

COMMISSION DECISION
of
on the financing of a Global Plan for humanitarian operations from the budget of
the European Communities in
South America

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 aid¹, and in particular Articles 2, 4 and 15(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Colombia continues to experience a violent internal conflict, which has affected more than 3,900,000 people to date and causes the new displacement of some 200,000 people per year,
- (2) Most internally displaced people (IDPs) are in need of short term relief immediately after their displacement and need humanitarian assistance to improve their living conditions and to be integrated into a new environment,
- (3) The Colombian institutions do not have sufficient capacity to cope with the humanitarian needs of IDPs and in many cases do not have access to them,
- (4) Some 14,000 children have been recruited by armed groups in Colombia and there is a need to protect vulnerable IDP children and prevent further recruitment,
- (5) The conflict in Colombia is increasingly affecting Ecuador and Venezuela where more than 400,000 Colombians are of concern to humanitarian agencies and in need of protection and humanitarian assistance. In Panama, approximately 12,000 Colombians are also in need of protection,
- (6) It is necessary to maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field in order to assess the needs, appraise proposed actions, coordinate and monitor the implementation of Community funded actions,
- (7) The scale and complexity of the humanitarian crisis, which is likely to continue, requires the formulation of a coherent framework for action,
- (8) On the basis of the assessment of the humanitarian situation, and taking into account other donors' interventions and the available budget, it is estimated that an amount of EUR 12,000,000 from budget article 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Communities will be required to assure humanitarian assistance to more than 190,000 conflict affected people in Colombia and neighbouring countries,
- (9) The time needed to meet the identified humanitarian requirements renders necessary to establish an implementation period for this decision of 18 months,

¹- *OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1-6*
[ECHO/-SM/BUD/2008/01000](#)

(10) The present Decision constitutes a financing Decision within the meaning of Article 75 of the Financial Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002², Article 90 of the detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation determined by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002³, and Article 15 of the Internal Rules on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Communities⁴.

(11) In accordance with Article 17 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, the Humanitarian Aid Committee gave a favourable opinion on 13 December 2007.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves an amount of EUR 12,000,000 for humanitarian aid for a Global Plan in 2008 benefiting conflict-affected people and refugees in Colombia and neighbouring countries from article 23 02 01 of the 2008 general budget of the European Communities.

2. In accordance with Articles 2 and 4 of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

- To provide protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia
- To provide protection, relief and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in neighbouring countries (in particular Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama)
- To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations

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 and does not exceed EUR 2,000,000.

² - OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006, OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1

³-OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p.1 Regulation as last amended by Commission Regulation (EC Euratom) No. 478/2007, OJ L 111 of 28.4.2007, P. 13

⁴ Commission Decision of 21.02.2007, C/2007/513

Article 3

1. The duration of the implementation of this Decision shall be for a period of 18 months, starting on 1 January 2008.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 January 2008.
3. If the actions 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 4

1. The Commission shall implement the budget by direct centralised management or by joint management with international organisations.
2. The actions supported by this Decision will be implemented by humanitarian aid organisations that are signatories to the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) or the EC/UN Financial Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA).
3. Taking account the specificities of humanitarian aid, the nature of the activities to be undertaken, the specific location constraints and the level of urgency, the activities covered by this Decision may be financed in full in accordance with Article 253 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation.

Article 5

1. The amount of EUR 12,000,000 shall be conditional upon the necessary funds being available under the 2008 general budget of the European Communities.
2. 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

| Specific objectives | Amount per specific objective (EUR) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| To provide protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia | 10,300,000 |
| To provide protection, relief and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in neighbouring countries (in particular Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama) | 1,500,000 |
| To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations | 200,000 |
| TOTAL | 12,000,000 |



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID - ECHO

HUMANITARIAN AID
for
conflict-affected people and refugees in Colombia and
neighbouring countries

GLOBAL PLAN 2008

Submitted to the Humanitarian Aid Committee - December
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007, the armed conflict in Colombia, which has been going on for four decades, continued with its own dynamics and with an intensity similar to previous years. No end to the conflict is in sight, be it by military means or negotiations. The conflict continues to entail serious humanitarian consequences for the civilian population. New displacement within Colombia continues as well as displacement towards the neighbouring countries Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama. Many rural communities are suffering from confinement or blockading and, hence, have their livelihoods endangered. Moreover, the recruitment of children by armed groups continues.

Colombia continues to have the second largest number of internally displaced people in the world, with more than 3,900,000 Colombians having been displaced. Every year the conflict causes the new displacement of some 200,000 people. Furthermore, UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) estimates that more than 400,000 Colombians have fled to neighbouring countries and are in need of protection, although many of them have never been registered because of ignorance of procedures, fear of reprisals or stigmatization.

The humanitarian crisis is exacerbated by repeated violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) committed by all the armed actors of the conflict. The situation in Colombia is somewhat paradoxical: While the country has a rather sophisticated legal protection framework in compliance with all relevant international treaties, state institutions are unable to apply it, either because of lack of presence in some regions or because of institutional weakness. The result is a huge gap in the coverage of the humanitarian needs of the victims of the conflict, with the civilian population being left unprotected against the armed actors.

Through the present Global Plan, the Commission will remain one of the key international humanitarian donors in Colombia. Humanitarian actions funded by the Commission will be consistent with the strategy designed in previous years but more emphasis will be put on the following two aspects: (1) focus on the blocked/confined population and the population at risk in rural areas, where the presence of state institutions and humanitarian actors is rather limited (2) a more pro-active attitude of the Commission's humanitarian partners towards the relevant state institutions so as to involve them in the response with the ultimate aim of handing over operations to them.

Approximately 190,000 people will be assisted by the Commission under this Global Plan, including more than 130,000 in Colombia and some 60,000 in Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama. The present Global Plan proposes humanitarian operations for a total amount of EUR 12,000,000. Operations will have an average duration of 12 months within an 18 month decision implementation period. The Global Plan will be completed by a separate financial allocation from the Food Aid Budget Line, the programming of which is under way.

2. CONTEXT AND SITUATION

2.1. General Context

The Republic of Colombia occupies the north-west corner of South America and borders Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and Venezuela. It has an estimated population of 45,600,000, with 76% of its population living in urban areas. Although it is rich in natural resources, with fertile agricultural land, energy resources (oil, natural gas and coal) and minerals, much of its wealth has been squandered in a debilitating 40-year long

internal armed conflict. As the conflict has intensified in recent years, gains made in reducing poverty have been eroded. As a consequence, despite sustained economic growth, the country has dropped from 53rd to 70th in the UNDP⁵ Human Development Index in eight years (1998-2006). Of the total population, 64% lives below the national poverty threshold⁶, of which 17.8% lives on two dollars per day, and 7% on just one dollar⁷. In addition, Colombia's inequality levels remain among the worst in Latin America⁸.

The internal conflict involves the Colombian army and a series of irregular armed groups: the FARC and ELN guerrilla organisations, paramilitary groups as well as various splinter groups formed by "de-mobilized" paramilitaries. All groups regularly commit violations of International Humanitarian Law, usually with high levels of impunity. There is a need for stricter application of International Humanitarian Law in order to prevent or substantially reduce displacement and ensure a higher level of assistance and protection⁹.

The conflict is largely self-financing through the proceeds of cocaine and to a lesser extent heroin production, extortions, kidnapping, oil revenues and other business activities. Its negative effects are compounded by social vulnerability and inequality, corruption, violence and drug trafficking. Since 1999, considerable amounts of United States military aid ("Plan Colombia") have been injected into the country in an attempt to strengthen the army, expand the territory controlled by the government and eradicate coca cultivation, but limited real progress has been achieved in bringing the conflict to an end.

