



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Foreign Affairs

2010/2096(INI)

28.10.2010

OPINION

of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

for the Committee on Development

on setting up an EU rapid response capability
(2010/2096(INI))

Rapporteur: Renate Weber

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Foreign Affairs calls on the Committee on Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls the pivotal role of the High Representative/Vice-President in coordinating EU operations in third countries and regions; underlines that the structure and working methods of the European External Action Service (EEAS) should aim at ensuring the coherence and consistency of EU action in crisis situations; calls therefore on the Council to grant the HR/VP a permanent mandate allowing her to activate a crisis cell, gathering representatives from all the appropriate services of the Commission and the Council and from all EU planning capabilities (MIC, CMPD, EUMS, CPCC) to coordinate the EU response in the event of disaster, in order to be able to start work quickly without having to systematically go to the Council; suggests that this cell could be supported by a team, deployable within the first hours of the crisis, could be composed of civilian (CRT, MIC), military and civ-mil (EUMS, CPCC) experts and could also benefit from SITCEN and SATCEN intelligence;
2. Emphasises the need for optimal coordination between an EU disaster response and other EU instruments - particularly Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) civil or military missions and instruments (i.e. Battlegroups) – which are already on the ground or which could be set up in the aftermath of a disaster; also underlines that EU response could rely as well on available multinational forces, such as the European Air Transport Command in Eindhoven which could for example play a role in coordinating Member States' strategic transport capabilities;
3. Acknowledges that military and civil defence assets in disaster relief should be used as a last resort, in compliance with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and the Oslo Guidelines; recalls that military means often constitute an important contribution to disaster response, along with civil protection and humanitarian aid, and notes that military assets can be necessary for filling critical capacity gaps (particularly strategic lift, specialised assets, heavy engineering and transport); therefore stresses the need to develop a comprehensive approach and to improve synergies between civil and military capabilities, and to identify areas in which Member States can pool their efforts and capabilities at EU level to contribute to EU disaster response, which is particularly important in a difficult economic climate;
4. Calls therefore on the High Representative/Vice-President and Member States to make substantial efforts to explore synergies in dual civil-military use of strategic airlift capacities; welcomes the cooperation between the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) and the European Union Movement Planning Cell (EUMPC) in the EU disaster response effort in Pakistan in this regard; calls on Member States to substantially increase air transport capabilities pooled in the European Air Transport Command (EATC) while ensuring dual civil-military use of these capabilities; welcomes in this regard the proposal by the Belgian Presidency to establish a multinational helicopter corps in the framework of the EATC to be used for both civilian and military tasks;
5. Encourages the Council to continue on-going discussions about improving the

predictability of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and calls for the immediate establishment of an EU Civil Protection Force, as suggested by the Barnier report as long ago as 2006;

6. Underlines the need to develop a comprehensive and proactive approach in response to disasters, coordinating the various means of action available to the Union and its Member States, such as crisis management (civil and military), financial assistance and development or social and environmental policies; believes in this context that the transition between disaster response and post-disaster reconstruction should be managed more efficiently; recalls the proposal to set up a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps in accordance with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (Article 214(5)), and with a view to the European Year of Volunteering 2011 encourages the European Commission and the Council to work, together with the European Parliament, on the rules and procedures for the operation of the Corps as soon as possible, especially in the light of similar initiatives taken by some Member States;
7. Recalls the existing structures, capabilities and instruments developed under the CSDP since the Helsinki and Feira European Councils, and stresses that civilian crisis management (including civilian response teams) can be financed from the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) budget; therefore supports the development of a rapid response capability that does not duplicate, but is complementary to, the existing structures and capabilities within the CFSP framework;
8. Recalls the need to respect the coordinating role of the United Nations and to recognise the contribution of other international actors.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	28.10.2010
Result of final vote	+: 39 -: 8 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Gabriele Albertini, Pino Arlacchi, Franziska Katharina Brantner, Frieda Brepoels, Elmar Brok, Arnaud Danjean, Mário David, Marietta Giannakou, Ana Gomes, Andrzej Grzyb, Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Tunne Kelam, Andrey Kovatchev, Eduard Kukan, Vytautas Landsbergis, Sabine Lösing, Ulrike Lunacek, Kyriakos Mavronikolas, Alexander Mirsky, Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Raimon Obiols, Kristiina Ojuland, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Vincent Peillon, Alojz Peterle, Hans-Gert Pöttering, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Nikolaos Salavrakos, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Werner Schulz, Adrian Severin, Charles Tannock, Zoran Thaler, Geoffrey Van Orden, Kristian Vigenin, Graham Watson
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Christian Ehler, Kinga Gál, Georgios Koumoutsakos, Barbara Lochbihler, Norbert Neuser, Vittorio Prodi, Potito Salatto, Judith Sargentini, Marietje Schaake, Traian Ungureanu, Renate Weber