



Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Humanitarian Aid for the victims of Hurricane Stan in Guatemala

Location of operation: GUATEMALA

Amount of Decision: EUR 2,600,000

Decision reference number: ECHO/GTM/BUD/2006/01000

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

On 5 October 2005 Guatemala declared a state of National Emergency and requested international support after Hurricane Stan hit the country. Ten days of continuous rain brought on by Hurricane Stan caused flooding and landslides in Guatemala where the soil was already saturated by the rainy season. According to the Guatemalan Government¹, these events affected some 3,500,000 people (31% of the total Guatemalan population) in 15 departments² (out of 22 departments, i.e. 68%); of these, 474,928 people (4% of Guatemala's population) have been severely affected and it is estimated that another three million people in the country have been indirectly affected by the floods. To date, there are 669 confirmed deaths, with another 844 people listed as missing.

¹ SE-CONRED (Secretaria Ejecutiva de la Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres - national coordinating agency for disaster reduction)

² Santa Rosa, Jutiapa, Sacatepéquez, Escuintla, Chimaltenango, Quetzaltenango, Sololá, San Marcos, Totonicapán, Retalhuleu, Suchitepéquez, Huehuetenango, Jalapa, Quiche and Guatemala.

Department	Affected	Deaths	Missing	Injured
San Marcos	185,938	264	133	29
Escuintla	157,824	25	0	49
Solola	28,034	271	691	208
Quetzaltenango	19,686	18	0	1
Jutiapa	15588	3	3	0
Huehuetenango	14,619	15	1	3
Chimaltenango	14,282	31	12	3
Quiche	10,148	9	1	79
Santa Rosa	9,017	8	0	0
Retalhuleu	8,799	2	0	13
Totonicapan	3,440	5	0	0
Suchitepequez	3,381	2	0	1
Sacatepequez	2,689	2	0	0
Guatemala	1,404	0	2	0
Jalapa	79	14	1	0
TOTAL	474,928	669	844	386

Source: SE-CONRED

The area affected by the hurricane corresponds to 33% of the national territory, i.e. 36,000 Km². 40% of the Guatemalan municipalities (i.e. 133 out of 333) were impacted by the storm.

According to ECLAC³, the impact of Hurricane Stan amounts to more than EUR 800 million, which is equivalent to 3.1% of GDP in 2004. In the list of the ten countries most affected in 2005 by natural disasters, CRED classified Guatemala's catastrophe as second in the world in terms of number killed/100,000 inhabitants. Regarding its economic impact, this disaster ranked third in terms of percentage of previous-year GDP.

An analysis at departmental level shows that the hurricane had the greatest impact in those departments with the lowest human development indices and which are home to populations with low income levels, who are often indigenous peoples.

Department	Affected population	% Indigenous Population	Impact (% GDP)	HDI (2002)
San Marcos	39.2%	35.3%	21.9	0.583
Escuintla	33.2%	6.5%	9.1	0.605
Solola	5.9%	96.3%	34.9	0.579
Quetzaltenango	4.1%	52.3%	7.3	0.655
Jutiapa	3.3%	2.8%	16.0	0.593
Huehuetenango	3.1%	64.6%	9.8	0.560
Chimaltenango	3.0%	78.8%	8.6	0.618
Quiche	2.1%	88.4%	2.0	0.508
Retalhuleu	1.9%	21.0%	19.9	0.632
Santa Rosa	1.9%	2.4%	7.7	0.604
Totonicapan	0.7%	98.3%	6.4	0.540
Suchitepequez	0.7%	48.0%	4.7	0.587
Sacatepequez	0.6%	41.1%	2.9	0.708
Guatemala	0.6%	12.3%	0.3	0.795
Jalapa	0.01%	14.9%	5.3	0.568
TOTAL	100%	41%	3.1	0.649

³ United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL)
ECHO/GTM/BUD/2006/01000

DG ECHO⁴ reacted very promptly and a first primary emergency decision to allocate EUR 1.7 million was taken on 6 October 2005 to help meet the initial urgent needs of the victims of Hurricane Stan in Guatemala and El Salvador. This included a humanitarian operation of EUR 0.3 million in the South-Western coast of Guatemala. Basic relief items like food parcels and non-food items were delivered during the first days of the emergency.

