



Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

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

Location of operation: **RUSSIA**

Amount of Decision: **EUR 6,000,000**

Decision reference number: **ECHO/RUS/BUD/2005/02000**

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population

1.1. - Rationale :

Political and security situation

The situation has not changed since the adoption of the latest funding decision by the Commission in April. However, there are needs which were not covered in the previous decision and which will therefore be funded under the present one.

Six years after the beginning of the second conflict, the situation has still not been normalised in Chechnya and remains unstable and volatile, with insecurity increasingly spreading to other republics of the Northern Caucasus.

In **Chechnya**, the security situation is seemingly characterised by more stability in Grozny and other big cities, but in the mountainous areas and across Chechnya, a tense situation, with regular military activity and frequent artillery shelling, prevails, with daily confrontations between the military/law enforcement structures and the rebel groups which have been very active the last months. The conflict goes on despite official statements on a supposed “normalisation”.

In parallel to the fighting, human rights organisations continue to report human rights violations by law enforcement structures on a regular basis, which include arbitrary arrests, abductions, torture and extra-judiciary executions of civilians.

The security situation is clearly deteriorating in the rest of the region. In **Ingushetia**, although no major attack of the magnitude of that of 21 June 2004 has happened since then, the situation is still very unstable. Authorities' legitimacy is strongly placed in doubt and there is strong underground rebel activity. Security incidents (bombs, attacks on law-enforcement officials) as well as mop-up operations and disappearances of civilians happen regularly, although less often than in Dagestan.

The situation in **Dagestan** gives most concern recently, as the situation has noticeably worsened there with bombings and targeting of political and law enforcement personnel taking place several times a week and strong rebel activity, possibly partly the result of the announced extension, a few months ago, of the Chechen resistance front to a North Caucasus front. Widespread corruption at all levels, elections scheduled next year, a very complex ethnic and clan structure, high poverty and a strong presence of radical Islam are factors which could lead to a violent destabilisation of Dagestan.

Humanitarian situation

In Chechnya, living conditions for the population continue to be extremely difficult, particularly in Grozny. Although there is some material progress, the nearly totally destroyed capital has seen little reconstruction taking place despite the fact that thousands of displaced people have returned from Ingushetia, increasing the population significantly. Shelter conditions are totally inadequate, with the majority of people accommodated in makeshift apartments in bullet-ridden and half-bombed buildings with no running water, no sewage system and irregular electricity. As for most of those who came back from Ingushetia, they face a second displacement either in overcrowded temporary accommodation centres or in the private sector as they are not able to go back to their destroyed houses. Only a small number of private houses have undergone basic rehabilitation thanks to international organizations and the payment of compensations, and apartment buildings are not being reconstructed. As for daily life, people continue to depend on State allowances, humanitarian aid and indebtedness in a context where job opportunities are scarce outside the public sector : according to official sources, some 70% of the active population is unemployed.

The number of Chechen IDPs in Ingushetia which the international community continues to assist has been stable in 2005 with no significant return in summer, contrary to what was expected. This is largely explained by the fact that people remaining in Ingushetia either have no place to go to in Chechnya, or fear to return there. There are currently 30,000 IDPs registered on DRC database. Of this total, 11,000 persons live in temporary settlements and 19,000 persons in the private sector. In addition, there are 9 to 10,000 IDPs in Dagestan.

1.2. - Identified needs :

The population in Chechnya, notably those who are displaced, is heavily traumatised by past and ongoing violence and lawlessness. The prevailing insecurity continues to affect families and hampers community development and the restoration of peace. People still suffer from insecurity and violence against civilians, unemployment and the lack of opportunities. Although the federal government's contribution towards the recovery of Chechnya has increased in comparison to previous years, the humanitarian situation remains precarious. In general, although billions of rubles have been committed to Chechnya on paper (for 2005, the federal budget was announced to be over 11 billions rubles, i.e. more than EUR300 million), there is still no clear evidence of reconstruction of infrastructures in Chechnya. Corruption is estimated to be the major issue facing the reconstruction of the republic.

Humanitarian needs are various and remain complex. Hundreds of thousands of people are still currently relying on humanitarian assistance provided by the international community. Needs are vast in Chechnya and far from being completely covered due to access problems, insecurity and the small number of international organisations. All of the people have not been assisted in the same way over the last years and therefore the humanitarian response as tailored as possible to the different levels of needs, taking into account the recent evolutions.

As a matter of fact, new developments over the last year call for a more diversified humanitarian response than before :

1) many of the people returning to Chechnya in 2004-2005, whether voluntarily or not, find themselves displaced for a second time because their house has been destroyed by the conflict. This means that funding is now to be concentrated more and more on Chechnya and that shelter needs have become a priority in order for people to be able to come back to their homes and restart their livelihoods.