The context of the conflict is complex and changing, especially following the formation of splinter groups. Illegal armed groups continue to fight over the control of territory, towns, roads or rivers, occupying civilian buildings and threatening the local population. Hence, new groups of civilians are at risk of being displaced from their homes or being blocked/confined. Since the beginning of the conflict, more than 3,900,000 people have been displaced by violence¹⁰. Thus, in terms of displacement Colombia ranks second in the world (after Sudan¹¹), with about 8% of its total population having been displaced. In recent years, there have been steadily increasing flows of refugees and asylum seekers into the neighbouring countries of Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama. In those three countries, according to UNHCR, the number of "people of concern" exceeds 450,000, i.e. Colombians who have fled their home country but have neither applied for asylum nor for refugee status because of ignorance of procedures, fear of stigmatization or threats.

2.2. Current Situation

An end to the Colombian conflict is not expected in the short term. In spite of the process of demobilization of the paramilitaries, which started in late 2003 and which was declared completed in 2006, the conflict has intensified over the past few years. Between 1 January and 31 May 2007, 394 military actions were registered in 207 municipalities of

⁵ United Nations Development Programme

⁶ World Bank, "Colombia at a glance", <http://devdata.worldbank.org>.

⁷ UNDP. Human Development Report 2006, World Bank World Development Indicators 2006

⁸ The GINI index (ratio of the income or consumption share of the richest group to that of the poorest) for Colombia is 58.6, the worst in Latin America after Bolivia and Haiti and among the 10 worst in the world according to the UNDP (Human Development Report 2006)

⁹ Cf the official Statement by the President of the ICRC on 5 September 2007

¹⁰ CODHES (Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement in its Spanish acronym; a Colombian NGO), Bulletin no.69, 12 September 2006

¹¹ Global IDP project: <http://www.idpproject.org>

28 departments¹². This means an increase of 17.9% as compared to the same period in the previous year and an increase of 55.1% as compared to the period August to December 2006. Military actions initiated by the army under the "*Plan Victoria*" in the South of the country in an attempt to regain control of rural areas which are traditional FARC strongholds have affected the departments of Meta, Caquetá, and Tolima. Military operations have also affected the centre (departments of Antioquia and Casanare) and the North (Guajira, Bolívar and Norte de Santander). Illegal armed groups have demonstrated that they still retain substantial operational capacity and have been particularly active in the Pacific Coast Departments (Nariño, Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Chocó) and border areas with both Venezuela (Catatumbo region in Norte de Santander, Arauca) and Ecuador (Putumayo and Nariño).

Between 1 January and 31 May 2007, 65 communities in 25 departments were declared to be "at risk" by the Early Warning System of the Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman). This represents an increase of 21.4% as compared to the same period during the previous year¹³.

In spite of the increase in intensity of military operations against FARC no major progress has been made in taking control of core rural FARC areas and no progress has been made regarding peace talks. In addition, the peace talks which were initiated between the Government of Colombia and the ELN have been progressing at a very slow pace. Even if an agreement is reached, the impact on the humanitarian situation will be moderate, as the ELN is no longer one of the main actors in the conflict.

The outcome of the demobilization process of the paramilitaries is doubtful. On the one hand, more than 31,671 former paramilitaries¹⁴ have already been demobilized. On the other hand, however, various new splinter groups have appeared. Some of them are led by commanders of the AUC¹⁵ who did not de-mobilize, others are an alliance between "demobilized" paramilitaries and drug traffickers¹⁶. Furthermore, it has been noted that several mid-level AUC commanders head new illegal armed groups, the operations of which are seriously affecting the civilian population - notably women, children and ethnic groups¹⁷. These new armed groups use violence against women as a strategy to control territory and apply forced recruitment of children. The demobilization process has been further complicated by revelations of links between paramilitary commanders and some politicians, which have unveiled an important infiltration of the state structures by paramilitaries.

3. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

3.1. Main affected population groups

3.1.1. Displaced populations

According to UNHCR, forced displacement is not only a side-effect of the conflict but also a tactic adopted by the parties to the conflict. The cumulated figure for displacement

¹² Human Rights Observatory of the Colombian Vice Presidency; OCHA

¹³ *ibidem*

¹⁴ High Commissioner for Peace, figure for demobilization as at 17 August 2006 on the website www.altocomisionadoparalapaz.gov.co

¹⁵ United Self-Defense Forces in their Spanish acronym

¹⁶ Organization of American Status Support Mission for the Peace Process (MAPP/OEA in its Spanish acronym), Ninth Quarterly Report, 3 July 2007

¹⁷ *ibidem*

in Colombia between 1 January 1985 and 31 December 2006 is 3,940,164 people according to CODHES¹⁸. The Unified Registration System for Displaced Population (RUPD in its Spanish acronym) operated by Acción Social¹⁹ has registered 2,169,874 displaced between 1 January 1995 and 31 August 2007²⁰. The difference in figures is mainly because there is a phenomenon of under-registration. Especially in rural areas IDPs are afraid to register, find the procedures too cumbersome or do not trust the official aid programmes²¹. Furthermore, RUPD excludes displacement because of fumigations, even if the displaced people were not cultivating illegal crops.

Three main types of movement have been observed: displacement towards the departmental capitals and urban centres, displacement towards the municipal capitals and displacement within rural areas.

Regions affected by displacement: In terms of new displacements, during the first trimester of 2007 the largest numbers of IDPs were received in Bogotá and the departments of Nariño, Antioquia, Valle del Cauca and Meta. While displacement in the South is linked to the Government's military operations, displacement on the Pacific coast is mainly caused by illegal armed actors trying to gain control of key drug trafficking areas.

In terms of total IDP population, the largest concentrations are in poverty belts in marginal areas of the main towns, where 30 to 50% of the displaced end up without any real prospects of returning. Other areas of displacement concentration are the Northern departments (Cesar, Magdalena and Sucre), where paramilitaries have a strong presence. Acción Social reports that 13 of the 32 departments of Colombia have received 75% of the displaced population. These departments are: Antioquia, Bolívar, Sucre, Magdalena, Valle, Bogotá, Cesar, Córdoba, Santander, Atlántico, Chocó, Norte de Santander and Nariño.

Evolution of displacement: New displacement continues to be significant and it is likely to exceed again 200,000 by the end of the year, in particular because of the violence and subsequent displacements before the local elections in October 2007²². The table below shows the evolution of displacement since 2001, both in terms of official and CODHES figures.

Number of new IDPs²³

| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------------------|
| CODHES | 341,925 | 412,553 | 207,607 | 287,581 | 310,387 | 221,638 | 72,230 (until 31 March) |
| ACCION SOCIAL | 374,803 | 423,814 | 220,062 | 160,493 | 169,898 | 206,633 | 79,099 (until 31 August) |

¹⁸ As cited by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre/Global IDP Project. With CODHES estimated figures for the first trimester 2007 being 72,230, the total cumulated figure January 1985 to March 2007 would be 4,012,394.

¹⁹ Acción Social ("Social Action") is the government agency responsible for the coordination of assistance to those displaced by violence.

²⁰ Acción Social, displacement figures as at 3 September 2007

²¹ CODHES, "Más o menos desplazados", 12 September 2006

²² One month before the date of the local elections, Reuters quoted the government as saying that 69 political murders had been registered since the beginning of the campaign, including 27 candidates, 13 town council members, five campaign volunteers and a campaign manager. (Reuters AlertNet, "Dozens of Colombia politicians killed ahead of vote", 28 September 2007)

²³ Figures as available at time of writing

3.1.2. Host communities

A large part of the displacement takes place in zones which are economically marginalised and prone to disasters. Many host communities, in particular in rural areas and small municipal capitals, are already living at little more than subsistence level and are ill equipped to cope with an influx of IDPs. Integrating humanitarian contingency planning in military operations would help receiving areas to be better prepared.