Efforts to determine the damage caused by the hurricane were hindered by the rain as floods and landslides wiped out roads, making it difficult for assessment teams to reach the affected areas. However, when the magnitude of the disaster was revealed with the first results of these assessments, DG ECHO adopted an emergency decision on 10 November 2005 of EUR 4.0 million for Guatemala and El Salvador. Of this amount, EUR 3.6 million was channelled to Guatemala through the implementation of 12 humanitarian operations in the six departments in which 90% of the affected population were concentrated: San Marcos, Solola, Escuintla, Quetzaltenango, Santa Rosa and Retalhuleu. Basic relief items (food, water, hygiene kits, etc) were distributed to the affected population who remained in public shelters and to those who were slowly returning to their homes. Medical assistance (including psycho-social support) was delivered to these families. Water supply was quickly restored in several communities. Several families who lost their houses were provided with temporary shelters. Some rural roads were repaired in order to re-establish access to communities that were isolated by landslides. DG ECHO partners implemented some actions aimed at restoring agricultural assets lost through the disaster.

At the moment, more than 12,000 people remain in temporary shelters. At the peak of the emergency phase there were around 43,000 people. These figures do not include the families who were sheltered in houses of relatives and friends.

In Guatemala, the poorest families have been hardest hit by Hurricane Stan. These families, the majority of them indigenous, lost their houses and most of their economic assets that would have allowed them to recover from this catastrophe. The Guatemalan Government recently presented their Reconstruction Plan to the international community. This plan confirms the significant gap that exists between the public resources and the actual needs in terms of rehabilitation and reconstruction. Currently, donors are analysing the request made by the Government in reconstruction terms, but few actors are focusing on the current post-emergency phase that will build the bridge between the emergency humanitarian aid and the long-term reconstruction phase. Furthermore, during a DG ECHO needs assessment mission, partners reported that some populations in the more remote areas have not been taken into account in the government assessment.

1.2. - Identified needs:

The productive sector concentrates 27% of the damage, especially the agricultural sub-sector. Agricultural risk-prone areas were severely affected by the disaster. The hurricane affected primarily poor peasants and rural workers by washing off crop lands located on slopes and flood-prone areas. These families usually have a poor diet and

⁴ Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO
ECHO/GTM/BUD/2006/01000

very limited food reserves. As they depend on agriculture, income for food purchases is very limited as their crops were damaged. As their second source of income is generally daily wage labour, their earning possibilities were also severely reduced by the hurricane. According to ECLAC, more than 17,000 jobs were lost as a consequence of the disaster. The Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture estimates that the hurricane has damaged an agricultural area of 720,000 hectares. It estimates crop losses to be 50% in the cases of yellow maize and rice; 80% for black beans; 30% for white maize; 90% for banana, sorghum and sesame and 5% for sugar cane. The same source estimates that in some areas of the western departments 100% of the small livestock died as a consequence of the disaster.

In order to prevent a deterioration of the nutritional status of the most vulnerable population, these families continue to require humanitarian assistance. This kind of assistance is particularly relevant in a country where almost one out of every two children under five suffers from chronic malnutrition and any external shock immediately leads to an upsurge in acute malnutrition rates. Food assistance should be linked to rehabilitation efforts (agricultural activities, housing reconstruction, training, watsan rehabilitation works) and to the prevention of a decline in people's nutritional status. In line with the Food Aid Security Regulation, the EC's actions in this field shall be limited to food interventions for identified targeted groups (vulnerable groups) and the action to be promoted shall consist of "non free food aid distribution mechanism" (i.e. through Cash for work or food for work programmes).

In addition to food distribution, it is important to help to restore livelihoods through the promotion of agriculture (distribution of seeds, agricultural inputs and tools), small animal and fish activities. Economic reactivation could combine the support of traditional agricultural and livestock programmes with other economic activities like weaving, etc.

At the moment, more than 12,000 people remain in temporary shelters. These shelters need a regular provision of drinking water and basic sanitation services, together with domestic and hygiene items. The disaster that forced people to move to temporary shelters also impacted the health system in the affected areas, thus increasing the risk for already prevalent diseases such as respiratory, diarrhea and vector-borne diseases. In this context, children, women and the elderly are especially vulnerable groups whose special needs must be taken into account. Preventive measures (including close monitoring for epidemics) should include general health assistance and psycho-social support activities, especially in the shelters.

