aid to refugees, Emergency Aid Reserve	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
DEVE Development and Cooperation	CARLOTTI Marie-Arlette (PSE)	10/07/2001

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	VAN HECKE Johan (PPE-DE)	12/09/2001
BUDG Budgets		
CONT Budgetary Control	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	11/09/2001

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Development	2383	2001-11-08

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
08/06/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0307	Summary
03/09/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		

08/11/2001	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
03/12/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
03/12/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0433/2002	
14/01/2003	Decision by Parliament	T5-0003/2003	Summary
14/01/2003	End of procedure in Parliament		
12/02/2004	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/2155(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/5/15117

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0433/2002	03/12/2002	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0003/2003 OJ C 038 12.02.2004, p. 0015-0085 E	14/01/2003	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2001)0307	08/06/2001	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	COM(2002)0322	03/07/2002	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2003)0430	16/07/2003	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2004)0583	03/09/2004	Summary

Humanitarian aid and ECHO. Annual reports 2000 and 2001

2001/2155(COS) - 03/07/2002 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to present ECHO's Annual Report 2001. CONTENT : the Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office states in this report that the global disaster situation continues to challenge the humanitarian community. The global trend towards more natural disasters continues, aggravating

demographic changes, environmental degradation, changes of land-use and other factors, particularly in the least developed and conflict-ridden states. The most important events in 2001 with humanitarian implications were the earthquakes in El Salvador and India, the floods in India, and the droughts affecting Central Asia. Regarding man-made disaster, the number of wars and violent crises has increased to 38 at the end of 2001. The circumstances are exacerbated in some regions by the effects of natural disasters and adverse climactic phenomena. ECHO allocated a total of EUR 543.7 million to fund humanitarian projects in more than 60 countries. The ACP countries were the biggest recipients of humanitarian aid allocated by the EC with a total of EUR 173.320 million (33%). Within Africa, the biggest crisis remained in the Great Lakes with EUR 35 million allocated for the DR Congo, EUR 32 million for Burundian refugees in Tanzania and EUR 20 million for Burundi itself. Assistance to the Western Balkans decreased compared to last year (16% decrease) due to the stabilisation of the region. However, mainly due to the large caseload of refugees and IDPs, Serbia remained ECHO's biggest operation. Whilst prospects for the return of the IDPs are still bleak, durable solutions for refugees - mainly integration but also repatriation - are in sight. ECHO's programme in 2001 continued to address basic needs whilst pursuing more durable solutions, such as facilitating the repatriation (legal information, go and see visits) and supporting the private accommodation of refugees, as a more dignified alternative to life in collective centres. Aid for Asia increase slightly and reached 20% (16% in 2000). Since the start of 2001, ECHO has provided almost EUR 54.7 million of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. Of these funds, EUR 23.4 million were allocated prior to September 11. After that date, EUR 31.3 million has been channelled through a variety of NGOs and international organisations to continue delivering food to the drought-affected populations and to pursue primary assistance to the IDP populations. These funds have been used to respond to war casualties and mine injuries resulting from increased population movements, and to provide assistance for people returning to their home areas (farming tools, seeds and shelter materials). They have also been used to fund logistics such as the WFP lorries and telecommunications, air transport, and to contribute to the re-opening of the ECHO office in Kabul. With respect to partners, three main partner groups were EC-NGOs (62.5% of ECHO's funding was implemented through them), the UN (26.5%, up from 19% last year) and other international organisations (7.9%). In 2001, ECHO continued to implement the recommendations of the so-called Article 20 evaluation as part of the overall reform effort. Important achievements include clarifying ECHO's mandate with respect to its role in the linking of relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD), improving ECHO's relations with the UN and implementing its administrative reform. The new primaryemergency procedure came into operation in June 2001 and allows ECHO to arrange the immediate despatch of the assistance with its partners within hours of the sudden onset of a crisis.