3.1.3. Returnees

In 2003 the Government indicated that it would facilitate the return of 60,000 IDP families by 2006. According to a report from the Prosecutor General²⁴, only 8,000 had returned between 2002 and 2005. In addition, the Prosecutor General has indicated that returns did not take place under the appropriate conditions, as in many cases local authorities were unaware of their obligations towards returnees and the army did not assess the security situation in areas of return²⁵.

3.1.4. Rural communities – confined, blocked communities and communities at risk

These communities are caught between two or more irregular armed groups and are not able to leave, remaining trapped or under siege. Entire communities are sometimes forcibly removed by irregular armed groups. In the first semester of 2006, confinement situations have been reported in the Departments of Chocó and Córdoba²⁶, while communities have been blocked by military actions carried out by different groups in Arauca, Caquetá, Meta, Putumayo, Antioquia, Huila, Tolima, Vichada, Guaviare and Chocó. According to UNHCR, there are some 200 communities in this situation and CODHES figures show that between January 2003 and June 2005, at least 275 municipalities in 30 departments of Colombia were affected by confinement or blockades²⁷.

3.1.5. Populations affected by the presence of illicit crops

Coca is often grown by ordinary farmers who either find an economic interest in growing it or are forced to do so by armed groups. In both cases coca growing leads to vulnerability to displacement. Vulnerability is further increased because armed groups are more active, often fighting each other for control of territory in areas where coca is cultivated. Furthermore, aerial fumigation can destroy licit crops as collateral damage, thus destroying small farmers' livelihoods. The population displaced by fumigations is

²⁴ The Prosecutor General as well as the Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsman) are control mechanisms which play an important role in monitoring the compliance of the Government's policy towards IDPs. However, the main constraint these institutions face is their limited financial capacity to strengthen their presence at the local level, and particularly in rural areas.

²⁵ The issue of return is addressed *inter alia* in the UNHCR study "Balance de la política pública para la atención integral al desplazamiento forzado en Colombia (enero 2004 – abril 2007)

²⁶ CODHES, "Más o menos desplazados". Bulletin of 12 September 2006. <http://www.codhes.org/Web/Info/Boletines/BOLETIN69DEFINITIVO.pdf>

²⁷ CODHES "Confinamiento de Población civil: Una aproximación conceptual para la caracterización de este fenómeno en Colombia"

not registered as displaced in the RUPD and is subsequently not entitled to the special protection and assistance foreseen in the legal system. Fumigations have also been a source of tension between Colombia and Ecuador, as Ecuador claims that fumigations in border areas of Colombia affect crops grown on the Ecuadorian side. In response, the Colombian president has announced that manual eradication would be applied. However, as manual eradication is typically accompanied by a significant presence of armed actors, it may result in population displacement.

3.1.6. Colombian refugees and asylum seekers

Ecuador continues to be the main receiving country but substantial numbers of people are also crossing to Venezuela and, to a lesser extent, Panama. A case in point is the mass arrival of 1,694 Colombians in San Lorenzo (Ecuador) between 23 and 27 August 2007²⁸.

The table below shows the number of asylum seekers and refugees in the three countries. The large gap between the number of people who UNHCR considers in need of international protection ("people of concern") and the actual number of asylum seekers is a matter of concern since the reasons for the occurrence of this gap have not been sufficiently studied yet. Another point of concern is the continuous degradation of the security situation in border areas of Ecuador and Venezuela, which are increasingly becoming part of the conflict zone. This situation has already led to internal displacement of Venezuelan citizens and there is a risk that the Colombian conflict will spill over to these countries. In Panama the main concern is the inadequate legal protection framework offered by the government to Colombians who have fled violence in their home country.

Number of Colombians in need of protection in neighbouring countries ²⁹

| Country | Number of Colombian Refugees | Number of Colombian asylum seekers | Number of Colombians in need of protection (estimation) |
|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Ecuador | 14,878 | 35,365 | 200,000 |
| Venezuela | 852 | 8,803 | 200,000 |
| Panama | 954 | 439 | 10,000 |

3.1.7. Ethnic groups: (Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations)

Afro-Colombians are amongst the most vulnerable groups: their human development index (HDI) is 0.66, the lowest in Colombia³⁰. Although they constitute only 8% of the total population and the indigenous peoples only 2%, they make up 11% and 8% respectively of the total displaced population³¹. All of Colombia's 84 indigenous groups

²⁸ UNHCR Situation report for the period 23 to 30 August 2007

²⁹ UNHCR figures as at 30 June 2007. Data on refugees and asylum seekers corresponds to number of people registered. The number of people in need of protection is an estimation made by UNHCR. Furthermore, in Panama there are 899 people who benefit from "temporary humanitarian protection".

³⁰ The HDI for Colombia is 0.790 according to the Human Development Report 2006

³¹ UNHCR "The State of the World's Refugees 2006". In terms of ICRC caseload, indigenous people made up 10.13% and Afro-Colombians 9.54% of the displaced assisted by ICRC in the first semester of 2006.

have been affected by displacement³², mostly because they often live in areas which are of strategic interest to illegal armed groups.

3.1.8. Women and children

According to official sources, 73% of the total IDP population is women and children. Many of them have been victims of violence³³. Many have to assume the role of heads of household due to the death or disappearance of their partners. Of all the displaced families in Colombia, 34% are headed by women.

3.2. Identified Humanitarian Needs

3.2.1. Protection

The widespread violation of IHL by all actors of the conflict is one of the root causes of the Colombian humanitarian crisis as it leads to displacement and deprives the affected population of access to food and basic services. Colombia has a sound legal protection framework which complies with international treaties and standards. The country's first law ("Law 387") to help the victims of forced displacement was adopted in July 1997 in line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and public policies for the protection of and assistance to IDPs have been developed on its basis. However, implementation has been patchy. The Constitutional Court declared the government's failure to appropriately enforce the rights of the conflict-affected population "an unconstitutional state of affairs"³⁴. In response to the Court's requirements, the Government adopted a new National IDP Plan with a rights-based public policy and introducing comprehensive measures to prevent displacement. The government has undoubtedly made progress in its policy towards IDPs and increased the corresponding resources, remaining the main provider of humanitarian assistance for IDPs³⁵. Nonetheless, much remains to be done. Registration, which is the basis of the attribution of rights to IDPs, needs to be improved in order to decrease the number of displaced populations who are left out of the system³⁶. Finally, the quality of the assistance provided by the state is still not homogenous: it is relatively adequate in most of the capitals and main cities of most departments while it is almost inexistent in others, particularly in isolated areas of the same departments.

³² International Displacement Monitoring Centre, A Profile of the Internal Displacement Situation, 30 June 2006

³³ Organization of American Status Support Mission for the Peace Process (MAPP/OEA in its Spanish acronym), Ninth Quarterly Report, 3 July 2007; Inter-American Human Rights Commission, "Las mujeres frente a la violencia y la discriminación derivadas del conflicto armado en Colombia", 18 October 2006

³⁴ Sentence T-025 of February 2004

³⁵ budgetary allocation of USD 2 billion for 2006-2010; Update on UNCHR operations in the Americas, UNHCR Executive Committee 2007, 27 September 2007

³⁶ In this context it is interesting to note that in its ruling of 15 August 2007, the Constitutional Court clearly underlined that those who have been displaced because of violence by state actors also have to be registered in the RUPD and are hence entitled to assistance. ("Ambito jurídico", 24 September 2007)

3.2.2 Emergency needs of the newly displaced population

Immediately after displacement, people often arrive in a new neighbourhood with only the essential goods they could transport. Hence, their most basic needs typically remain uncovered. Emergency food and non-food assistance is therefore deemed essential. It forms part of Acción Social's responsibilities but is only provided to IDPs who are registered. ICRC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Acción Social to provide primary emergency assistance to newly displaced people in case of massive displacements and in case of individuals when the organization has an office located in the town of arrival.