Although the damage to the water and sanitation sector only represents 1.2% of the total damage, destruction took place at critical points in water and sanitation systems that rendered them unusable. Water provision and sanitation are always critical issues in hydro-meteorological disasters and these problems were rightly addressed by many DG ECHO partners during the emergency phase. These emergency solutions were aimed at quickly re-establishing water provision for the affected population. Although these repairs proved extremely useful during the emergency phase, they did not provide a permanent solution and these systems remain highly vulnerable to future hydro-meteorological events that might occur in the next winter season. This sector provides an excellent opportunity for mainstreaming risk reduction in this post-emergency phase.

43% of the total damage is related to the transport sector. Thus, 1,400 km of paved roads (26% of the total) and 5,400 km of unpaved roads (52% of the total) were

damaged by the landslides and floods. Several rural communities were cut off for days and weeks until partial rehabilitation works were carried out by the machinery provided by municipalities and some NGOs. Although in theory this is a sector traditionally covered by the Central Government, rehabilitation of access to some rural communities is not always prioritised by government large-scale road reconstruction programmes. Therefore this sector might offer some opportunities for those DG ECHO partners interested in implementing small scale risk mitigation actions in the transport infrastructure at community level.

According to ECLAC's assessment, the damage in the housing sector represents 13.3% of the total. The Guatemalan Government⁵ has reported that over 13,500 houses were affected by the hurricane: 12,500 houses need to be rebuilt and more than 1,200 houses require repairs. Out of the 12,500 houses that have to be rebuilt, 64% of them also need to be relocated. Finding suitable risk-free land for such relocation is not an easy task in a country like Guatemala, where public land is scarce and expropriation of private land is not a politically viable option in a highly speculative market. Housing is, after transport, the sector where the Government has identified the biggest gap in terms of funding: 22.4% of the housing needs identified by the Government have not found yet a funding source. While not targeting shelter as a major component, interventions under this decision may, as part of an integrated approach, include a shelter component.

Local authorities' capacity was clearly exceeded by the magnitude of the disaster. Coordination mechanisms between the civil society and the central, departmental and municipal governmental levels did not always work properly during the emergency phase. Local authorities require external support to deal with the complexity of the rehabilitation process. Funding initiatives aimed at strengthening local governments' capacities to coordinate rehabilitation actions and to plan the reconstruction phase would be a useful input also for LRRD purposes and may be incorporated into some projects.

Disaster risk reduction should be mainstreamed as much as possible in humanitarian operations, not only through the inclusion of specific disaster preparedness and mitigation activities, but also through the adoption of a risk reduction approach in the post-emergency humanitarian activities.

1.3. Target population and regions concerned:

The Decision will target around 80,000 people, either living in temporary shelters or who have been relocated to new sites and families, or who have returned to their homes. This Decision covers the most severely affected departments such as San Marcos, Solola, Quetzaltenango.

Operations will take into account the special needs of vulnerable groups such as children, women, elderly, disabled and indigenous minorities.

Priority will also be given to operations that mainstream disaster risk reduction in their rehabilitation activities as this population will most probably continue to live in disaster prone areas.

⁵ Ministerio de Comunicaciones, Infraestructura y Vivienda
ECHO/GTM/BUD/2006/01000

1.4. Risk assessment and possible constraints:

The three main constraints for a successful implementation of operations are the following:

1. The next hurricane season officially starts in June and continues until November. During this period humanitarian operations could be disrupted by adverse weather conditions.
2. Presidential elections are due to be held in Guatemala in 2007. As the election approaches, increasing political tensions could disrupt operations.
3. Security remains a critical issue in Guatemala. The Peace Agreement signed by the civil war parties in 1996 did not solve the root causes of the civil conflict in Guatemala. The majority of Guatemalans live below the poverty line and the hurricane has worsened the situation of the poorest. The department hardest hit by the hurricane, San Marcos, borders Mexico and is considered a hot spot in the Guatemalan network of drug production and trafficking. In the last months there have been several clashes between the security forces and some communities of that department, most likely encouraged and sponsored by drug barons.

