



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
HUMANITARIAN AID OFFICE (ECHO)

## **Humanitarian Aid Decision** F9 (FED9)

**Title:** Humanitarian aid to facilitate the repatriation to Angola of Angolan refugees in Namibia

**Location of operation:** NAMIBIA

**Amount of decision:** € 1.000.000

**Decision reference number:** ECHO/NAM/EDF/2004/01000

### **Explanatory Memorandum**

#### **1 - Rationale, needs and target population:**

##### **1.1. - Rationale:**

The April 2002 ceasefire in Angola, after 27 years of civil war, laid the building blocks for a lasting peace in Angola. It also lifted the curtain which had hidden the true extent of the humanitarian crisis in the country, and triggered movements on an unprecedented scale of the most vulnerable population groups, IDPs and spontaneously returning refugees. According to Government and OCHA figures, up to 3.800.000 people have moved in Angola since the ceasefire, including 45.000 (UNHCR) refugees who have been repatriated in an organised manner and up to 150.000 who have spontaneously returned from neighbouring countries. Humanitarian partners in Angola estimate that 70% of the returns had taken place without any form of assistance from local authorities or humanitarian organisations to areas where the minimum conditions for resettlement were not in place. Tackling this situation has been the major challenge for humanitarian partners since mid-2003, when the nutritional crisis in the country was generally judged to be over, and the post-conflict transition phase to have begun.

According to the UN<sup>1</sup>, two years after the signing of the April 2002 Memorandum of Understanding formally marking the cessation of hostilities, nearly all IDPs had returned to their areas of origin, and the majority of those who had not returned have decided to remain within their host communities. An estimated 100.000 people remain internally displaced compared to 3.8 million at the end of the war. In addition, approximately half of the estimated 442.000<sup>2</sup> refugees estimated to have fled to neighbouring countries still remain in their host countries, mainly the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and Namibia.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Consolidated Appeal for the Transition, Mid-Year Review, June 2004

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR figures, of whom in camps in : DRC – 163.000 ; Zambia – 200.000 ; Namibia – 24.500 ; Republic of Congo – 16.000. Remaining 38.500 spontaneously settled.

Many thousands of refugees began to repatriate spontaneously as soon as the ceasefire was declared, primarily to Cuando Cubango, Moxico, Uige and Zaire Provinces, and these spontaneous returns have continued steadily ever since. Those who managed to reach areas already accessed by humanitarian partners received the same assistance as other vulnerable groups in those areas. Many more, though, were unable to reach their areas of origin further inland, and remained blocked in precarious conditions in border areas whilst trying to organise their onward journey. At the same time, the first organised repatriations of refugees began in June 2003, following the signature in November and December 2002 of tripartite agreements between the UNHCR, the Government of Angola, and the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), and Zambia respectively. As most of the interior of the country (Angola is the fourth biggest in Africa) was then still inaccessible due to the presence of mines and other UXO and badly damaged or destroyed road and bridge infrastructure, and due to the complete absence of any minimum conditions in 70% of designated resettlement areas, it was decided to repatriate first of all only those refugees who wished to return to accessible sites near the borders<sup>3</sup>. By November 2003, when the official convoys were suspended due to the onset of the rainy season, compounded by the overcrowding of these areas, 45.000 had been brought back to Angola by UNHCR and its partners.

Spontaneous repatriation, however, still goes on, with refugees travelling ever greater distances in hazardous conditions in order to get home, encouraged by reports from family members already in Angola that the situation is stable and conditions improving. From December 2003 to February 2004, for example, ECHO partners working in Lumbala N'Guimbo, in the interior of Moxico province, had registered almost 1.000 spontaneous returnees – families with children - from Nangweshi camp, Zambia. Most had travelled first by river, then across northern Namibia and heavily-mined southern Angola by foot – a distance of almost 800 km – during the worst rainy season the region has known for 25 years. This is in itself significant, as the population of Nangweshi were considered to be UNITA “elite”, and it was always thought that they would be the last to return to Angola. The fact that many are returning – and the vast majority wish to return as soon as possible<sup>4</sup> - bears witness to the overall confidence in the lasting nature of the peace.