2) new areas have opened up to humanitarian organisations where access and security have slightly improved : as a consequence, ECHO partners are now able to assist populations which have been overlooked so far and need very basic help.

3) six years into the conflict and with some socio-economic improvements due to the payment of salaries and social allowances, food aid is no longer the most appropriate instrument to support beneficiaries. Food is available on the markets but households have no economic access to it. Therefore, the emphasis should be on gradually continuing to decrease food aid and replacing it with other types of assistance : food security, income-generation activities or voucher assistance. Food aid should eventually be kept only for the most vulnerable until they can be taken over by other assistance mechanisms.

The needs to be covered in this decision, which complements the major decision adopted in April 2005, concern living conditions and protection.

Living conditions

Basic food and non-food items (clothes for children, household and hygienic items) are in dire need. Most families are largely deprived of these items and because of the lack of work opportunities and income, they cannot afford to buy them. However, although direct food aid continues to be a valuable contribution to the household economy, there is a need for further targeting. The reduction in the number of beneficiaries of direct food assistance needs to continue and to be carefully implemented, while in parallel other activities will be phased in or increased, such as school feeding (already in place), food for work, distribution of seeds, greenhouses and livestock or other **income-generation activities** which are sustainable and do not create dependency.

Water and sanitation activities continue to be crucial in reducing the risk of water- borne and infectious diseases in Chechnya, which are widespread. The government is hardly present in this sector, especially in Grozny where there is no running water even in hospitals. Filtered, drinkable water has to be brought by trucks and is still currently provided by the international community. Water and sanitation facilities have to be repaired or installed in

hospitals and social structures. In Ingushetia, water and sanitation programmes will also have to be maintained as long as there will be IDPs in collective settlements.

In the **shelter** sector in Chechnya, there are vast needs in terms of reconstruction, especially in Grozny, a city which used to host 400,000 inhabitants and where apartment buildings have not been reconstructed so far. The current population is estimated to be around 90 to 100,000 people. The reconstruction of apartment buildings and destroyed houses is an issue for the government to tackle. People have started receiving compensations for destroyed houses, but many families are still waiting and the whole process is slow and reported to be marred with fraud, with people reportedly having to pay a 30% bribe to get the money. Payments should continue into 2006, as the total number of eligible people has been increased. In parallel, however, there are urgent needs for basic rehabilitation in houses not totally destroyed which donors could answer, as they are not eligible for compensations. The families concerned could receive shelter materials which would allow them to secure a dry-room in the house. This would allow, notably, a certain number of families to leave the overcrowded collective centres in Grozny.

After several years of disruption of **education** and widespread destruction of facilities, there are vast needs in the educational sector, where the Chechen government is spending too little money. The priorities are the reconstruction of facilities (which should be the task of the government) and the equipment of the classrooms in Chechnya, as well as the provision of books in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan and the running of parallel schools or the strengthening of local schools for IDP children in Ingushetia and Dagestan. The lack of kindergartens is also problematic and needs to be addressed, in particular in order to give children basic skills in Russian and allow them to successfully follow primary education. Because of the war, many adolescents have been out of school for years, whether in Chechnya or in Ingushetia, and therefore are in urgent need of vocational training in order to be able to acquire some skills and work.

The extent of war-related psychological disorders is such among the population in both Chechnya and Ingushetia that **psycho-social assistance** is crucial, especially among children and adolescents. A study led by WHO found more than 70% of the population to be affected.

Because of the presence of mines, there is also a continued need for **mine-risk education**, especially in schools. Mines have been and continue to be highly used and the degree of contamination by unexploded ordnance is also high. According to UNICEF, at least 3,020 have been killed or wounded by mines and unexploded ordnance since 1995, of which 20% were children under 18¹. Considering the limited size of the population, the incident level is higher than that recorded in other mine-affected countries such as Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia.

Protection

In a context where the civilian population is directly affected by the conflict and where severe human rights violations continue to take place, the **protection of civilians** must be maintained and prioritised in all three republics, especially with regard to legal aid. The level of violence implicating civilians, e.g. abductions, torture, disappearances, remains the main challenge of the humanitarian intervention in this context. Protection activities through

¹ These figures reflect only part of the total impact of mines and UXO because of lack of data on military casualties and lack of access to the mountainous Southern districts

mandated organisations such as ICRC and UNHCR should continue and strive to enhance the capacity building of local organisations and initiatives. The respect of International Humanitarian Law, in particular the Geneva Conventions, should continue to be advocated. However, the difficulty of access by protection agencies to the conflict-affected population remains a major issue and has not improved much so far. It has even seriously deteriorated for the ICRC, which has been denied access to prisons for a year, leaving the population in Chechnya largely unprotected.

