



## **Humanitarian Aid Decision**

23 02 01

**Title: Humanitarian aid for the victims of the Chechnya conflict**

**Location of operation: RUSSIA**

**Amount of decision: 2,000,000 euro**

**Decision reference number: ECHO/RUS/BUD/2004/03000**

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### **Explanatory Memorandum**

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

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

This present decision follows a first €16,5M decision adopted on 13 May 2004 and a second €10M decision adopted on 18 October 2004. It stems from the need to urgently cover part of an unexpected gap in WFP's food pipeline in the Northern Caucasus as of early next year, due to US commitments (\$6M) not materialising.

Five years after the beginning of the second conflict in Chechnya, in autumn 1999, the situation has not normalised, in spite of what is officially claimed. On the contrary, insecurity is increasingly spreading to the entire Northern Caucasus, where the situation runs the risk of getting out of control. The situation in Chechnya has been extremely volatile and tense for the last months, especially since the 21 June attack in Ingushetia. Fighting goes on in a number of areas of Chechnya, "zachistki" (mop up operations) continue to take place regularly and disappearances of civilians are still continuously reported, most of the time blamed on the military or their pro-Moscow allies, including the private army of the late president's son. The rebel side has, lately, significantly increased its operations against the federal and Chechen pro-Moscow forces. A series of large-scale attacks have taken place in Grozny and other villages, notably during summer.

The major development of the recent months is the increase in terrorist attacks in Russia and the confirmation of the spillover of the conflict to Ingushetia and North Ossetia, with the raid of 21 June against law-enforcement structures in Ingushetia, which left 90 people dead, and the hostage-taking in a school in Beslan in September, which ended up with several hundreds of people dead (330 officially, half of them children). The operation in Ingushetia came as a surprise in a republic which so far had remained relatively quiet, even if the recent trend showed similar patterns of disappearances, extra-judicial killings by FSB (Federal Security Service) and other

forces as in Chechnya. It had a very strong impact on the population. It also led to an increased tension between Ingushetians and Chechens, until it became clear that the operation had been organised to a large extent internally by Ingush people, albeit with the support of Chechen rebels, under the coordination of Shamil Bassaiev. The fact that 40 people from within the Ministry of Interior participated in the raid against their own colleagues is particularly worrying, as it points to a real fragility of the structures in place.

The hostage-taking in Ossetia has the potential to seriously exacerbate the already fragile ethnic relationship between Ingush and Ossets. The latter were engulfed in a short conflict in 1992 over the disputed territory of Prigorodny which borders Ingushetia and was populated by many Ingushetians. Most of them had to leave their homes and find refuge in Ingushetia, where some 20,000 of them are still displaced. Despite recent talks between the two governments, there has not been any durable settlement so far and the return of Ingushetians to their homes of origin is still a burning issue. The tension is such since last September that a re-igniting of the conflict is not to be excluded, although this has been avoided so far. Such a development would destabilise North Ossetia, which was considered by Moscow until now as their bridgehead in the Northern Caucasus and a solid ally on their Southern flank. If, in addition, the situation in South Ossetia (Georgia) was to deteriorate again, there would be a potential for further destabilisation of the Caucasus.

The operations in Ingushetia and North Ossetia, as well as other recent terrorist attacks in Russia outside the region (explosion of two planes on 24 August, bombing near a Moscow metro station on 31 August), show that the Northern Caucasus and the rest of the country are not immune from the spillover of the unresolved Chechnya conflict, in the context of a multiplication of militant groups which seem to be acting in an autonomous way and where the radical Islamic component appears to be gaining ground.

In Chechnya, the conditions of living for the population continue to be dire, particularly in Grozny, where little reconstruction has taken place so far. Shelter conditions are abysmal, with the majority of people accommodated in makeshift apartments in bullet-ridden and half-bombed buildings, with no running water and irregular electricity. A number of private houses have undergone minor rehabilitation thanks to international organisations, but none of the numerous apartment buildings has been reconstructed so far. As for the daily life, people continue to depend on State allowances, humanitarian aid and indebtedness, in a context where job opportunities are scarce. Many families are hoping to receive the promised federal compensations for lost housing, which were supposed to be paid last and this year, but so far few have materialized and those who have received them have reportedly had to pay significant bribes.

In spite of the difficult environment, people continue to return to Chechnya, partly due to the deterioration of the security and protection situation in Ingushetia. IDPs there are under pressure to leave, especially after the 21 June raid. However, apart from insecurity, which is their first concern, the problem currently facing IDPs who return to Chechnya is the lack of accommodation. While local authorities had been eager to open Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) in order to accommodate IDPs coming back from closing tented camps in Ingushetia, there is currently no place to go back to for IDPs whose house was destroyed. TACs are overcrowded and there

is no plan for commissioning new buildings. IDPs who return can either stay with relatives, which most of them do, or rent a room in the private sector.

Some 40,000 IDPs are still hosted in Ingushetia, in the private sector and in spontaneous settlements, as well as 10,000 in Dagestan, which the international community strives to protect and assist.

