

**Question for oral answer O-0069/2010
to the Council**

Rule 115

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Subject: Creation of a European civil protection force

Following the tragic natural disasters which have occurred recently, it has again become necessary to improve the European Union's crisis response capabilities, both inside and outside Europe. In its resolutions of 2007, 2008, 2009 and more recently its resolution on the earthquake in Haiti adopted on 10 February 2010 (P7_TA(2010)0015), Parliament calls for a European civil protection force to be established as soon as possible to give the European Union an immediate response capacity in the event of natural or man-made disasters (earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, forest fires, floods, landslides, industrial and nuclear accidents, terrorist attacks, maritime disasters, major pandemics).

The proposal to set up a European civil protection force, which was inspired by a report by Michel Barnier in 2006 or by the "EU-FAST" (European Union First Aid and Support Team) proposal put forward by a number of Member States, has been made in response to a real need which should not be overlooked by the Commission.

A European civil protection force will only be possible by means of preventive organisation and a pooling of existing national resources. The dispersion of national resources and the sometimes limited coherence of European action have a cost both in terms of effectiveness and in financial terms. The creation of a European civil protection force would foster a sense of belonging to Europe and raise the profile of the European Union, which is the main financial donor in terms of humanitarian aid and development.

In the absence of a legislative proposal from the Commission to set up a European civil protection force, is the Council prepared to consider closer cooperation on the basis of Article 20 of the Treaty on European Union and following the preparatory action concerning an EU rapid response capability, so that Member States who wish to do so can press ahead?

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