



4.3.2010

B7-0156/2010

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on major natural disasters in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, France and Spain

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**B7-0156/2010**

**European Parliament resolution on major natural disasters in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, France and Spain**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union and to Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
  - having regard to the Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Union Solidarity Fund (COM(2005)0108) and to Parliament's position of 18 May 2006<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 20 February 2010 a unique meteorological phenomenon occurred on Madeira, with excessive and unprecedented rainfall (it is estimated that the rainfall recorded over five hours corresponded to what is usually recorded on average over two and a half months), strong winds and very high waves, which caused the death of at least 42 people, with 32 people still missing, 370 people displaced and some 70 people injured;
- B. whereas on 27 and 28 February 2010 a massive and destructive storm named Xynthia occurred in western France, along the Atlantic coast (in the Poitou-Charentes and the Pays-de-la-Loire regions), which led to the deaths of almost 60 people, leaving nearly 10 people missing and more than 2 000 people displaced, and causing unprecedented damage;
- C. whereas meteorological phenomena, especially storm Xynthia, have also isolated different regions in Spain, particularly the Canary Islands and Andalusia, and have caused serious damage, the full extent of which is yet to be determined,
- D. whereas these disasters resulted in human suffering and irreparable psychological damage to the victims' families and the affected population,
- E. whereas these disasters caused large-scale destruction, with huge damage to public infrastructure – including roads, motorways and bridges and the provision of essential services such as water supply, electricity, sanitation and telecommunications – and to houses, commercial establishments, the coastal economy, industry and agricultural land, as well as to natural, cultural and religious heritage,
- F. whereas the economic and social impact of these disasters, with obvious repercussions on productive activity in general in those regions, currently prevents people from resuming their normal lives,
- G. whereas there is a need to clean up, reconstruct and rehabilitate the disaster-stricken areas,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 297 E, 7.12.2006, p. 331.

to restore infrastructure and facilities in the fields of energy, water supply, sanitation and telecommunications as well as roads, bridges and housing, to re-establish those areas' productive potential and the jobs that have been lost, and to adopt appropriate measures to compensate for the social costs inherent in the loss of jobs and of other sources of income,

1. Expresses its deepest sympathy and solidarity with all the regions affected by these phenomena, regrets the serious consequences on their economic and productive structure and conveys in particular its condolences to the families of the victims;
2. Pays tribute to the search-and-rescue teams that have worked without interruption to rescue people and to limit the human and material damage;
3. Calls on the Commission, as soon as the governments concerned submit the relevant requests, promptly to encourage all action necessary to mobilise the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) in the most urgent and flexible way and to the maximum possible amount with the aim of helping the victims of this disaster;
4. Reiterates that a new EUSF Regulation based on Commission proposal COM(2005)0108 is imperative in order to address the problems caused by natural disasters in a more flexible and effective way; criticises the fact that the Council has blocked the dossier although Parliament had adopted its position by an overwhelming majority at first reading in May 2006; urges the Spanish Presidency and the Commission to seek, with maximum responsibility and without delay, a solution allowing the process of revision of that Regulation to be relaunched with a view to creating a stronger and more flexible instrument that is able to respond effectively to the new climate-change challenges;
5. Calls on the Commission to take into account the specific nature and fragility of the island and outermost regions affected;
6. Urges the Commission, in addition to mobilising the European Union Solidarity Fund, to be open and flexible as regards negotiating with the relevant authorities the revision of the regional operational programmes Intervir+ (ERDF) and Rumos (ESF) and their French equivalents, as well as the section on Madeira of the Thematic Territorial Enhancement Operational Programme, which is financed by the Cohesion Fund; calls on the Commission to proceed with this revision as soon as possible and to analyse the possibility of increasing the Community cofinancing rate in 2010 for specific projects under the respective operational programmes in line with the rules and ceilings set out in Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, without calling into question the annual financial envelope allocated to the Member States in question;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Governments of the Member States, the Government of the Autonomous Region of Madeira and the French and Spanish regional authorities concerned.