## 1.2. - Identified needs:

Since 2000, WFP has been conducting regular distribution of basic food commodities for the vulnerable local and displaced population in Chechnya and for the displaced in Ingushetia, a republic known for the lowest living standards and the highest rates of poverty and unemployment in the Russian Federation.

A WFP mission took place in Autumn 2003 to review the existing emergency operation and formulate a new operation for 2005 in the North Caucasus. The mission found that although there had been some improvement in the stability of the situation in Chechnya over the past year, the security situation remained precarious and many people in both Chechnya and Ingushetia lived in a state of permanent uncertainty. It recommended that WFP continue to provide emergency food assistance to vulnerable people in Chechnya, and to people displaced in Ingushetia. In Ingushetia, DRC and WFP monitors interviewed approximately 1 in every 20 households amongst Chechen IDPs living there, in order to increase the humanitarian understanding of why the IDPs were living outside Chechnya, their coping mechanisms in Ingushetia and their intentions to return. The sample survey of IDPs in Ingushetia generated a profile of IDPs in the Republic receiving humanitarian assistance. Analysis of the information gathered indicated that over 90% of the displaced fall within the extremely vulnerable category.

Taking the results of this analysis, the criteria used to select beneficiaries for the food relief distribution programme were revised to improve the level of targeting and reflect the reduced needs and resources available. As of July 2004 the relief distribution has been implemented in accordance with the lists derived according to the new criteria: household income, dependency ratio, type of accommodation and ownership of a vehicle.

Additionally to this, DRC carried out a household economic assessment in the 'ECHO' areas of Chechnya in August 2002 and in the so-called 'WFP' areas in 2003. This survey reassesses the food aid needs among the most vulnerable populations of Chechnya, resulting in targeting through revised beneficiary selection criteria for the relief distribution programme from mid-2004. The survey also provided updated information on all households so that families are selected through the new criteria using 2003 information on the household economic situation. The survey used qualitative and quantitative information collected through semi-structured and household interviews. A consultant is currently in the region to look at these data, draw lessons from the first months of implementation of these new criteria and make recommendations for the future.

Due to increased rate of returns of IDPs to Chechnya throughout 2004, the number of IDPs in Ingushetia decreased from 65,799 in January 2004 (DRC database, as of 31 January 2004), to an estimated 40,000 in the beginning of November 2004. Of these 25,000 are currently residing in private accommodation with a majority hosted by Ingush families, and are supported in terms of accommodation and utilities. It should

be noted that after five winters, many of these host families have largely exhausted their reserves. A further 15,000 IDPs are currently accommodated in spontaneous settlements, assisted through aid agencies, but nevertheless the living conditions are far from reaching appropriate standards.

For those who have remained in Chechnya, the conflict has seriously impacted on Chechnya's economy and public infrastructure. The employment infrastructure has collapsed, educational standards have dropped dramatically and the social and welfare system has deteriorated markedly. The results of the 2003 ECHO-funded Household Economy Assessment in Chechnya on the whole confirmed the continuing economic hardship for families living in this Republic. Some 75% of assessed households lived on less than \$0.75 per person per day and 50% lived on less than \$0.50<sup>1</sup>, both well below the Russian Federation poverty level of approximately \$2 per person per day. The findings suggested that people categorised among the poorest of the population of Chechnya largely depend on humanitarian food assistance as their primary coping mechanism, indicating that the relief assistance programme should continue until the population have established alternative sources of income such as through regular employment.

Food is still considered the most important need in Chechnya, followed by shelter and health requirements. In addition, many families need capital to rebuild their properties if they are to have a home once again. The traditional coping mechanisms of an extended family are overstretched and the marginal segments of the population now have problems to return to a situation of self-reliance.

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

The target population will be the most vulnerable households in 13 districts of Chechnya (125,000 people) and IDPs in Ingushetia (40,000 people).

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

The security in the Northern Caucasus has been further deteriorating in the past few months, including in Chechnya since last spring. Apart from the continued pattern of disappearances and extra-judicial killings, which has extended outside Chechnya, all the republics of the region have faced rebel attacks recently and if this trend were to be confirmed, it could have wide humanitarian consequences. It is very difficult to predict the evolution of the security situation in the region, which is very tense now. A conflict between North Ossetia and Ingushetia would plunge the whole region into further destabilisation.

The successful implementation of humanitarian programmes will be, as always, linked to security and access to Chechnya and to the region in general. Access to Chechnya has been easier this year until spring for the UN, then came to a stop during several weeks over summer and then re-started regularly in Autumn. The growing insecurity might be reversing the objective of having two UN missions a week. In addition, the risk of kidnapping continues to be as high in the whole region. A UN Headquarters Security Mission is taking place in December, which will assess once again the level of risk and make recommendations for the frequency of UN missions

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<sup>1</sup> According to DRC records on beneficiary households in WFP relief distribution areas

to Chechnya accordingly. The mission is joined by ECHO Security Coordinator, who will conduct its own security assessment in the region.