Humanitarian aid and ECHO. Annual reports 2000 and 2001

2001/2155(COS) - 14/01/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Marie-Arlette CARLOTTI (PES, France) on humanitarian aid 2000. (Please refer to the summary dated 03/12/02.) Parliament went on to state that humanitarian aid, which confirms the importance attached by the Union to the values of solidarity with all peoples, should not be subject to the political conditionality which prevails in other areas of development aid. It commended ECHO on its more rigorous approach to management of aid, as illustrated, in particular by: - the strengthening of its partners' ex ante and ex post audit procedures, - local monitoring in closer contact with EU delegations, - improved dialogue with UN specialised agencies to improve management. Parliament called on all donor states to adhere to the practices, acquired over many years of experience, of a gradual approach on the ground, based on a process of building up trust with local populations, also taking into account their eating habits. It deplored the disastrous effect of the US air force's 'bombardment' of Afghanistan with food aid parcels in the winter of 2001-2002. Humanitarian aid is politically neutral. All governments should therefore allow the delivery of humanitarian aid in all circumstances.

Humanitarian aid and ECHO. Annual reports 2000 and 2001

2001/2155(COS) - 16/07/2003 - Follow-up document

PURPOSE : to present the Humanitarian Aid Office : ECHO - Annual Report 2002. CONTENT : in 2002 natural disasters affected 170 million people and killed almost 40,000. More than 42 ongoing wars and violent crises throughout the year left behind a humanitarian legacy of 37 million uprooted people. Despite the fact that ECHO, with a budget of EUR 537.8 million in 2002, once again was amongst the three main humanitarian donors world-wide, global humanitarian aid of USD 4.5 billion (OCHA) remains only a fraction of global military spending of USD 839 billion (SIPRI Yearbook 2002), obliging the humanitarian community to limit its response and to focus on the areas of highest needs. ECHO's response followed the global evolution of the essential needs of people affected by natural and man-made disasters, with a continued shift from Eastern Europe to Africa and Asia. Half of the violent crises were located in Africa, hosting 27.5% of all refugees. Asia hosted the largest refugee population world-wide (48.3% of all refugees). ECHO succeeded in implementing its needs-based strategy, as reflected by the regional distribution of its funding of humanitarian operations: populations of ACP countries were the biggest recipient of aid (EUR 211.5 million or 39%), followed by Asia (EUR 137.96 million or 26%) and by Eastern Europe (EUR 85.3 million or 16 %). New emergencies, like the one in Afghanistan caused by the accelerated return of somewhere between 1.5 and 2 million refugees and the food crisis in Southern Africa with up to 13 million people facing serious food shortages required ECHO to call on the emergency aid reserve for an additional EUR 80 million in commitment appropriations. Also, in the context of 'post 11 September' international politics, ECHO started in a timely manner to make contingency plans to deal with the humanitarian consequences of a war in Iraq. This involved close co-ordination with Member States, major partners, especially those in the UN and Red Cross movement, and with other major donors such as the United States. Whereas the plight of the Iraqi people, caused by two major conflicts followed by ten years of international sanctions, received increasing media attention in 2002, other humanitarian crises have disappeared from the headlines. ECHO successfully continued its support in favour of forgotten crises. The total funding allocated to forgotten crises identified in Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Angola, Chechnya and Western Sahara reached EUR 85 million (16% of ECHO's budget). Another feature of ECHO's work was to achieve sustainability of its operations, by trying to hand-over projects or lay the ground for future linkage to longer-term development instruments. Such implementation of a policy linking relief, rehabilitation and development ('LRRD') was marked for the phasing-down of its operations in the Balkans. Also, in Sierra Leone and in Angola ECHO's provision of humanitarian aid became part of an integrated EC Action plan to tackle the humanitarian crises and the initial resettlement process. New developments in relation to crisis management matters under the Common Foreign and Security Policy as well as in the context of the "Convention for the Future of Europe" have necessitated an active response from ECHO explaining and defending the specificity of the "humanitarian space." ECHO deepened its relationships with its major partners through the so-called "Strategic Programming Dialogues". They were held in November 2002 for the third year running with the main UN agencies (UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, OCHA and, for the first time, WHO). Similar dialogues were held with the ICRC, IFRC and the NGOs. In

2002 ECHO undertook significant efforts to further improve communication, collaboration and co-ordination with the European Parliament. The EP adopted in its plenary session on 14 January 2003 the report prepared by Mrs Carlotti, expressing the EP's favourable appreciation of ECHO's progress in effective aid delivery, simplification of procedures and sound financial management during the period 2001-2002. ECHO enhanced its information, communication and awareness raising activities during 2002, notably through increased coverage in the mass media and through the launch of its redesigned website in November. As concerns the continuous implementation of reform in 2002, ECHO moved away from centralised to partially decentralised financial circuits. The internal control systems has been reoriented and further strengthened allowing a better assessment of risks related to humanitarian projects and a more efficient monitoring of progress by concentrating on outputs. In July 2002 ECHO underwent an internal re-organisation to further improve the efficiency of the service, to create new synergies and a better distribution of the workload between units.