IDPs who are not registered (some 30% according to CODHES) do not have access to immediate aid in areas in which ICRC³⁷ is not present unless it is provided by other humanitarian organizations.

3.2.3 Other humanitarian needs of the displaced population

- **Health:** Registered IDPs have access to the health system although the system is not always functional in the rural areas. Non-registered IDPs can only access the system through informal payments, which they often cannot afford because their income has been depleted. The main health problems are low vaccination coverage (58%) and high infant (22 per 1000) and child mortality (26 per 1000)³⁸. In terms of morbidity, diarrheic diseases and acute respiratory infections together with other vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, Chagas disease and leishmaniasis are the most prevalent. Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS continue to increase.

- **Water and sanitation:** Access to tap water is generally acceptable in Colombia³⁹. However, there are two situations in which drinking water is generally not available: in cases of illegal occupation by the displaced population of urban areas and in many conflict affected rural areas, where the systems have often deteriorated.

- **Shelter:** Temporary shelter should be part of the emergency assistance provided by the government, but the 2005 report of the Prosecutor General mentioned that in the first quarter of 2005 only 33% of the temporary shelter needs had been covered by Acción Social. Apart from temporary shelter, adequate housing is the main uncovered need for registered IDPs. Housing and land property is generally lost when the displacement takes place and the state has so far been deficient in assisting people to prevent or replace the loss. By October 2006, only 12.1% of the registered displaced families had received a housing allocation in urban areas. In rural areas, allocations decreased from 3,819 households in 2005 to 2,787 in 2006⁴⁰. Non-registered IDPs have no access to subsidies.

- **Nutrition/food security:** The displaced populations - mainly farmer families - who move to urban centres are food insecure. A WFP⁴¹/DG ECHO⁴² nutritional survey showed that 23% of displaced children under 5 and 16% of those of the host

³⁷ ICRC concentrates its work in some 20 priority zones.

³⁸ "Salud sexual y reproductiva en Colombia, encuesta nacional de demografía y salud", Profamilia.

³⁹ According to a census carried out by the Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE) in 2005, 86% of households have access to tap water and 76.9% to a sewage system.

⁴⁰ Prosecutor-General's Office, "La prevalencia de los derechos de las víctimas de desplazamiento". November 2006.

⁴¹ World Food Programme

⁴² Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO

communities were chronically malnourished. 23% of displaced children suffer from stunting⁴³. Acute malnutrition rates are at 1.8%. As this level is not considered abnormal, nutrition programmes *per se* are not a priority.

- **Psychosocial:** Displacement is a traumatic experience. According to the Ministry of Health, 40% of the population affected by conflict is at risk of contracting a mental disease as a consequence of the conflict, 20% suffer some degree of mental depression, 14% suffer from psychosis and 10% show anxiety problems. In spite of the seriousness of the problem, psychological treatment is not systematically included in the assistance offered by the government⁴⁴. Psychosocial support should focus on the most vulnerable groups, including women and children but is not a priority *per se*.

On the basis of non-discrimination, assistance may also be required for the host communities as the new arrivals usually tend to put a strain on locally available resources.

3.2.4. Needs of confined and blocked populations and populations at risk

The communities trapped in the middle of the conflict are in need of protection. However, getting access to confined/blocked areas usually requires negotiations with illegal armed actors and only the Red Cross Movement is authorized by the Government to undertake such negotiations. The Red Cross Movement (ICRC in particular) is therefore the main institution aiding confined/blocked populations, but their protection activities are complemented by the work of a number of international NGOs, which have managed to get access to areas not covered by the Red Cross.

The restrictions stemming from confinement or blockading entail a lack of access to food (villagers cannot go to the fields to cultivate crops) and basic goods and services as well as the impossibility of developing productive activities, thus endangering the local populations' livelihoods.

3.2.5. Needs of the population displaced to neighbouring countries (refugees, asylum seekers and "people of concern" to UNHCR)

The newly arrived victims of the Colombian conflict in neighbouring countries require emergency assistance in the host country in terms of food and non-food items, temporary shelter and basic services. On the basis of non-discrimination, assistance may also be required for the host communities as the new arrivals usually tend to put a strain on locally available resources.

They also need the legal protection provided by refugee status. However, even in Ecuador (the neighboring country offering the best protection framework which has recently launched a plan for development and peace for the Northern border area – "Plan Ecuador") only one third of the asylum seekers have been granted refugee status. In addition, according to UNHCR estimates there are over 400,000 people in need of international protection in Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama who have not applied for asylum or refugee status because of ignorance of procedures, fear of stigmatization or threats.

⁴³ UNICEF Humanitarian Action Update Colombia, 28 September 2007

⁴⁴ The seriousness of the situation is confirmed by an MSF's mental health report. <http://www.msf.org>.

3.2.6. Education and child protection against forced recruitment

Although the law guarantees the right to education for displaced populations, displaced families face many barriers to ensuring the education of their children. A report from Human Rights Watch⁴⁵ undertaken in Bogotá and Cartagena indicates that displaced families find it difficult to cope with real annual education costs (USD 1,000 per year when taking into account books, uniforms, school supplies, extra charges for examinations, etc). In addition they require identity documents which in many cases have been lost during the displacement. As a consequence, absenteeism is significant. Moreover, displacement often implies that children have to drop out of school for a certain period of time. Because of the classes hence missed, for many children it is then very difficult to re-integrate into the official educational system again once their family has settled in a new location.

On the other hand, children and adolescents are increasingly facing forced recruitment by irregular armed groups. UNICEF estimates that some 10,000 boys and girls have been recruited by irregular armed groups⁴⁶, while Human Rights Watch estimates that figure to be 14,000⁴⁷. A recent study carried out among demobilized children by the Defensoría del Pueblo shows that 66.2% of the children interviewed were recruited under threat to them or to their families and 18.9% were deceived⁴⁸. Out of the more than 30,000 paramilitaries demobilized, only 212 were minors and there is no information about the condition of the rest of the minors recruited. Recruitment by illegal armed groups continues⁴⁹, especially in big towns receiving families displaced by violence. Children who have dropped out of the schooling system are the most vulnerable to such forced recruitment.

Further to recruitment, displaced youth are often particularly targeted by illegal armed groups in urban contexts (600 youth have been murdered in the last five years in Ciudad Bolívar and Altos de Cazucá alone, a marginal urban area on the outskirts of Bogotá mostly populated by IDPs)⁵⁰. Again, children who drop out of school and spend time on the streets are particularly vulnerable to violent practices like social cleansing.

3.2.7. Mine risk reduction

Colombia is currently the country with the largest number of new mine victims in the world (15% of the world total). As per official figures, in 2006 1,123 people became victims of landmines/unexploded ordnances (UXO), 79 of whom children, 21 women and 1,023 men⁵¹. From 1 January to 31 August 2007, mines and UXOs have claimed 619 victims⁵². According to the Landmine Monitor Report 2006⁵³, nearly one third of the casualties reported were civilians. Furthermore, the report assumes that there is significant under-reporting of casualties. Civilians injured by landmines in rural areas are

⁴⁵ Human Rights Watch (HRW), 14 October 2005, Colombia: Displaced and Discarded The Plight of Internally Displaced Persons in Bogotá and Cartagena. <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/colombia1005>

⁴⁶ Country information at www.unicef.org

⁴⁷ www.hrw.org/Spanish/informes/2003/Colombia_ninos

⁴⁸ www.defensoria.org.co

⁴⁹ Organization of American States Support Mission for the Peace Process (MAPP/OEA in its Spanish acronym), Ninth Quarterly Report, 3 July 2007

⁵⁰ "Informe de Riesgo No. 012-07 A.I." of 31 May 2007 by the Ombudsman Delegate for the Risk Assessment of the Civilian Population as Result of the Armed Conflict provides detailed information about the security situation people have to face in Altos de Cazucá and Ciudad Bolívar.