UNHCR and its partners launched the second phase of the official repatriation exercise in June 2004, and estimates that 145.000 refugees, of whom about 90.000 in an organised manner, will repatriate from DRC, Zambia and Namibia this year, including to areas further inland, such as the Central Highlands. A significant number of refugees, mainly currently in Zambia and Namibia, wish to return to the Planalto provinces of Huambo, Huila, Bie, Kwanza Sul and Benguela. However, apart from the fact that the distances are great (Osire/Namibia – Huambo almost 1.000 km), it is currently very difficult to access these areas overland, which would anyway be extremely onerous in terms of setting up transit centres, food, fuel, time etc., and would cause extreme discomfort to, and risk increasing the vulnerability of the returnees. This situation could be avoided by using a combination of air and land transport<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Mainly Luau and Cazombo in Moxico, M'Banza Congo in Zaire, Maquela do Zombo in Uige and Caiundo in Cuando Cubango

<sup>4</sup> Confirmed many times over to ECHO staff in personal interviews with refugees and their leaders at Nangweshi camp, Zambia, February 2004

<sup>5</sup> IOM Road Assessment mission, March 2004

However, as evidenced by the continuing spontaneous repatriation, and as declared by the refugees themselves, most want to go home quickly and many will not wait for the convoys – except those in Osire, Namibia, who would be faced with walking several hundred kilometres in the extreme conditions of the desert. It is clear that returning spontaneously carries the risk of increased vulnerability, particularly for the elderly, women and children, and depletes the already minimal economic assets, which would need to be used for the journey home.

The repatriation of refugees is a prime and fundamental consideration from a humanitarian standpoint, as well as being driven by political imperatives. The fact that almost two and a half years have passed since the end of the war in Angola, and that the peace is holding, is the most compelling political imperative. The repatriation of those refugees who wish to return to Angola must be completed in the shortest possible time, not only for their own well-being, but also to relieve the burden on the host countries who have provided them with hospitality for many years.

### 1.2. - Identified needs:

UNHCR has budgeted its programme for the Voluntary Repatriation of Angolan refugees from Namibia, Zambia and DRC at € 16.580.531. An additional component covering the physical repatriation (transport and logistics) will be carried out by the International Organisation for Migration. In its turn, IOM has budgeted this component at €6.938.744.

The single greatest obstacle to repatriation as identified by the refugees themselves, and therefore their greatest need, is transport. Obtaining recognised identity documents is also of concern to most. The fact that conditions in their home areas of Angola may not be very good seems to be of secondary importance when compared with the desire to go home.

An intervention to address the transport and logistics challenges is therefore judged to be the most effective way to ensure safe and orderly repatriation in accordance with humanitarian principles.

In view of the larger context of the repatriation, and of the associated activities carried out by UNHCR in accordance with their mandate, it is imperative that all interventions funded from this decision, to be implemented by IOM, be closely coordinated with UNHCR, and that UNHCR receive regular reports on the progress of the activities.

In view also of the risk of the spread of HIV/AIDS, as thousands of people return from countries with high rates of infection to a country with (possibly) lower rates, and where HIV/AIDS awareness is almost totally non-existent, and in view of the levels of mine and UXO infestation in Angola, HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness and mine awareness activities will be an integral component of all interventions financed under this decision.

### 1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

This decision will directly address the transport and logistics expenditure for up to 15.000 Angolan refugees repatriating, both spontaneously and in an organised manner, from and around Osire camp in Namibia to the border with Angola.

Though it is obviously difficult to give a precise breakdown at this stage of age and gender of the refugees who will repatriate, an extrapolation may be drawn on the basis of the figures pertaining to the population groups currently residing in camps. On the basis of figures provided by UNHCR as at 31 December 2003, children under 18 make up 56% of the

population, women between 18-59 represent 19%, whilst 5% are over-60. It is, therefore, safe to say that children will be major beneficiaries of interventions funded under this decision.

#### 1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints:

The possible constraints to the achievement of the objective are potential difficulties in the registration process and the condition of infrastructure. However, such possible constraints are likely to be more hypothetical than real insofar as the Namibian context is concerned. An added constraint may be the attitude of the Government of Angola in upholding the principles of the voluntary nature of the returns and the free choice of return site.

### **2- Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed:**

#### 2.1. – Objectives:

Principal and specific objective :

To provide transport and logistics assistance to Angolan refugees repatriating from Namibia.

#### 2.2. - Components:

- a) Transport, either overland or by air, from and around Osire camp in Namibia to the border with Angola.
- b) Logistical support to the repatriation in Namibia.
- c) HIV/AIDS and mine awareness activities.

### **3 - Duration foreseen for actions within the framework of the proposed decision:**

The duration for the implementation of this decision will be 12 months.

Humanitarian operations funded by this decision must be implemented within this period.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01/07/2004.

Start Date: 01/07/2004

If the implementation of the actions envisaged in this decision is suspended due to *force majeure* or any comparable circumstance, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the decision.

Depending on the evolution of the situation in the field, the Commission reserves the right to terminate the agreements signed with the implementing humanitarian organisations where the suspension of activities is for a period of more than one third of the total planned duration of the action. The procedure established in the Framework Partnership Agreement in this respect will be applied.

#### **4 –Previous interventions/decisions of the Commission within the context of the crisis concerned herewith**

ECHO in 2003 provided funding to the tune of € 4.541.811 from various decisions with wider objectives for repatriation-related activities. Furthermore, ECHO has in 2003 and 2004 granted funding directly to humanitarian partners providing primary health care, emergency food security, essential relief items, HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness activities and humanitarian demining and mine awareness activities to returning refugees in Angola.