Humanitarian aid and ECHO. Annual reports 2000 and 2001

2001/2155(COS) - 03/09/2004 - Follow-up document

The Commission has presented its 2003 annual report on the Humanitarian Aid Office – ECHO.

Following its needs-based approach to humanitarian crises ECHO adapted its funding patterns to the global evolution of humanitarian needs. The main beneficiaries of ECHO aid were populations in Africa (EUR 225 million), followed by Asia/Latin America (EUR 224. 2 million). Important funding was also provided to the Occupied Palestinian Territories given the deterioration of the humanitarian conditions. As for the Newly Independent States, the

humanitarian situation of the Chechen population had not improved. Funding levels thus remained high (EUR 26 million). Low funding levels for operations in Europe (EUR 7.7 million) reflected, as foreseen, the phase-out in the Balkans. Applying it to the 2003 budget allocation, 64 % (EUR 347.6 million) of ECHO’s budgetwas spent in areas of highest needs, as compared with 49% in 2002.

ECHO’s annual aid strategy 2003 underlined its continued focus on forgotten crises where there is little interest from public opinion and other donors. Forgotten crises identified included Western Sahara, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar/Burma, Angola, Burundi, Northern Korea, Philippines, Northern Caucasus (Chechnya), Thailand, Uganda and Yemen. The total support allocated to those crises was EUR 119 million, roughly 20 % of the budget (+ 4% compared to 2002).

ECHO was a key player promoting the adoption of the “Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship” by the world´s leading humanitarian donors and organisations (Stockholm, June 2003). While maintaining a broad dialogue with the humanitarian NGOs on crucial humanitarian issues, ECHO demonstrated its commitment to close donor co-ordination by participating in the UN Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and supporting International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Appeals. In 2003 ECHO chaired the annual meeting of the principal donors of ICRC and hosted the launch of the UN CAP in Brussels. It should be notes that the draft Constitutional Treaty provided for a specific provision on humanitarian aid. It became part of the European Council’s agreement on the Constitutional Treaty of June 2004, reaffirming that humanitarian aid operations shall comply with international law and the principles of impartiality, neutrality and non-discrimination.

For ECHO, the best way to preserve the "humanitarian space" is full implementation of the Good Donorship Principles, continuous commitment to high quality assistance and a transparent dialogue with other key players.

Humanitarian aid and ECHO. Annual reports 2000 and 2001

2001/2155(COS) - 08/06/2001 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the annual report on humanitarian aid 2000. CONTENT : a visible reduction in the number of natural disasters in the year 2000 was off set by the considerable increase in man made crises. So noted the European Commission's Annual Report for the year 2000. The number of ongoing wars and violent crises at the end of 2000 had increased to 36 and include conflicts in the Northern Caucasus, Colombia, Israel/West Bank and Afghanistan. The Report estimates that the number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) is currently 20-25 million world-wide. Although lower than equivalent numbers for the mid-1990's, they remain nevertheless unacceptably high, not least because they risk destabilising the host countries themselves. The EU's humanitarian assistance programme is channelled through ECHO which is responsible for distributing EU funds. In 2000, 121 funding decisions relating to ECHO were approved amounting to a total of EUR 491.7 million. The geographical distribution of funds reflects the improvement of the war situation in the Western Balkans. For example, in 1999 the ex-Yugoslav states were the recipient of 55% of the ECHO budget. In 2000 this figure dropped to 20% The three main type of partners working with ECHO in the year 2000 were: - EC-NGOs (they received 65% of ECHO funding); - the United Nations (which received 19% of funding) and - other international organisations (which received 10% of funding). Stemming from the 1999 "Article 20" evaluation a number of organisational and procedural changes to further enhance the effectiveness of ECHO are being introduced. Unfortunately however, a number of challenges, common to all humanitarian organisations, remain unsolved. Largely these relate to the increasing number of security incidents, denial of access to victims and the risk of negatively influencing fragile local communities through aid. As the report notes, humanitarian aid can only treat some of the symptoms, it cannot address the root causes of the problems, which need to be addressed through tools such as conflict prevention, environmental protection and sustainable development.