⁵¹ Mine Observatory of the Vice Presidency of Colombia, www.derechoshumanos.gov.co

⁵² *ibidem*

⁵³ Landmine Monitor Report 2006, www.icbl.org

often a long distance from available healthcare services, and if they do reach those services their injuries may not be recorded as mine-related because of security concerns. Landmines are frequently found in school yards, local water sources and rural access roads, with 96% of mine and UXO accidents occurring in rural areas⁵⁴.

3.2.8. Natural disasters

Colombia is a disaster-prone country. From 1997 to 2006 a total of 5,255 disaster events have been reported, affecting 7,532,627 people⁵⁵. The vast majority of damage has been caused by hydro-meteorological events such as floods, heavy rainfall, landslides, drought, storms (4,106 events). In 2007 alone, heavy rainfall which provoked floods and landslides affected 580,227 people⁵⁶ and caused damage in 25% of Colombian municipalities⁵⁷. Given the geographically widespread nature of the Colombian conflict, natural disasters are likely to strike conflict-affected areas. With the displaced population's vulnerability already substantially increased and their coping mechanisms dramatically reduced because of their displacement, disasters have a particularly pronounced negative impact on IDPs' humanitarian conditions. A further aggravating factor is that displaced people often have to settle on the most vulnerable – i.e. disaster-prone - land.

4. PROPOSED DG ECHO STRATEGY

4.1. Coherence with DG ECHO's overall strategic priorities

Colombia is classified in the GNA⁵⁸ as a “high-crisis” country with “medium vulnerability”. Colombia is also included in DG ECHO's list of forgotten crises.

The fact that Colombia is considered a “medium vulnerability” country reflects its relatively advanced economic and social development in relation to many other countries where DG ECHO traditionally intervenes. However, the affluence of major cities such as Bogotá, Medellín and Cali masks enormous pockets of serious humanitarian need, mostly in the more remote rural areas, and even on the outskirts of those cities. There is little or no presence of State institutions in the places of greatest humanitarian need, on account of the violence and conflict, and the State is unable to intervene in those humanitarian situations.

DG ECHO considers Colombia as a forgotten humanitarian crisis. Even if the country receives a large amount of attention from the United States and is often spoken about in the media, this is more in the context of Plan Colombia. The issues of displacement and humanitarian need are rarely raised, except in the Spanish speaking media.

In the humanitarian operations funded under this Global Plan, specific emphasis will be put on a handover/exit strategy. Implementing partners will have to make clear efforts to seek complementarities with state-funded assistance and not substitute the government

⁵⁴ UNICEF Humanitarian Action Update Colombia, 28 September 2007

⁵⁵ DesInventar Database by La Red Latinoamericana de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres

⁵⁶ Directorate General for Disaster Preparedness and Management (DGPAD in its Spanish acronym), 24 July 2007

⁵⁷ OCHA Update on Colombia Floods, 26 July 2007

⁵⁸ General needs assessment annually elaborated by DG ECHO

which is providing resources to assist the victims of the conflict. Priority will be given to operations in areas where there is little or no presence of state institution or humanitarian actors with a view to covering gaps in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the conflict-affected population most in need.

LRRD⁵⁹ has been mainly based on the existing complementarities between DG ECHO and interventions under the EC thematic budget for Uprooted People. With the end of this budget line, long term support to the displaced population will be provided by the National Indicative Programme⁶⁰. The EC Delegation and the DG ECHO office in Bogotá have already scheduled a calendar of regular meetings in order to ensure coordination between actions funded by the National Indicative Plan and those funded by DG ECHO. Synergy is also sought with other EU funded programmes such as the Peace Laboratories, the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, "Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development" and the Stability Instrument⁶¹.

In addition to complementarities that come from the fact that DG ECHO works in the conflict areas where only humanitarian organizations have access and the EC Delegation focuses its work essentially in communities where some level of stabilization has been gained, the Delegation's institutional support to the State assistance mechanisms is essential to ensure that the government gradually takes over from humanitarian actors its responsibility to protect and assist the population affected by conflict.

In terms of *disaster preparedness*, DG ECHO pursues a policy of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction measures in the humanitarian projects it funds. As mentioned above, IDPs usually have to settle on the least desirable land, which is often the land most prone to natural disasters. DG ECHO partners have to take these risks into account when formulating proposals and include appropriate preparedness measures in their projects to the extent possible. In addition, this Global Plan includes a rapid reaction component in case a natural disaster occurs in conflict-affected areas. There is also coordination between the Global Plan and the projects funded in Colombia under the new DIPECHO⁶² Action Plan for South America⁶³, in the framework of which two projects are envisaged to support disaster preparedness in Colombia.

4.2. Impact of previous humanitarian response

The 2007 Global Plan will only be fully evaluated during the last quarter of 2007. The main results so far are detailed in the following sections.

4.2.1. Specific objective 1: Protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia.

- As of May 2007, 27,348 newly displaced had received emergency assistance (food parcels and non-food items) from ICRC; ICRC provided assistance to 1,000 victims of threats and helped 115 families of victims of summary executions with short-term

⁵⁹ Linking Rehabilitation, Relief and Development

⁶⁰ There is a new Country Strategy Paper for 2008 – 2013.

⁶¹ Budget line 19 06 01 01 Crisis response and preparedness - Instrument for Stability

⁶² Disaster Preparedness ECHO

⁶³ ECHO/DIP/BUD/2007/03000, 6,500,000 EUR, budget line 23.02.03

[ECHO/-SM/BUD/2008/01000](#)

economic support. 13 cases of forced recruitment of minors were documented and 521 victims of IHL violations assisted.

- Up to September 2007 more than 40,000 new IDPs (less than 12 months of displacement), host populations and confined or blocked populations had received humanitarian post-emergency assistance including improved shelter, distribution of non-food items, access to basic services (primary health care, water and sanitation) and psychosocial assistance.

4.2.2 Specific objective 2: Protection, relief and assistance to refugees in neighbouring countries.

- Up to the end of June 2007, 25,923 newly arrived victims of the Colombian conflict, vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers in Ecuador had received emergency assistance (food, household items, temporary shelter), and 5,792 new asylum seekers had been registered.
- In Venezuela during the first semester 2007 1,801 newly arrived victims of the Colombian conflict, vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers received assistance, including food kits and hygiene kits. Of the registered refugees and asylum seekers, 60% were documented. In Panama 1,230 refugees and asylum seekers were assisted during the same period.
- In all three countries, UNHCR has continued its efforts to improve the protection framework for asylum seekers by strengthening the national institutions involved in the reception, registration, documentation, assistance and integration of refugees.

4.3. Coordination with activities of other donors and institutions

The primary responsibility for the coordination of the humanitarian aid to the displaced belongs to the Government through the Presidential Office and Acción Social. According to the Prosecutor General⁶⁴, some steps have been taken to improve coordination, such as the adoption of the National Plan to provide attention to the displaced population and the creation of platforms to assist the national system to better comply with the obligations prescribed by law. However, the reports estimate that the measures adopted have had little impact in terms of coordination of the different State institutions at field level and calls for further efforts on the government side. The DG ECHO office in Bogotá has regular meetings with Acción Social to ensure coordination between the Commission's and the government's humanitarian aid.