Access to the Northern Caucasus in general could be severely constrained if insecurity was to continue, as is expected, to spill over into all republics of the Northern Caucasus. Humanitarian organisations are currently working on a remote control system, most of them (notably the UN) based in Ingushetia or/and in Ossetia. If Ingushetia was to be confirmed as a target of rebel attacks, this could hamper the operationality of ECHO partners. Following the attack of 21 June in Ingushetia, some partners (the UN) were already thinking of relocating their main base to Vladikavkaz and coming to Nazran only for the day, but this strategy could be jeopardised now that North Ossetia is no more immune to insecurity. There could, therefore, be a serious problem of access to the beneficiaries if insecurity continues to increase in the whole region.

As far as the monitoring of operations in Chechnya and Ingushetia by ECHO staff is concerned, it will continue to be done through a remote control system from Moscow, with as frequent travel as possible to the Northern Caucasus, depending on the situation, and hopefully with more frequent visits to Chechnya itself if security allows. ECHO, unfortunately, has not been allowed to open an office in Nazran, Ingushetia, and there is no prospect for opening an office in Grozny in the near future, considering the security situation.

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

### **2.1. – Objectives:**

Principal objective :

To ensure the food security of the people affected by the conflict in Chechnya throughout the next months.

Specific objectives :

- To cover the basic food needs of the most vulnerable IDP and local population in Chechnya and of IDPs in Ingushetia.

### **2.2. - Components:**

The operation, operated by WFP, will consist in the distribution of a basic food ration to Chechen IDPs in Ingushetia (those registered on the DRC database) and to displaced persons and members of food-insecure households in Chechnya proper (beneficiaries targeted on the basis of household security surveys).

## **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.



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

Donors in <b>RUSSIA</b> the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria	143,000	ECHO	36,000,000		
Belgium	0	Other services			
Denmark	525,344				
Finland	1,480,000				
France	208,254				
Germany	1,433,000				
Greece	0				
Ireland	200,000				
Italy	0				
Luxembourg	0				
Netherlands	4,801,212				
Portugal	0				
Spain	0				
Sweden	2,351,146				
United Kingdom	803,299				
Subtotal	11,945,255	Subtotal	36,000,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	47,945,255		

Dated : 03/12/2004

(\*) Source : ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://hac.cec.eu.int>  
Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

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

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: 2,000,000 euro

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

<b>Principal objective:</b> <i>To ensure the food security of the people affected by the conflict in Chechnya throughout the next months.</i>				
<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<sup>2</sup></b>
Specific objective 1: To cover the basic food needs of the most vulnerable IDP and local population in Chechnya and of IDPs in Ingushetia.	2,000,000	Chechnya (13 districts) Ingushetia	Distribution of basic food aid	- UN - WFP-PAM
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>			

<sup>2</sup>

UNITED NATIONS - WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME



## 7 –Evaluation

Under article 18 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid 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).

## 8 –Budget Impact article 23 02 01

Budget impact article 23 02 01	
	CE (in Euro)
Initial available appropriations for 2004	476.395.908
Virement budgétaire	25.000.000
Virement Commission	-3.700.000
Supplementary budgets	
Transfers	
<b>Total available appropriations</b>	<b>497.695.908</b>
Total executed to date (as at 3/12/2004)	491.814.311,78
Available remaining	5.881.596,68
Total amount of the Decision	

## COMMISSION DECISION

of

on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European Union in  
**RUSSIA**

### THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,  
Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid<sup>3</sup>, and in particular Article 14 thereof,

Whereas:

1. The Chechnya conflict has led to a considerable outflow of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into the neighbouring republics, with Ingushetia and Daghestan currently still hosting some 50,000 IDPs,
2. The continued violence has provoked the displacement of about 140,000 IDPs within Chechnya itself,
3. The conflict has widely disrupted the socio-medical infrastructure and the agricultural production inside large parts of Chechnya, notably Grozny, and put additional strain on the infrastructure system in the neighbouring republics, notably Ingushetia,
4. Years of displacement and the persistently volatile security situation in the region have – both psychologically and financially – exhausted the affected IDP population,
5. 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.
6. It is estimated that an amount of **2,000,000** euro from budget line **23 02 01** of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over **250,000 vulnerable people**, taking into account the available budget, other donors' interventions and other factors.

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 **2,000,000** euro for humanitarian aid

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<sup>3</sup> OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6

operations **for the victims of the Chechnya conflict** by using line **23 02 01** of the **2004 general** budget of the European Union.

2. In accordance with Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:
  - **To cover the basic food needs of the most vulnerable IDP and local population in Chechnya and of IDPs in Ingushetia.**

*Article 2*

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of **12** months, starting on **01/12/2004**.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01/12/2004.
3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended owing to *force majeure* or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension shall not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the implementation of this Decision

*Article 4*

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption

Done at Brussels,

*For the Commission*

*Member of the Commission*