Since pressure on IDPs to return continues to be high, there is a need to ensure that this return is exclusively voluntary. Therefore, IDPs have to be made aware of their rights to stay in Ingushetia if they so wish and their rights have to be defended.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned :

The target population for the distribution of food and non-food items will be 10,000 people in Southern Chechnya (the remaining districts are already covered under the previous decision) and 1,800 children under 2 in Ingushetia.

Water and sanitation activities will target the IDP population in temporary settlements in Ingushetia as well as the population in medical and social structures in Chechnya.

Shelter programmes are directed towards the most vulnerable people across Chechnya whose house has been partially destroyed and who are not eligible to compensations.

Several programmes are targeted towards children and adolescents : food aid (specific food for IDP babies 4-24 months old in Ingushetia and Chechnya), primary education, psycho-social/vocational training and mine awareness.

Income-generation activities will target vulnerable but able-bodied people across Chechnya.

Protection activities target the whole population in Chechnya, in particular IDPs and returnees, as well as IDPs in Ingushetia and Daghestan.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints :

Insecurity continues to be high not only in Chechnya (where it is a bit less insecure lately, at least in Grozny and the plains), but in the Northern Caucasus in general. All republics of the region covered by ECHO programmes are now confronted with rebel activity and a high risk of further destabilisation which might have humanitarian consequences, notably in Dagestan. It is very difficult to predict the evolution of the security situation in the region.

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 significantly better in 2005 and some new regions have become accessible to humanitarian workers, although the trend can always be reversed at any time. A UN Headquarters Security Mission took place in December and recommended to downgrade the largest part of Chechnya from Phase V to Phase IV. However, the risk of kidnapping remains high in the whole region.

Access to the Northern Caucasus in general could be constrained if insecurity is 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 North Ossetia. If Ingushetia was to destabilise further, this could hamper the operational capacity of ECHO partners and their access to the beneficiaries.

In addition to insecurity, obstruction to the work of humanitarian agencies and staff by the federal and local authorities could hamper the delivery of humanitarian aid. Lately, several NGOs have either encountered problems in re-registering (People in Need notably, which has not had its accreditation renewed) or have been visited by several law-enforcement agencies. There have also been visa problems. This happens at a time when, on the one hand, Russian authorities have announced that there would be no more Consolidated Appeal Process for the UN and are actively trying to convince the international community that there is no need for humanitarian aid any longer but rather for development aid; but on the other hand the government in Chechnya requests the international community to continue with humanitarian aid.

While acknowledging that recovery instruments could cautiously play a role in the Northern Caucasus at large, ECHO recommends that humanitarian aid be maintained as long as there are needs deriving from the conflict. It is likely that after TACIS phases in, in 2006 (a €20 M assistance programme will finance activities in education, health and income-generation sectors), the two instruments of the Commission will co-exist for some time in the region, with the two instruments covering different types of needs in a coordinated way.

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 is now considering recruiting some local staff in Chechnya in order to improve its monitoring capacity. It hopes that by establishing a small office for the local staff in Grozny, it will gain authorisation from the authorities to open an office in Nazran.

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

2.1. - Objectives :

Principal objective: **To improve the humanitarian situation of the victims of the conflict in the Northern Caucasus**

Specific objectives:

To improve the living conditions of people affected by the conflict

To improve the protection of the population

2.2. - Components :

Targeted basic and supplementary food as well as non-food items will be distributed in Chechnya and Ingushetia, as well as small livestock in Chechnya.

Shelter rehabilitation (one or two dry rooms) will be conducted in private houses in Chechnya.

Water and sanitation programmes in Chechnya and Ingushetia will continue to be supported.

Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Art.110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Art.168 thereof (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L248 of 16 September 2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31 December 2002).Rate of financing: In accordance with Art.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

The primary education of children will be supported in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Daghestan, as well as child-friendly spaces and kindergardens. Adolescents and young adults will benefit from psycho-social support and vocational training activities in Ingushetia and in Chechnya. The population in Ingushetia and Chechnya, especially children, will benefit from mine-risk education. Other programmes targeted specifically towards the victims of landmines and other handicapped people (rehabilitation, prosthesis equipment) are already financed under the previous decision.

Income-generation activities will be developed in Chechnya in order to gradually reduce the number of food beneficiaries and allow people to become self-sufficient.

Protection activities will be carried out in all three republics.

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration of humanitarian aid operations shall be 18 months.