With regard to coordination of international humanitarian actors, the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has established a humanitarian country team which is working through three thematic groups to promote common approaches towards humanitarian aid. The group themes are protection, assistance and basic services and early recovery. DG ECHO is the only donor to participate in the humanitarian country team as well as in the three groups.

⁶⁴ "La prevalencia de los derechos de las víctimas del delito de desplazamiento forzado". November 2006. This publication is a compilation of the reports that the Prosecutor General has issued in order to monitor how the Government is complying with the Constitutional Court's T-025 ruling of February 2004.

There are regular meetings organized by DG ECHO's Bogotá office with ECHO partners. This coordination forum, enlarged to include also other interested humanitarian actors and the EC Delegation, has been the platform to develop the present strategy for 2008. The strategy was also discussed at a meeting between DG ECHO, humanitarian organizations and other Commission services in Brussels on 21 September 2007.

The DG ECHO office in Bogotá is also coordinating activities with the EC Delegation and other donors in Bogotá.

4.4. Risk assessment and assumptions

The Colombian conflict is increasingly affecting border areas of Ecuador and Venezuela. If it spreads further, additional funds in support of affected populations of Venezuela and/or Ecuador would be needed.

Although insecurity is a major problem in rural conflict areas and urban marginal zones in Colombia, the humanitarian community has rarely been targeted in the past and there is in general respect for international humanitarian actors. However, the appearance of new splinter groups - made up of "de-mobilized" paramilitaries or of paramilitaries who did not participate in the demobilization process - poses a new security risk, as their interaction with humanitarian organizations is not clear. A similar problem might arise if the re-integration of de-mobilized paramilitary groups does not succeed. The consequences for actions funded under this Global Plan would be reduced space for humanitarian actors to operate. A reduction of operating space and access might also be the consequence of a possible deterioration of the local security situation related to the local elections in October 2007.

Access to the civilian population in areas in which the conflict is most acute is very difficult and usually depends on the will of local commanders. In rural areas controlled by illegal armed groups access is theoretically limited by a presidential decree forbidding any international organization - with the exception of the Red Cross⁶⁵ - to establish contact with the illegal armed groups. In other areas, humanitarian organizations are simply advised by the irregular armed groups not to operate. In spite of this, operations funded under past Global Plans have generally achieved satisfactory access to the beneficiary population. However, it is not excluded that a change in the dynamics of the conflict may result in reduced access and subsequently lead to modifications in the number of beneficiaries and areas of operation of the actions funded under this Global Plan.

It is assumed that Acción Social will continue to provide assistance to IDPs in departmental capitals and beyond in the framework of their agreement with ICRC⁶⁶.

⁶⁵ The Red Cross Movement has the Government's official authorization to engage dialogues with armed actors to gain humanitarian access as stipulated by Law 852 of 2003 in the specific case of the Colombian Red Cross

⁶⁶ There is an agreement between Acción Social and ICRC by which Acción Social provides emergency assistance to new individual IDPs while the ICRC assists cases of massive displacement (more than 50 people at a time) plus individual cases where it has an office and Acción Social has insufficient capacity.

4.5. DG ECHO Strategy

In its 2008 Global Plan, DG ECHO will give further priority to the allocation of resources to the areas which are most affected by conflict and where therefore the humanitarian needs are most acute. In this context, the focus will be on areas where there is little presence of the state and humanitarian organizations. In principle, the first priority areas will be the departments of the Pacific coast, border areas with Ecuador and Venezuela and the traditional conflict zones in the South, in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and in Montes de María. Secondary priority areas will include the remaining departments of Bolívar, Guajira and Cesar and Antioquia, Tolima and the Magdalena Medio region. However, bearing in mind the fluid situation in almost all Colombian departments, changes in the priority areas may be required so as to be able to address new situations occurring during its implementation period.

The Global Plan will aim at improving the overall protection framework for the conflict-affected population both in Colombia itself and the neighbouring countries (in particular Venezuela, Ecuador and Panama).

All actions funded under this Global Plan should include a handover/exit strategy. Complementarities with state assistance need to be sought to the largest extent possible with a view to encouraging Colombian authorities to assume their responsibility towards their own citizens.

In terms of assistance, the priority in Colombia will be to provide emergency aid to newly displaced populations. When government capacity is insufficient, this will be mainly done by the ICRC and NGOs with sufficient access to the affected population. In addition to emergency assistance, this Global Plan will provide early recovery humanitarian aid to newly displaced populations (less than 12 months since displacement) so that they reach minimal living conditions which permit them to restart their livelihood. On the principle of non-discrimination assistance may be provided to host communities if their resources are stretched because of the arrival of new IDPs. This Global Plan will also provide basic humanitarian assistance to confined or blocked populations or to populations at risk as long as their difficult humanitarian situation persists. Return operations will be funded only if they comply with international standards and are voluntary, safe and with respect to dignity.

Although the focus of the Global Plan will be on rural areas, specific actions in marginal urban areas will be funded to protect children from recruitment by illegal armed groups, mainly through education activities. The focus will be on newly displaced children and a clear link with formal education systems will be established.

In terms of disaster response, this Global Plan will fund the distribution of emergency relief items if a natural disaster strikes in a conflict-affected area. Disaster preparedness will be mainstreamed in actions funded under this Global Plan to the extent possible.

In neighbouring countries (Venezuela, Ecuador and Panama) UNHCR and NGO partners will be supported to provide emergency assistance to newly arrived victims of the Colombian conflict, asylum seekers and refugees in addition to the protection actions mentioned above. Support will also be given to refugee status determination and registration activities.

The Global Plan does not foresee the funding of de-mining or mine risk reduction actions as such but activities for mine risk education may be mainstreamed in humanitarian actions implemented in heavily mined areas.

DG ECHO and its partners will continue to encourage LRRD as described in point 4.1.

Overall, more than 190,000 people will be directly assisted through this Global Plan. In Colombia, more than 50,000 will benefit from emergency assistance, some 80,000 from early recovery basic humanitarian assistance and some 1,500 from child protection actions. In neighbouring countries some 60,000 people will benefit from protection and assistance actions.

Principal objective:

To provide protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the Colombian conflict, both in Colombia and in neighbouring countries

Specific objectives:

Specific objective 1: To provide protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia

Component 1. Improved protection of the affected populations in accordance with current international agreements and the Colombian legal framework:

- Implementation of safeguard measures for civilians in need of protection
- Visits and selective assistance to detainees
- Support for families of detainees and hostages
- Activities in favour of missing persons and their families
- Improved respect of international agreements, strengthening the enforcement of the legal framework
- Sensitization, education and prevention of accidents with antipersonnel mines and Unexploded Ordnances

Component 2. Providing emergency assistance to displaced populations (where authorities are unable to provide effective relief):

- Distribution of food and non-food items during the first six months of displacement.

Component 3. Helping registered and non-registered displaced populations regain a minimum level of self-sufficiency and recover their livelihood:

- Water and sanitation assistance (excluding the construction of water points)
- Provision or improvement of shelter
- Improving access to the national health care system
- Food security through canteens
- Restarting basic livelihoods
- Psychosocial support

Component 4. Humanitarian assistance for blocked, confined populations, populations, at risk or returnees:

- Water and sanitation assistance (including the construction of water points)
- Shelter improvement (only when the conflict situation has had an impact on shelter)
- Health care assistance (including mobile clinics as a step to facilitate the return of health services when possible)
- Food security: livelihood support, home gardens, canteens for returnees (only if return complies with international principles)
- Psychosocial support

Component 5. Child protection activities (to deter the recruitment of minors by armed groups and to protect them from other forms of violence):

- Informal education to reintegrate vulnerable children into the state education system
- Nutritional assistance, including school feeding
- Psychosocial support
- Institutional strengthening.

