



VOICE (*Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies*) is a network representing 83 European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in humanitarian aid worldwide. VOICE is the main NGO interlocutor with the European Union on emergency aid and disaster risk reduction and it promotes the values and specificities of humanitarian NGOs.

To: Mr. Lamassoure, Chair of Budget Committee

Also sent to: Members of Budget and Development Committees

Brussels, 7 April 2014

Subject: European Parliament support for humanitarian aid - €150 million transfer in 2014 EC Budget

Dear Mr. Lamassoure MEP,

We are writing to thank you for the consistent support for humanitarian aid shown by both the Budget and Development Committees throughout this legislature of the European Parliament. Your engagement in the hearings in 2010 ensured that humanitarian aid had a qualified European Commissioner, through your nomination of a standing rapporteur the issue has been championed consistently, and this political support has been followed through by ensuring that Humanitarian Aid continues at its existing level in the annual EU budgets and the Multiannual Financial Framework.

On 27 March, the European Commission submitted a request for transfers of payment appropriations within the 2014 budget, specifically €150 million to the Humanitarian Aid budget line (reference: Commission Document DEC 6/2014), to the EP for approval. Our understanding is that this will be discussed in the EP on 10 April. **We would be most grateful for your support for EU humanitarian aid by approving this request, ensuring that life-saving humanitarian operations can continue.**

Indeed, the request for €150 million is made in the context of DG ECHO's recent indication that it will require a total of €400 million in additional payment credits in 2014 to simply ensure that this year's expected humanitarian aid operations worldwide can be implemented in accordance with identified needs. We are very grateful to you for the attention the European Parliament has recently given to this issue and for reiterating your political commitment to this cause.

The EU is a leading global donor for humanitarian aid assisting around 120 million victims of natural disasters, man-made or protracted crises in 109 non-EU countries every year. Support for EU humanitarian aid is strong among EU citizens, as indicated in Eurobarometer surveys, and millions of crisis-affected people in countries and regions including Syria, South-Sudan, Sahel and the Central African Republic benefit from lifesaving assistance via DG ECHO and its partners; professional humanitarian NGOs, Red Cross movement and UN agencies.

The current shortfall jeopardizes the scale and existence of numerous operations which we deliver. Uncertainty over continued humanitarian funding in the current situation is already having an impact on NGOs' ability to plan and implement vital operations in the field, where speed, timeliness and ability to respond to arising needs are essential. If additional payment appropriations are not made available, we are concerned that many life-saving activities will come to a halt mid-2014.

In addition to the current proposed transfer, further budgetary reinforcement will be required during 2014 to secure the total of €400 million signalled by DG ECHO as necessary for this year's humanitarian operations. Due to the specific nature of humanitarian aid which works via rapid response, it requires secure funding. As the European Parliament has already started indicating, as of 2015, payment appropriations have to equal commitments for humanitarian aid in the annual budgetary cycle to ensure predictability in planning humanitarian operations. We hope that in the next European Parliament we can continue to count on you and your colleagues to show the same level of support for this issue.

In the meantime your support for this initial transfer request of €150 million will enable NGOs to continue responding to the needs of crisis-affected populations and providing life-saving assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Nicolas Borsinger,

President, VOICE

AUSTRIA

DENMARK

GERMANY

SWITZERLAND

	
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