Partners working in San Marcos are already taking into account this situation when they approach the beneficiaries. Local authorities and community representatives are duly consulted and informed about their actions. Partners will have to take into account these security and logistical constraints.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed: ⁶

2.1. Objectives:

Principal objective: To support victims of Hurricane Stan in Guatemala to regain a minimum level of self sufficiency while reducing their vulnerability to natural disasters.

Specific objectives:

To assist the victims of floods and landslides with integrated relief, emergency rehabilitation, short-term reconstruction and disaster preparedness support.

2.2. - Components:

⁶ 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 Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 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 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 DG 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/comm/echo/partners/index_en.htm

Aid funded under this Decision will be given as an integrated package, the principal components of which will be:

Food security: Food aid (distribution of food rations), agricultural (seeds, tools, agricultural inputs) and livestock activities.

Food-For-Work schemes could be envisaged for labour intensive rehabilitation activities.

Agricultural and livestock activities will be coordinated with the EC Food Security Programme in Guatemala, the Ministry of Agriculture and SESAN (Secretary of Food Security and Nutrition).

Water and sanitation: Rehabilitation of water systems, water treatment, water distribution and waste disposal and latrines. Training of community water management committees.

Health: general and emergency health care, rehabilitation of medical facilities, drugs supply, health education and training, psychosocial support.

Nutrition: Local capacity building on nutrition. Educational activities aimed at informing the target populations on best nutritional practices.

Livelihood recovery: activities aimed at allowing beneficiaries to gain a minimum level of self-sufficiency.

Non food items: Domestic and resettlement items, hygiene kits.

Disaster preparedness and mitigation⁷ : DG ECHO has requested partners to incorporate a risk reduction approach into their proposals, and links to DIPECHO will be made where appropriate.

Other small-scale activities may be integrated into the aid package where appropriate, such as post-emergency/semi-permanent shelter, local capacity building, small-scale rehabilitation of rural roads and minor bridges.

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be 18 months.

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

This duration will allow funding of the required humanitarian actions for a sufficient transition period before reconstruction takes place.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 May 2006 in order to allow funding to some humanitarian operations scheduled to start on that date.

⁷ Rehabilitation works should mainstream disaster risk reduction whenever this is viable
ECHO/GTM/BUD/2006/01000

Start Date: 01 May 2006

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 DG ECHO operations in GUATEMALA				
Decision Number	Decision Type	2004 EUR	2005 EUR	2006 EUR
ECHO/GTM/BUD/2004/01000	Non Emergency	800,000		
ECHO/-CM/BUD/2005/01000	Primary emergency		300,000	
ECHO/-CM/BUD/2005/02000	Emergency		3,600,000	
	Subtotal	800,000	3,900,000	0
	Grand Total	800,000	3,900,000	

Dated :
Source : HOPE

5 - Other donors and donor co-ordination mechanisms.

Donors in GUATEMALA the last 12 months					
1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	3,900,000		
Belgium		Other services			
Cyprus	21,390				
Czech Republic	77,000				
Denmark					
Estonia					
Finland					
France	850,000				
Germany	724,987				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland					
Italy	200,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	100,000				
Malta					
Netherlands	2,407,000				
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	1,947,199				
Sweden	4,936,777				
United kingdom					
Subtotal	11,264,353	Subtotal	3,900,000	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	15,164,353		

Dated : 06/04/2006

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

The Government's reconstruction plan was presented in March. The plan will take some time to be implemented; the first results are not likely to be achieved in less than 12 months. In the meantime, an estimated 12,000 people are still living in temporary shelters, and in need of humanitarian aid. Water systems have been repaired, but they remain extremely vulnerable to the rains forecasted for this winter season (starting in May), and need to be rehabilitated following a risk reduction design, in order to avoid destruction by future natural events. Affected families have lost their economic assets, but even if these are replaced, these families will need food aid until they recover their full economic capacity. Donors have made commitments for the emergency phase and some have made commitments for the reconstruction phase, but there is an absence of coverage of humanitarian needs in between these two phases.

Particular attention will be paid in order to ensure adequate coordination with the rest of the donors as well as with other EC actions in the field, both at the regional (PRESANCA programme) and bilateral level (Food security NGO call for proposals and Local Development Programme, currently under approval).

