



VOICE General Assembly  
Brussels, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2006

### **General Policy Resolution**

-

The VOICE network,

Recognising that the involvement of the EU in the post-tsunami relief has been substantial enough to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected population, and welcoming the fact that the consecutive EU Presidencies have supported the process from relief to recovery,

Re-iterating the fact that European humanitarian NGOs, as professional aid providers, are taking numerous steps to ensure proper transparency and accountability of their activities in the post-tsunami regions,

Conscious that, as the EU develops its crisis capabilities in order to respond to natural disasters and complex emergencies outside the Union, there may be a possible blurring of roles and undermining of humanitarian principles with the increased involvement of the military and civil protection actors in the delivery of EU humanitarian aid,

Wary about the financial resources that the EU is allocating to humanitarian aid in order to meet all humanitarian crises for the years to come, as the financial perspectives 2007-2013 show no significant increase in terms of annual average budget for humanitarian aid,

Welcoming the adoption by the Council of EU Guidelines on promoting compliance with International Humanitarian Law by third countries and hoping that these measures will also be used to the benefit of populations in need,

Conscious of the humanitarian consequences which EU political decisions can have in third countries, such as in the Palestinian Territories, where the EU's decision to halt its direct aid to the Palestinian Authority is contributing to a humanitarian crisis,

Welcoming the ongoing reform process inside the international humanitarian system - provided that these developments will directly benefit needy populations and maintain the independence and diversity of humanitarian organisations,

#### **CALLS UPON THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (Council, European Parliament and European Commission)**

1. To ensure that decisions in relation to humanitarian funding – including the Emergency Reserve – are made in a manner consistent with humanitarian principles as enshrined in the Humanitarian Aid Council Regulation 1257/96 and the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.
2. To ensure that EU political decisions do not have negative humanitarian consequences in third countries and to recognise that humanitarian NGOs can not act as substitutes for failing or absent public services in the countries of operation, where the basic needs of civilian populations have to be met.
3. To ensure that any discussions in relation to the wider humanitarian reform process are inclusive of NGOs and the Red Cross which have a proven track record in the delivery of humanitarian aid.