Component 6. Emergency response and preparedness:

- Distribution of food and non-food items
- Disaster preparedness and small-scale mitigation activities

Component 7. Coordination:

- Data collection, information analysis and distribution on the humanitarian situation in Colombia
- Facilitation of information exchange amongst local, national and international organisations
- Support to the establishment of monitoring mechanisms in the affected regions
- Institutional strengthening

Specific objective 2: To provide protection, relief and assistance to the refugees and asylum seekers in neighbouring countries (in particular Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama)

Component 1. Protection of the refugees and asylum seekers:

- Legal assistance
- Protection and advice to Colombian asylum seekers
- Support for registration of Colombian refugees (institutional strengthening)

Component 2. Assistance to asylum seekers and refugees to promote their local integration:

- Emergency assistance for newly arrived asylum seekers and their host communities
- Support for integration of Colombian refugees
- Support for durable solutions for asylum seekers, refugees and their host communities

Specific objective 3: To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations

In order to maximize the impact of the humanitarian aid for the victims, the Commission decides to maintain a DG ECHO support office located at Bogotá. This office will appraise project proposals, co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of humanitarian operations financed by the Commission. The office provides technical assistance capacity and necessary logistics for the good achievement of its tasks.

4.6. Duration

The duration for the implementation of this Decision will be 18 months starting from 1 January 2008. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from 1 January 2008. This duration is requested because some of the activities to be funded under this Global Plan may be a continuation of or build upon activities funded under the previous Global Plan. Therefore, while some projects will start on 1 January 2008, others may start towards the end of the first semester 2008. In addition, the insecurity and volatility of the Colombian context may require an extension of the originally envisaged duration of projects.

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

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 organizations 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.

4.7. Amount of Decision and strategic programming matrix

4.7.1 Total amount of the Decision: EUR 12,000,000

4.8. STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING MATRIX FOR THE GLOBAL PLAN

| Principal Objective | <i>To provide protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the Colombian conflict, both in Colombia and in neighbouring countries:</i> | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Specific objectives | Allocated amount EUR | Geographical area of operation | Activities proposed | Expected outputs / indicators | Potential partners (*) |
| <p>Specific objective 1:</p> <p>To provide protection, relief and assistance to people affected by the internal conflict in Colombia</p> | 10,300,000 | Colombia | <p>1. Improved protection of the affected populations in accordance with current international agreements and the Colombian legal framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of safeguard measures for civilians in need of protection • Visits and selective assistance to detainees • Support for families of detainees and hostages • Activities in favour of missing persons and their families • Improved respect of international agreements, strengthening the enforcement of the legal framework • Sensitization, education and prevention of accidents with antipersonnel mines and UXO <p>2. Emergency assistance to IDPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of food and non-food items | <p>To contribute to an improved protection of the affected populations in accordance with current international agreements (IHL, GPID, International Convention on Child Rights) as well as the Colombian legal framework (Law 387, sentence T025...):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of people under 18 recruited by armed groups decreases – confidential results - All combatants are made aware of the difference between participants and non participants in the conflict – confidential results - The families of persons reported missing have been informed of their fate and whereabouts, and the number of disappearances has diminished - Detainees of concern to ICRC (held by the government and the armed groups) and hostages are better treated in accordance with IHL – confidential results <p>The most urgent needs of 50,000 IDPs in terms of food and non-food assistance are met for six months following forced displacement, in accordance with SPHERE standards</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACH- ESP - CARITAS – ESP - CHURCH OF SWEDEN AID - CROIX-ROUGE - ESP - CROIX-ROUGE - FRA - CROIX-ROUGE - NLD - COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE - CICR- ICRC –CH - COOPI - DRC - DIAKONIE - MDM – FRA -MERCY CORPS SCOTLAND - MPDL - NRC - OXFAM – UK - SAVE THE CHILDREN – UK - SI - PAHO - UN -UNOCHA - UNHCR – BEL - WFP - BEL |

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| | | | <p>3. Helping registered and non-registered displaced population regain a minimum level of self-sufficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and sanitation assistance (excluding the construction of water points) • Provision or improvement of shelter • Improving access to the national health care system (through administrative support) • Food security through canteens • Restarting basic livelihoods • Psycho-social support <p>4. Humanitarian assistance for blocked/ confined populations, populations at risk or returnees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and sanitation assistance (including the construction of water points) Shelter improvement (only when the conflict situation proved to have had an impact on people shelters) • Health care assistance (including mobile clinics as a step to facilitate the return of health services when possible) • Food security: livelihood support, home gardens, canteens for returnees (only if return complies with international principles) • Psycho-social support <p>5. Child protection activities (to deter the recruitment of minors by armed groups and to protect them from other forms of violence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal education to reintegrate | <p>Around 80,000 affected people have improved living conditions and social integration. At least one of their unmet basic needs is addressed. (As defined by SPHERE standards)</p> <p>1,500 children that dropped out of school are better protected through an access to adapted education and integrated support and are able to reintegrate the formal</p> | |
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| <p>Specific objective 2:</p> <p>To provide protection, relief and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in neighbouring countries (in particular Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama)</p> | <p>1,500,000</p> | <p>In particular Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama</p> | <p>vulnerable children into the state education system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional assistance • Psychosocial support • Institutional strengthening <p>6. Emergency response and preparedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of food and non-food items • Disaster preparedness and small-scale mitigation <p>7.Coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection, information analysis and distribution on the humanitarian situation in Colombia • Facilitation of information exchange amongst local, national and international organisations • Support to the establishment of monitoring mechanisms in the affected regions • Institutional strengthening <p>2.1. Protection of the refugees and asylum seekers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal assistance, • Pprotection and advice to Colombian asylum seekers • Support for registration of Colombian refugees (institutional strengthening) <p>2.2. Assistance to asylum seekers and refugees to promote their local integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency assistance for newly | <p>schooling system.</p> <p>To contribute to an improved capacity to save and preserve life during natural disasters and their immediate aftermath which have entailed a major loss of life, physical, psychological or social suffering or material damage (This assistance shall be limited to populations also affected by the conflict)</p> <p>To contribute to an improved coordination of the assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular reports on the humanitarian situation in Colombia formulated and distributed - evaluation of the humanitarian situation of specific groups - Maintenance of the database of humanitarian assistance and organizations in Colombia. <p>To contribute to an improved protection of the refugees and asylum seekers 33,000 refugees and asylum seekers have their rights better respected (including socio-economic rights) and are more aware of their options</p> <p>To contribute to an improved respect of the refugees and asylum seekers right to humanitarian assistance and to promote</p> | <p>- UNHCR - NRC</p> |
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| <p>Specific objective 3: To maintain a technical assistance capacity in the field, to assess needs, appraise project proposals and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of operations</p> | <p>200,000</p> | <p>Bogota</p> | <p>arrived asylum seekers and their host communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for social integration of Colombian refugees • Support for durable solutions for asylum seekers, refugees and their host communities | <p>their social local integration 27,000 refugees and asylum seekers (including host populations) receive support to facilitate durable solutions or voluntary return</p> | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Risk assessment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Irregular armed groups may prevent access to target populations and their actions may force humanitarian organisations to withdraw from certain areas</i> ▪ <i>A worsening of the security situation, locally or more extensively, could delay the implementation of activities and reduce the space for humanitarian actors</i> |
| <p>Assumptions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>It is assumed that the Colombian government, through Acción Social, will continue to provide assistance to IDPs in departmental capitals and beyond</i> ▪ <i>It is assumed that the existence of a conflict and a humanitarian crisis continue to be recognised.</i> |
| <p>Total cost</p> | <p>12,000,000</p> |

(*) ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE, (ESP), CARITAS ESPANOLA, (E), CHURCH OF SWEDEN AID, COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE (CICR), COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE, CRUZ ROJA ESPAÑOLA, (E), CROIX-ROUGE FRANCAISE, HET NEDERLANDSE RODE KRUIS (NLD), THE DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL, DIAKONISCHES WERK der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland (DEU) , MEDECINS DU MONDE, MERCY CORPS SCOTLAND (GBR), MOVIMIENTO POR LA PAZ, EL DESARME Y LA LIBERTAD, (E), NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL (NOR), OXFAM (GB), THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (GBR), SOLIDARIDAD INTERNACIONAL, (E), UNITED NATIONS - PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION, , UNITED NATIONS, OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES - BELGIUM, UNITED NATIONS - WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME - BELGIUM.

