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## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Pasqualina Napoletano, Walter Veltroni, Fiorella Ghilardotti, Gianni Vattimo, Bruno Trentin, Elena Ornella Paciotti and Luis Berenguer Fuster, on behalf of the PSE Group

and by Monica Frassoni, Giorgio Celli, Reinhold Messner, Marie Anne Isler-Béguin, Nelly Maes and Gorka Knörr Borràs, on behalf of the Greens/ALE Group

on the floods in northern Italy and in Spain

**European Parliament resolution on the floods in northern Italy and in Spain**

*The European Parliament,*

- A. having regard to the abnormal meteorological conditions and the exceptionally violent storms which, between 15 and 18 October 2000, assailed various parts of northern Italy (in particular Alpine valleys) and also affected Switzerland and France,
- B. whereas at least 24 people have lost their lives as a result of the severe weather and over 40 000 have had to be evacuated,
- C. whereas in Spain too, torrential rain is falling along virtually the entire Mediterranean coastline, the toll so far being three people dead and three missing, together with extensive damage to property,
- D. having regard to the destruction of homes and certain means of production, the damage caused to the agricultural and industrial production process and to SMEs, the loss of jobs and the resulting social and economic implications,
- E. having regard to the particularly precarious situation in which thousands of families now find themselves, having been deprived of electricity, drinking water, telephone links and heating, being cut off from road and rail networks and from basic infrastructures, and having no access to public services,
- F. having regard to the irremediable damage done to the architectural heritage and to woodland, landscapes, protected areas, flora and fauna,
- G. whereas major road and rail links have been disrupted,
- H. having regard to the sheer size of the disaster and the huge amount of money which will have to be spent in order to restore the damaged areas and enable the local people to resume a normal life, and having regard to the emergency action which needs to be taken in order to prevent the outbreak of plant-related diseases,
- I. whereas much of the disaster area qualifies for money from the Community's Structural Funds, in particular the ERDF and the EAGGF Guarantee Section,
- J. whereas some of the damage caused by the natural events in question could have been prevented by means of a proper long-term preventive regional-planning policy covering both water basins and the surrounding mountainous areas, and whereas such a policy has not yet been fully implemented,
- K. whereas an increase in the levels of greenhouse gas emissions in most of the Member States runs counter to the commitments made by the European Union at Kyoto and whereas, according to a report by the European Environment Agency, it is likely that EU emissions of such gases will increase by 6%,

- L. whereas, owing to the current climate changes, there is a risk of further natural disasters on a similar scale, and whereas this is particularly worrying in the case of mountainous regions on account of the obvious effects which such disasters would have on lowland plains,
1. Expresses its sympathy and its full support for the victims' families and for the people (and their communities) affected by the disaster;
  2. Calls on the Commission and all the Member States to waste no time in expressing their support in practical ways, by marshalling workers and equipment under the five-year plan establishing a Community action programme in the field of civil protection, which was adopted by the Council on 9 December 1999 (Decision 1999/847/EC);
  3. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote cooperation on spatial planning in the framework of the Interreg III Community Initiative, giving priority to flood prevention by using natural, sustainable engineering methods in the most affected eligible regions;
  4. Calls on the Commission to gather together emergency funds in order to assist those affected by the natural disaster in question and to combine the funding provided by the national and local authorities with what is available under the social and economic cohesion policy and the common agricultural policy, in particular by marshalling a significant proportion of the funds allocated to rural development, pursuant to Article 33 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 of 17 May 1999 on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) amending and repealing certain regulations relating to action to be taken in the event of a natural disaster;
  5. Calls on the Commission to apply Article 87(2) of the EC Treaty with a view to granting appropriate financial aid to all sectors affected by the disaster;
  6. Calls on the affected Member States to update their legislation so as to prevent unsustainable spatial planning, infrastructure and house-building in hydro-geologically vulnerable areas;
  7. Calls on the Council and the Commission to take political initiatives designed to strengthen cooperation and action in the field of spatial planning, in accordance with the guidelines of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), particularly in the field of reforestation, agri-environmental measures, sustainable water-basin management and the revitalisation of mountainous areas;
  8. Calls on the Commission to devote particular attention to projects which will be submitted to it under the LIFE programme with a view to re-establishing a high-quality environment in sensitive areas;
  9. Calls on the Commission to take all appropriate action in order to ensure that those affected by the disaster are swiftly notified regarding the aid made available to them from EU funds, and that the aid is allocated without delay; calls on the Commission to submit

specific proposals to the Council and the European Parliament if it becomes apparent that the resources available for such aid are inadequate and to consider the merits of devising appropriate support measures for mountainous areas;

10. Calls on the regional governments concerned and on Italy's central government to make the necessary legislative and financial efforts in order to promote the renaturalisation of the most dangerous rivers;
11. Expects the Commission and the European Union to implement measures which tie in with a comprehensive strategy to reverse the greenhouse effect;
12. Reiterates its view that the European Union and its Member States should again play a leading role in international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and halt climate change, and should implement ambitious measures as part of an overall climate-change strategy;
13. Expresses its appreciation at the prompt, effective action taken by the Italian authorities in support of the people affected by the floods;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.