

**Question for written answer E-005386/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Antonyia Parvanova (ALDE), Renate Weber (ALDE), Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Véronique Mathieu (PPE), Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), Norbert Neuser (S&D), Françoise Castex (S&D) and Charles Goerens (ALDE)

Subject: United States' 'no abortion' clause applied to humanitarian aid

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) upholds a 'no abortion' clause – covering both abortion information and medical services – which extends to agencies providing humanitarian aid. This prohibition includes the denial of abortion services to women and girls raped and impregnated in armed conflict. The fact that the United States is the world's largest provider of humanitarian aid has enabled it to define the treatment policy for victims of war rape. This US policy therefore has direct consequences for all humanitarian actions in which USAID is actively or passively involved, and could compromise humanitarian aid projects sponsored by the Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the Commission and Member States, as well as jeopardising the EU's power to shape its own development assistance policy in general.

- Does the Commission believe that this USAID policy has led to the option of safe abortion being withheld from women who have become pregnant as a result of rape as an act of war?
- Does the Commission agree that these women and girls are doubly punished, firstly by being raped and secondly by being denied access to a safe termination of the resulting unwanted pregnancy?
- Does the Commission agree that the EU has a moral obligation to give support to these women and girls, including the option of safe abortion?
- Is the Commission of the opinion that women and girls who are raped in armed conflict are entitled to medical care and attention, as stated in the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols¹? Does this include the option of safe abortion?
- Does the United States' 'no abortion' clause directly or indirectly affect EU and UN humanitarian efforts, since it applies to all US co-sponsored humanitarian activities? Can the Commission indicate what EU funding is affected by the US 'no abortion' clause?
- Does the Commission intend to ensure that EU development funding is not subject to the conditions of the US 'no abortion' clause?
- Will the Commission raise the matter with the US and urge President Obama to rescind this clause?

¹ Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions; Articles 10 and 16 of Additional Protocol I; Articles 7 and 10 of Additional Protocol II.