Basic information

2010/2101(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Implementation of the European consensus on humanitarian aid: the mid-term review of its action plan and the way forward **Subject** 6.50 Emergency, food, humanitarian aid, aid to refugees, Emergency Aid Reserve	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
DEVE Development	STRIFFLER Michèle (PPE)	04/05/2010
	Shadow rapporteur TOIA Patrizia (S&D) VAJGL Ivo (ALDE) GRÈZE Catherine (Verts /ALE)	

European Commission

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

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
08/07/2010	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/12/2010	Vote in committee		Summary
15/12/2010	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0375/2010	
17/01/2011	Debate in Parliament		
18/01/2011	Decision by Parliament	T7-0005/2011	Summary
18/01/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
18/01/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2010/2101(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/7/03322

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE448.860	22/10/2010	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE452.886	19/11/2010	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0375/2010	15/12/2010	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0005/2011	18/01/2011	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2011)2858	17/06/2011	

Implementation of the European consensus on humanitarian aid: the mid-term review of its action plan and the way forward

2010/2101(INI) - 18/01/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid: the mid-term review of its action plan and the way forward.

The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and the associated action plan: Parliament considers it regrettable that, outside the humanitarian partners, there is insufficient awareness of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. It calls for the introduction of specific training about the Consensus, particularly for the European External Action Service (EEAS), for diplomats from the Member States and for military bodies. Members also consider it regrettable that Member States are not more involved in implementing the Consensus.

Parliament notes that there has been a dramatic increase in the number and severity of natural disasters, that the incidence of complex crises is rising and that the provision of aid is becoming increasingly difficult and dangerous. It advocates **increased funding for humanitarian aid** to reflect the growing number of humanitarian interventions, and calls on the budgetary authority to **transfer all or part of the emergency reserve allocation to DG ECHO's initial budget**, underlining the importance of achieving the OECD/DAC target of 0.7% of GNI by 2015. Realistic budgets should be drawn up, allocating appropriations for natural disasters or humanitarian action on the basis of repeated experience with spending in previous years. In addition, the resolution calls for additional efforts to be made to speed up the funding of operations following disasters and the simplification of procedures for budgetary implementation.

Noting that the increasing involvement of non-humanitarian bodies in responding to humanitarian crises carries with it a major risk of confusion between the military and humanitarian roles and blurs the boundaries of impartial and independent humanitarian aid, Parliament calls for an increase in funding and the development of capabilities and resources in order to ensure that humanitarian aid and civil protection remain purely civilian tasks.

It recalls the importance of maintaining a balanced overall response while devoting particular attention to 'forgotten crises'.

Humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law (IHL): the resolution emphasises that **EU humanitarian aid is not a crisis-management tool** and deplores the increasing politicisation of humanitarian aid and its consequences in terms of respect for the 'humanitarian space'. It calls for military

and civilian personnel, and humanitarian workers involved in disaster response or humanitarian operations, to act in accordance with the principles of neutrality, independence and impartiality, and hopes that specific training in international humanitarian law will be provided at the EEAS. The Commission is asked to ensure that additional funding is earmarked for promoting IHL among those who bear arms, among young people and among politicians and civil society.

A joint framework for the delivery of aid: Parliament makes several observations on the issues of quality, coordination and consistency in the delivery of EU humanitarian aid. It points out that the provision of aid must be based solely on identified need and the degree of vulnerability. More specific attention ought to be directed at the most vulnerable groups of people, such as women, children and forcibly displaced persons. The evaluation process needs to be further improved, particularly with regard to the application of vulnerability criteria, especially regarding women, children and disabled groups. Parliament encourages the Commission to pursue its work in specific fields such as nutrition, protection, gender and sexual violence, refugees, returnees and IDPs and calls for the issues of gender and reproductive health to be systematically integrated into the emergency healthcare aspect of humanitarian response.

On a technical level, Parliament insists that the EU assistance in the event of natural or man-made disaster should aim to:

- help the local economy as much as possible, in particular by purchasing locally or regionally produced foodstuffs and providing the necessary materials for farmers;
- integrate the gender dimension;
- respect the diversity of the bodies actively involved in financing and implementing international humanitarian programmes – the UN, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs;
- encourage efforts to reinforce the capacity of local players;
- respect the role of NGOs;
- call for proper coordination and exchange of information between all actors involved;
- call for the system of humanitarian coordinators to be reinforced;
- reinforce the transparency and accountability principles.

Parliament notes that the worsening incidence of sexual violence is a major problem in humanitarian contexts, with systematic rape being used in some cases as a weapon of war.

Use of military and civil protection capabilities: Parliament reaffirms that a very clear distinction needs to be maintained between the remits of military and humanitarian bodies, particularly in areas affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts, and that it is essential for military resources and capabilities to be used only in a very limited number of cases and as a last resort in support of humanitarian aid operations, in accordance with UN guidelines. It calls on the Commission to undertake awareness-raising activities about the specificity of humanitarian aid as part of EU foreign policy and calls on Member States to ensure that their armed forces apply the UN guidelines. Parliament reaffirms that the use of civil protection resources in humanitarian crises must be needs-based and must complement and be consistent with humanitarian aid.

The resolution notes that the recent tragedies in Haiti and Pakistan demonstrated that the tools available to the EU for responding to disasters (humanitarian aid and the Community Civil Protection Mechanism) need to be improved in terms of effectiveness, speed, coordination and visibility. These disasters have highlighted the need to **create a European rapid reaction capacity**. Members call on the Commission to bring forward ambitious legislative proposals for the establishment of a European civil protection force, based on optimising the existing Community Civil Protection Mechanism and pooling existing national resources. Civil protection force financing has to be additional to funding for humanitarian emergencies. The European civil protection force could comprise a commitment by certain Member States voluntarily to make available predetermined essential civil protection modules, which would be ready to intervene immediately for EU operations coordinated by the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC). Most of these modules, which are already available at national level, would remain under control of Member States and the deployment of these modules on a standby basis would form the nucleus of the EU's civil protection to respond to disasters outside and inside the EU.

Continuity of aid: Parliament calls for swift implementation of the new European strategy to support disaster risk reduction in developing countries. It advocates a substantial increase in the funding allocated to this aspect of policy. It goes on to deplore the fact that there has still been little practical progress on linking emergency aid, rehabilitation and development, in spite of the numerous political undertakings given in that regard in recent years. The resolution calls for more resources with the aim of assuring the continuity of aid and a focus on flexibility and complementarity among existing financial arrangements in the phases of transition from emergency to development.