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

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 November 2005.

Start Date : 01 November 2005

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 humanitarian aid operations.

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. In this respect, the procedure established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

4 - Previous interventions/Decisions of the Commission within the context of the current crisis

List of previous ECHO operations in RUSSIA				
Decision Number	Decision Type	2003 EUR	2004 EUR	2005 EUR
ECHO/RUS/210/2003/02000	Non Emergency	9,500,000		
ECHO/RUS/210/2003/01000	Non Emergency	16,500,000		
ECHO/RUS/BUD/2004/01000	Non Emergency		16,500,000	
ECHO/RUS/BUD/2004/02000	Non Emergency		10,000,000	
ECHO/RUS/BUD/2004/03000	Non Emergency		2,000,000	
ECHO/RUS/BUD/2005/01000	Non Emergency			22,500,000
	Subtotal	26,000,000	28,500,000	22,500,000
	Grand Total	77,000,000		

Dated : 21/09/2005
Source : HOPE

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms.

Donors in RUSSIA the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		ECHO	34,500,000		
Belgium		Other services			
Cyprus					
Czech republic					
Denmark	255,724				
Estonia					
Finland	1,700,000				
France	42,000				
Germany	1,250,000				
Greece	248,000				
Hungary					
Ireland	200,000				
Italy					
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg					
Malta					
Netherlands	3,178,933				
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain					
Sweden					
United kingdom					
Subtotal	6,874,657	Subtotal	34,500,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	41,374,657		

Dated : 21/09/2005

(*) Source : ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://nac.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: EUR 6,000,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To improve the humanitarian situation of the victims of the conflict in the Northern Caucasus</i>					
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation		Activities	Potential partners³
Specific objective 1: To improve the living conditions of people affected by the conflict	4,200,000	Chechnya, Daghestan	Ingushetia,	Provision of food and non-food items, water and sanitation, shelter assistance, primary education, psycho-social assistance, mine awareness, income-generation activities.	- ACF - FRA - CARE - AUT - DRC - IRC - UK - PEOPLE IN NEED - UN - FAO-I - UN - UNICEF - BEL - WORLD VISION DEU
Specific objective 2: To improve the protection of the population	1,800,000	Chechnya, Daghestan	Ingushetia,	Legal aid, detention visits	- CROIX-ROUGE - CICR- ICRC - CH - UN - UNHCR - BEL
TOTAL:	6,000,000				

³ ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, (FR), CARE OESTERREICH - VEREIN FÜR ENTWICKLUNGSZUSAMMENARBEIT UND HUMANITÄRE HILFE, COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE (CICR), Clovek v tísní - společnost při České televizi, o.p.s., DANSK FLYGTNINGEHJÆLP, International Rescue Committee UK, UNICEF, UNITED NATIONS - FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES - BELGIUM, WORLD VISION, (DEU)

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.

8 - Budget Impact article 23 02 01

-	CE (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2005	476.500.000
Reinforcement from emergency aid reserve	100.000.000
Transfers	- 3.500.000
Total Available Credits	573.000.000
Total executed to date (by 19/09/2005)	480.637.870
Available remaining	92.362.130
Total amount of the Decision	6,000,000

Payment schedule

	2005	2006	2007
EUR	900,000	2,500,000	2,600,000

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 aid⁴, and in particular Article 15(2) 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 40,000 IDPs,
- (2) The continued violence has provoked the displacement of about 200,000 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 infrastructure 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 18 months.
- (6) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 6,000,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over 200,000 beneficiaries, taking into account the available budget, other donors-contributions and other factors.
- (7) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 21 October 2005.

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 EUR 6,000,000 for humanitarian aid for the victims of the Chechnya conflict by using line 23 02 01 of the 2005 general budget of the European Union.
2. In accordance with Article 2 (a) of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

To improve the living conditions of people affected by the conflict
To improve the protection of the population

The amounts allocated to each of these specific objectives are listed in the annex to this decision

Article 2

The Commission may, where this is justified by the humanitarian situation, re-allocate the funding levels established for one of the specific objectives set out in Article 1(2) to another objective mentioned therein, provided that the re-allocated amount represents less than 20% of the global amount covered by this Decision.

Article 3

1. The duration for the implementation of this decision shall be for a maximum period of 18 months, starting on 01 November 2005.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 November 2005.
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

Annex: Breakdown of allocations by specific objectives

Principal objective: To improve the humanitarian situation of the victims of the conflict in the Northern Caucasus	
Specific objectives	Amount per specific objective (EUR)
To improve the living conditions of people affected by the conflict	4,200,000
To improve the protection of the population	1,800,000
TOTAL	6,000,000