5. 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://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm.

6. BUDGET IMPACT ARTICLE 23 02 01

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| - | EC (EUR) |
| Initial Available Appropriations for 2008 | 499,095,000 |
| Supplementary Budgets | - |
| Transfers | - |
| Total Available Credits | 499,095,000 |
| Total executed to date (by ..) | - |
| Available remaining | - |
| Total amount of the Decision | 12,000,000 |

7. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Humanitarian aid actions funded by the Commission are implemented by NGOs, Specialised Agencies of the Member States, and the Red Cross organisations on the basis of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) and by United Nations agencies based on the EC/UN Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) in conformity with Article 163 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation. These Framework agreements define the criteria for attributing grant agreements and financing agreements in accordance with Article 90 of the Implementing Rules and may be found at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index_en.htm.

Individual grants are awarded on the basis of the criteria enumerated in Article 7.2 of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, such as the technical and financial capacity, readiness and experience, and results of previous interventions.

8. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Statistics on the humanitarian situation

Annex 2: Map of country and location of DG ECHO operations

Annex 3: List of previous DG ECHO operations

Annex 4: Overview of donors' contributions

Annex 5: List of abbreviations

Annex 1: Statistics on the humanitarian situation⁶⁷

Poverty, inequality

- 64% of the total population lives below the national poverty threshold, of which 17.8 % lives on two dollars per day, and 7 % on just one dollar.
- 93% of IDPs live in extreme poverty as compared to 14.7% of the total Colombian population
- Very high level of income inequality: UNDP inequality index 63.8, i.e. among the world's ten countries with highest inequality

Nutrition

- 23% of displaced children under 5 and 16 % of those of the host communities chronically malnourished
- Acute malnutrition rate: 1.8%.
- Throughout Colombia, in rural areas malnutrition is twice as high as in the urban areas (17.1%).
- More than 50% of deaths of children under five are associated with malnutrition (i.e. an upwards trend since 1997). For 85% of people older than 70 years mortality is caused by malnutrition.

Ethnic groups

- Afro-Colombians are amongst the most vulnerable groups with a human development index of 0.66, the lowest in Colombia (as compared to 0.790 for all the country).
- Although they constitute only 8% of the total population and the indigenous peoples only 2%, they make up 11% and 8% respectively of the total displaced population
- In terms of ICRC caseload, indigenous people made up 10.13% and Afro-Colombians 9.5% of displaced assisted by ICRC in the first semester of 2006.
- All of Colombia's 84 indigenous groups have been affected by displacement, mostly because they often live in areas which are of strategic interest to illegal armed groups.

Women

- According to official sources, 73% of the total IDP population is women and children. Many of them have been victims of violence any have to assume the role of heads of household due to the death or disappearance of their partners.
- Of all the displaced families in Colombia, 34% are headed by women.

⁶⁷ World Bank "Colombia at a glance"; UNDP Human Development Report 2006; UNHCR "The State of the World's Refugees 2006"; ICRC 2007; UNICEF Humanitarian Action Update on Colombia, September 2007; WFP survey 2007; WFP/WHO evaluation 2005, National Nutritional Survey 2005, Colombian national statistics 2006

Annex 3: List of previous DG ECHO operations

| List of previous DG ECHO operations in Colombia/Ecuador/Venezuela | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Decision Number | Decision Type | 2005 EUR | 2006 EUR | 2007 EUR |
| ECHO/-SM/BUD/2005/01000 | Global Plan | 12,000,000 | | |
| ECHO/DIP/BUD/2005/03000 | Ad-hoc | 4,500,000 | | |
| ECHO/ECU/BUD/2006/01000 | Emergency | | 1,000,000 | |
| ECHO/-SM/BUD/2006/01000 | Global Plan | | 12,000,000 | |
| ECHO/-SM/BUD/2007/01000 | Global Plan | | | 12,000,000 |
| ECHO/-SM/BUD/2007/02000 | Emergency | | | 1,000,000 |
| ECHO/DIP/BUD/2007/03000 | Ad-hoc | | | 6,500,000 |
| | Subtotal | 16,500,000 | 13,000,000 | 19,500,000 |
| | Grand Total | 49,000,000 | | |

Dated : 05 October 2007

Source : HOPE

Annex 4: Other donors' contributions

| Donors in Colombia/Ecuador/Venezuela the last 12 months | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|------------|-----------------|-----|
| 1. EU Members States (*) | | 2. European Commission | | 3. Others | |
| | EUR | | EUR | | EUR |
| Austria | | DG ECHO | 19,500,000 | | |
| Belgium | 400,000 | Other services: | | | |
| | | Stability Instrument | 5,000,000 | | |
| | | Mine action | 2,000,000 | | |
| Bulgaria | | | | | |
| Cyprus | | | | | |
| Czech Republic | | | | | |
| Denmark | | | | | |
| Estonia | | | | | |
| Finland | 500,000 | | | | |
| France | | | | | |
| Germany | 3,265,093 | | | | |
| Greece | | | | | |
| Hungary | | | | | |
| Ireland | | | | | |
| Italy | 20,977 | | | | |
| Latvia | | | | | |
| Lithuania | | | | | |
| Luxemburg | 823,000 | | | | |
| Malta | | | | | |
| Netherlands | 3,000,240 | | | | |
| Poland | | | | | |
| Portugal | | | | | |
| Romania | | | | | |
| Slovakia | | | | | |
| Slovenia | | | | | |
| Spain | 450,098 | | | | |
| Sweden | 579,720 | | | | |
| United Kingdom | | | | | |
| Subtotal | 9,039,128 | Subtotal | 26,500,000 | Subtotal | 0 |
| | | Grand total | 35,539,128 | | |

Dated : 05 October 2007

(*) Source : DG ECHO 14 Points reporting for Members States. <https://hac.ec.europa.eu>

Empty cells means either no information is available or no contribution.

Annex 5: List of Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACCION SOCIAL | "Social Action": government body in charge of assistance to the victims of the conflict |
| AIDCO | Europe Aid Co-operation Office |
| AUC | Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia |
| CODHES | Consultoria para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (Colombian NGO with focus on human rights and displacement) |
| EC | European Commission |
| DG ECHO | European Commission: Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid |
| ELN | Ejército de Liberación Nacional |
| EU | European Union |
| FARC | Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia |
| GP | Global Plan |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| ICRC | International Committee of the Red Cross |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| IHL | International Humanitarian Law |
| LRRD | Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NRC | Norwegian Refugee Council |
| OAS | Organisation of American States |
| RUPD | Registro Unico de Población Desplazada – official registration system for IDPs |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNICEF | The United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNOCHA | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| US | United States of America |
| UXO | Unexploded Ordnance |
| WFP | World Food Programme |