



Plenary sitting

B8-1288/2016

23.11.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B8-1812/2016, B8-1813/2016 and B8-1814/2016

pursuant to Rule 128(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Italy after the earthquakes
(2016/2988(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Italy after the earthquakes
(2016/2988(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 of 15 March 2016 on the provision of emergency support within the Union¹,
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) No 375/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 April 2014 establishing the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps ('EU Aid Volunteers initiative')²,
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid³,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 11 April 2011 on Further Developing Risk Assessment for Disaster Management within the European Union,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 28 November 2008 calling for civil protection capabilities to be enhanced by a European mutual assistance system building on the civil protection modular approach (16474/08),
 - having regard to its resolution of 19 June 2008 on stepping up the Union's disaster response capacity⁴,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2013 on the European Union Solidarity Fund, implementation and application⁵,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 28 November 2013 on the European Union Solidarity Fund⁶,
 - having regard to the questions to the Commission on the situation in Italy after the earthquakes (O-000139/2016 – B8-1812/2016, O-000140/2016 – B8-1813/2016 and O-000141/2016 – B8-1814/2016),
 - having regard to Rules 128(5) and 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas after the devastating earthquake that hit central Italy on 24 August 2016, three more major quakes, together with a flurry of tremors, struck the central Italian regions, on 26 October with magnitudes of 5.5 and 6.1, and on 30 October with a magnitude of 6.5;

¹ OJ L 70, 16.3.2016, p. 1.

² OJ L 122, 24.4.2014, p. 1.

³ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

⁴ OJ C 286 E, 27.11.2009, p. 15.

⁵ OJ C 440, 30.12.2015, p. 13.

⁶ OJ C 114, 15.4.2014, p. 48.

- B. whereas quakes and aftershocks have continued to batter central Italy over the past months; whereas the tremor that shook Italy on 30 October was the most powerful earthquake to hit the country since 1980;
 - C. whereas in the recent quakes more than 400 people are reported to have been injured and 290 to have died;
 - D. whereas the devastating earthquakes could accumulate in a 'domino effect' and lead to 100 000 displaced residents;
 - E. whereas the impact of the latest quakes has destroyed towns, seriously damaged local and regional infrastructure, ruined historical and cultural heritage, and done harm to economic activities, especially those of SMEs, to agriculture and to touristic and gastronomic potential;
 - F. whereas the territories concerned suffer from a deformation that extends over an area of about 130 square kilometres, with a maximum displacement of at least 70 centimetres;
 - G. whereas sustainable reconstruction efforts need to be properly coordinated in order to remedy the economic and social losses;
1. Expresses its deepest solidarity and empathy with all the individuals and families in the territories affected by the earthquakes, and with the Italian national, regional and local authorities involved in relief efforts following the disaster;
 2. Appreciates the relentless efforts made by the rescue units, civil protection forces, volunteers, civil society organisations, and local, regional and national authorities in the devastated areas in order to save lives, contain the damage and guarantee common basic activities to maintain a decent standard of living;
 3. Underlines the serious economic effects of the successive earthquakes and the destruction left in their wake;
 4. Underlines the gravity of the situation on the ground which is putting considerable and intense financial pressure on Italian national, regional and local public authorities;
 5. Welcomes the increased level of flexibility in the deficit calculation on spending related to the earthquakes that has been granted to Italy, in accordance with the Treaties, in order to cope with the current emergency efficiently and swiftly and with future interventions required to secure the areas affected;
 6. Welcomes the solidarity expressed by the EU institutions, other Member States, European regions and international players, as exemplified by mutual assistance in emergency situations;
 7. Highlights the prediction problems associated with earthquake systems and the high seismicity of South East Europe; notes with concern that thousands of people have died and hundreds of thousands have been left homeless in the past 15 years as a result of destructive earthquakes affecting Europe;
 8. Expresses its concern over the large number of displaced persons exposed to the harsh

weather conditions of the forthcoming winter season;

9. Stresses the importance of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism in fostering cooperation among national civil protection authorities across Europe in adverse situations and in minimising the effects of exceptional occurrences; calls on the Commission and the Member States to further simplify the procedures for the activation of the Mechanism in order to make it available rapidly and effectively in the immediate aftermath of a disaster;
10. Considers that the partial ‘budgetisation’ of the annual European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) financial allocation provided for in the proposed Omnibus Regulation could help in the future to accelerate the mobilisation procedure with a view to providing an earlier and more effective response to citizens affected by a disaster; moreover, in the context of possible future reforms, invites the Commission to analyse the feasibility of increasing the advance payments threshold and shortening the deadlines for processing the applications;
11. Stresses the importance of creating synergies among all available instruments, including the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds), and of ensuring that resources are used effectively for reconstruction activities and all other necessary actions, in full cooperation with the Italian national and regional authorities; calls on the Commission to be ready to adopt amendments to programmes and operational programmes to this end as soon as possible after the submission of a request for amendments by a Member State; underlines likewise the possibility of using the European Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to sustain the rural areas and agricultural activities that have been impacted by the earthquakes;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Government of Italy, and the regional and local authorities of the areas affected.