



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Development

2011/2023(INI)

11.5.2011

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Towards a stronger European disaster response: the role of civil protection and humanitarian assistance
(2011/2023(INI))

Rapporteur: Michèle Striffler

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Reiterates that the European Union should respect humanitarian principles (humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence) to meet humanitarian needs outside the EU and that the use of civil protection resources must be needs-based and must complement and be consistent with humanitarian aid; emphasises that these principles are not dogma but stem from operational efficiency considerations;
2. Encourages the Commission to support the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to keep working towards the definition of a common methodological framework for assessing needs by seeking the systematic involvement of local stakeholders, including non-state stakeholders;
3. Stresses the importance of developing relief asset pre-positioning capacities in order to improve the speed at which humanitarian organisations respond to disasters; notes that the development of depots/hubs reflects the effectiveness of this approach in terms of speed, quality and cost efficiency, and calls on the Commission to continue to provide financial support in this field;
4. Recognises that the use of military assets – transport, logistics, security – to support humanitarian operations may provide key back-up, particularly in the case of large-scale natural disasters; reiterates that these military assets should be used in very specific circumstances and as a last resort, in accordance with United Nations recommendations;
5. Welcomes the proposal to create a European Emergency Response Centre; asks for the introduction of specific and transparent rules on cooperation and coordination between the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission, pointing out that humanitarian aid is not a policy instrument for crisis management;
6. Reaffirms the core role played by the OCHA in coordinating international humanitarian action;
7. Calls on the Commission to make active efforts to ensure the visibility of the resources and capabilities deployed in the field, particularly through the use of EU symbols in conjunction with national badges.