In the aftermath of the tropical storm, DG ECHO, AIDCO and RELEX established an informal “task force” to ensure maximum cohesion and complementarities in the EC response. Considering the importance of the reconstruction needs, a specific food security allocation was decided upon which will be closely coordinated with DG ECHO interventions and partners, as they are best placed to implement long-term development projects in the affected areas. The Delegation is preparing Guidelines for a Food Security Call for Proposals which will ensure that LRRD principles are fully taken into account. The adoption of this ad hoc decision would allow a better preparation of this process. Furthermore, this decision would allow for a Disaster Preparedness approach, as DG ECHO requested partners to incorporate a risk reduction component in their proposals.

There are also good opportunities to link DG ECHO interventions with those of the most active Member State in this emergency: Spain. During the emergency phase, some DG ECHO partners complemented DG ECHO funding with Spanish funds, thus increasing the impact of their operations. Spain has announced the commitment of very significant funds for post-STAN reconstruction (EUR 30 million of which 8 for a budget support operation), and their programme will be based on the plans agreed at departmental and municipal levels, providing potential for coordination with DG ECHO operations. The Spanish reconstruction plan will most likely start towards the end of this year. The timing of this ad hoc decision will facilitate the transition between the post-emergency and the reconstruction processes.

6 - Amount of Decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: EUR 2,600,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

Principal objective: <i>To support victims of Hurricane Stan in Guatemala to regain a minimum level of self sufficiency while reducing their vulnerability to natural disasters.</i>				
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Activities	Potential partners⁸
Specific objective 1: To assist the victims of floods and landslides with integrated relief, emergency rehabilitation and short-term reconstruction and disaster preparedness support.	2,600,000	San Marcos, Solola, Quetzaltenango, Suchitepequez, Escuintla	Food security, Water/Sanitation, Health, Nutrition, Livelihood recovery Non food items, Disaster preparedness and Mitigation,	- ACH- ESP - DANCHURCH AID – DNK - MEDICUS MUNDI - ESP - OXFAM - UK - TROCAIRE - WFP
TOTAL:	2,600,000			

⁸ ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE (ESP), FEDERACION DE ASOCIACIONES MEDICUS MUNDI ESPANA (E), FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJAELP (DNK), OXFAM-Solidarite(it), (BEL), Trocaire, (IRL), UN - WORLD FOOD PROGRAM - LIAISON OFFICE

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 DG 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/comm/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm.

8 - Budget Impact article 23 02 01

-	CE (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2006	470,429,000
Supplementary Budgets	
Transfers	
Total Available Credits	470,429,000
Total executed to date (11/05/2006)	307,550,000
Available remaining	162,879,000
Total amount of the Decision	2,600,000

COMMISSION DECISION
of
on the financing of humanitarian operations from the general budget of the European
Union in
GUATEMALA

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 aid⁹, and in particular Article 15(2) thereof:

Whereas:

(1) On 5 October 2005 Hurricane Stan combined with a band of low pressure resulted in rainfall far above average in Guatemala and El Salvador creating an emergency situation in several departments of both countries;

(2) The governments of the two countries declared a state of national emergency and asked for international assistance;

(3) The losses suffered by the vulnerable and extremely poor rural families have left them reliant on humanitarian aid during a whole agricultural cycle;

(4) The European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO has provided emergency humanitarian aid for the affected populations, but has assessed that a further humanitarian intervention is required to respond to continuing serious humanitarian needs in Guatemala;

(5) The Government's reconstruction plan was presented in March and will take some time to be financed and implemented;

(4) 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 from 01 May 2006;

(5) It is estimated that an amount of EUR 2,600,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to at least 80,000 displaced people affected by Hurricane Stan, taking into account the available budget, other donors' contributions and other factors.

(6) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Regulation (EC) No.1257/96, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 22 June 2006.

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 2,600,000 for humanitarian aid operations in favour of the victims of Hurricane Stan in Guatemala by using line 23 02 01 of the 2006 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 assist the victims of floods and landslides with integrated relief, emergency rehabilitation and short-term reconstruction and disaster preparedness support.

The total amount of this Decision is allocated to this objective.

Article 2

1. The duration for the implementation of this Decision shall be for a maximum period of 18 months, starting on 01 May 2006.

2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 01 May 2006.

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 3

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

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission