



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 19 May 2011**

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**NOTE**

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| from:           | General Secretariat  |
| to:             | Delegations  |
| No. prev. doc.: | 9687/11  |
| Subject:        | Council Conclusions on the mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan – implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action |

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Delegations will find in the Annex to this note the above Council Conclusions, which were adopted by the Council on 17 May 2011.

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**Council Conclusions on the mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian  
Aid Action Plan – implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action**

1. The Council recalls that the EU has a solid framework in place for effective and principled humanitarian action, with a specific legal basis in the Treaty <sup>1</sup>, the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid as a basic policy framework <sup>2</sup> and an action plan for its implementation <sup>3</sup>.
2. The Council notes the impact of on-going and new complex emergencies, as well as the recent increase in the frequency and scale of natural disasters, both of which contribute to growing levels of humanitarian needs and thereby lead to increased demands on the capacity and financial resources of humanitarian actors.
3. The Council welcomes the Commission Communication “The mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan – implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action” <sup>4</sup> and its general aim to reinforce the EU's strong commitment to further enhance the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid in order to ensure an effective and principled EU contribution to the international humanitarian response.
4. The Council also welcomes the progress <sup>5</sup> made in implementing the Consensus Action Plan since its adoption in July 2008. The Council invites the Commission and the Member States to reinforce collective and individual efforts to implement the practical measures set out in the Action Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Art. 214 TFEU.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 25 of 30.1.2008, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Action Plan for the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, doc. 12125/08.

<sup>4</sup> 17778/10.

<sup>5</sup> 17778/10 ADD1.

5. The Council reaffirms the central and overall coordinating role of the United Nations, particularly the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and underlines its strong support for a plurality of implementing partners in promoting a coherent international response to humanitarian crises.
6. The Council underlines the necessity to ensure coordinated, coherent and consistent EU action in humanitarian emergencies, as well as the importance of ensuring that humanitarian dimensions are duly considered throughout the EU's external action.
7. The Council welcomes the recommendations and priorities outlined in the Commission Communication and agrees to pursue further joint EU efforts on:
  - a) Humanitarian aid effectiveness, including through:
    - multi-donor approaches to support clear comparable identification of needs and to address critical capacity-gaps in the international humanitarian system, and a strong and active EU role in international fora reflecting the full weight of the EU's contribution to humanitarian aid;
    - exploring greater burden-sharing and better coordination, including a discussion of respective roles and responsibilities between the Commission and Member States based on particular strengths and priorities while as a group, focussing on provision of assistance according to needs;
    - response planning especially for protracted crises, including sharing of funding intentions, strategies and more joint missions, evaluations and lessons-learning, accompanied by better consistency in recording aid allocations;
    - continued efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian food assistance, principally through implementation of the Council Conclusions on Humanitarian Food Assistance<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> 9654/10.

- with a view to improving the resilience of vulnerable crisis-affected populations, engage in reinforced efforts to promote strong linkages and complementarity with longer-term development approaches on: disaster risk reduction (with particular attention to the impact of climate change) and the transition from emergency response to recovery (including early post-crisis needs assessment and transition strategies);
  - exploring the feasibility of setting indicative long-term policy targets for the EU’s humanitarian action (EU humanitarian goals);
  - exploring how to enhance Member States' efforts to implement the Consensus, including supporting EU Member States’ donor capacity as appropriate.
- b) Coherence and consistency in EU humanitarian aid and its interaction with other policies, including through:
- working with a diverse range of actors (including the military) to ensure a strong understanding of the fundamental humanitarian principles;
  - an enhanced role of the Council Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) to ensure that the distinctive modalities and specific objectives of humanitarian aid are fully respected, whilst ensuring strong links between humanitarian aid and other policy areas;
  - through COHAFA, undertake an annual monitoring and reporting of progress on Consensus implementation;
  - enhance practical coordination and information sharing of EU humanitarian response through joint risk management, needs assessments and coherent financing of humanitarian activities.

c) Strengthened EU contribution to the international humanitarian system, including through:

- reinforced advocacy for the protection of humanitarian space, including the promotion of international humanitarian law (both general and case-specific);
- engaging in outreach with emerging donors and crisis-affected countries on the humanitarian mandate and key humanitarian issues;
- continued work on the sharing and dissemination of good humanitarian donorship (GHD) principles and good humanitarian practices and in support of the 'Principles of Partnership';
- maintaining and enhancing the EU's humanitarian professionalism through existing training facilities, especially the Network on Humanitarian Action (NOHA);
- exploring other areas upon which donors working jointly could further promote enhanced efficiency, transparency and accountability of humanitarian aid.

8. The Council affirms the importance of continued efforts on dissemination of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and on awareness-raising on the humanitarian principles and modalities, including within national governments and in liaison with the European Parliament and national parliaments.

9. The Council welcomes the intention of the Commission to bring forward a proposal for the revision of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, on the basis of Article 214 of the Treaty and in line with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

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