#### **5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms**

According to information provided by the organizations themselves, IOM has received a contribution of US \$ 3.000.000 from the USA, whilst UNHCR has received contributions to the Voluntary Repatriation programme totaling US \$ 9.295.860, as follows (in US\$)<sup>6</sup> :

USA	3.000.000	Germany	1.184.834	Switzerland	396.825
Japan	1.500.000	Netherlands	900.000	South Africa	144.903
UK	1.305.970	Canada	763.359	Private donors	99.969

#### **6 –Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:**

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: 1.000.000 euro

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<sup>6</sup> UNHCR - Angola Voluntary Repatriation Operation Update June 2004

## 6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives:

<b>Principal objective:</b> To provide transport and logistics assistance to Angolan refugees repatriating from Namibia				
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Allocated amount by specific objective (Euro)</b>	<b>Possible geographical area of operation</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>
Specific objective 1: To provide transport and logistics assistance to Angolan refugees repatriating from Namibia	1,000,000	From refugee camps for Angolan refugees in Namibia to the Angolan border	- Transport - Logistics - HIV/AIDS and mine awareness	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>			

## 7 - Evaluation

Under article 18 of the Regulation the Commission is required to "regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations." These evaluations are structured and organised in overarching and cross cutting issues forming part of ECHO's Annual Strategy such as child-related issues, the security of relief workers, respect for human rights, gender. Each year, an indicative Evaluation Programme is established after a consultative process. This programme is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen in the initial programme, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. More information can be obtained at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm).

## COMMISSION DECISION

of

**on the financing of humanitarian operations from the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund  
in Namibia**

**THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,**

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, in particular Article 72 thereof<sup>7</sup>,

Having regard to the Internal Agreement of 15 December 2000 on the Financing and Administration of the Community Aid under the Financial Protocol to the Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Community and its Member States signed in Cotonou (Benin) on 23 June 2000, in particular Articles 24(3) and 25(1) thereof<sup>8</sup>.

Whereas:

1. The peace process in Angola since the April 2002 ceasefire is holding ;
2. The Tripartite Agreements signed in November 2002 between UNHCR, the Government of Angola and the Government of Namibia establish the framework for the voluntary repatriation of Angolan refugees;
3. More than 200.000 Angolan refugees still remain in neighbouring host countries, and there is a clear desire from the majority of these refugees to return to their country of origin ;
4. The continued high numbers of refugees returning spontaneously and without assistance to Angola increases the risk of a deterioration of their humanitarian situation ;
5. It is necessary for political and humanitarian reasons to complete the repatriation process in the shortest possible time ;
6. An assessment of the humanitarian situation leads to the conclusion that humanitarian aid operations should be financed by the Community for a period of 12 months;
7. In accordance with the objectives set out in Article 72 of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, it is estimated that an amount of 1.000.000 Euro from the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to up to 15.000 people, taking into account the available budget, other donors' interventions and other factors ;
8. The amount represents less than 25% of the indicative programme ;

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<sup>7</sup> OJ L317 of 15.12.2000, p.3

<sup>8</sup> OJ L317 of 15.12.2000, p.354

9. The EDF Committee has been duly informed in accordance with Article 24(3) of the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1*

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves a total amount of 1.000.000 euro from the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund for humanitarian aid operations to refugee populations in Namibia who are repatriating to Angola.
2. In accordance with Article 72(3)(d) of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objective:
  - To provide transport and logistics assistance to Angolan refugees repatriating from Namibia.

The full amount of this decision is allocated to this objective.

*Article 2*

1. The implementation of the humanitarian aid operation(s) funded by this decision shall have a maximum duration of 12 months, starting from 01/07/2004.
2. Expenditure under this Decision is eligible from 01/07/2004.
3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended due to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the implementation of this Decision

*Article 3*

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Commission*

*Member of the Commission*



**Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objective**

<b>Principal objective:</b> <i>To provide transport and logistics assistance to Angolan refugees repatriating from Namibia</i>	
<b>Specific objectives</b>	<b>Allocated amount by specific objective (Euro)</b>
Specific objective 1: <i>To provide transport and logistics assistance to Angolan refugees repatriating from Namibia</i>	1.000.000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.000.000</b>

Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Regulation No.1257/96 are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 168 thereof.<sup>9</sup>

Rate of financing: In accordance with Article 169 of the Financial Regulation, grants for the implementation of this Decision may finance 100% of the costs of an action.

Humanitarian aid operations funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) (in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation) and by United Nations agencies based on the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). The standards and criteria established in Echo's standard Framework Partnership Agreement to which NGO's and International organisations have to adhere and the procedures and criteria needed to become a partner may be found at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm)

<sup>9</sup> Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) n° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L 248, 16/09/2002 and n° 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31/12/2002.