

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0053/09
pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure
by Thierry Cornillet, on behalf of the ALDE Group
to the Council

Subject: One year on from signature of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid

The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid was signed jointly by the Council and the representatives of the Member States' governments meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission on 18 December 2007. The process of negotiations between the three Institutions provided an important opportunity to reach a political consensus on how to react to increasingly complex crisis situations and to define, for Europe, the boundaries of humanitarian action. A Commission action plan setting out specific measures to implement this joint text was adopted on 29 May 2008 and approved by the Council on 22 July 2008.

Article 101 of the Consensus states that '*EU progress in implementation of this Consensus on Humanitarian Aid should be discussed regularly in Council and with the European Parliament ...*'

- With a view to conducting a regular assessment of humanitarian aid policy (Article 28 of the Consensus), the mandate of the 'Food Aid' group has been extended to include humanitarian aid, and will come into force on 1 January 2009. What exactly is the mandate of this new configuration? And how does the Council intend to implement the Consensus, particularly with regard to coordination and coherence?
- In view of the growing frequency of natural disasters and changes to the climate, what is the EU's political strategy for incorporating disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness in developing countries into its humanitarian and development aid policy?
- What attention is given to humanitarian crises which are under-funded, neglected or forgotten, where the global international humanitarian response is inadequate?
- How will the EU follow up the International Conference on respect for international humanitarian law of 16 September 2008, with a view to preserving the 'humanitarian area' needed to ensure security for humanitarian workers and give them access to vulnerable populations?

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Forwarded: 12.03.2009

Deadline for reply: 02.04.2009