



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Assemblée nationale for its own initiative Opinion on European Union civil protection and welcomes its conclusions.

The Commission takes note of the fact that the Assemblée nationale recognizes the increase in funds allocated to the European Union's civil protection efforts in the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework as a necessary consequence of not only such unique threats as the COVID-19 pandemic, but also as a guarantee that the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism ('the mechanism') will be fit for purpose in the face of new, ever more frequent emergencies. Indeed, it was only in the last year that the mechanism was activated a record 114 times, demonstrating the significance of its role in the EU crisis management cycle.

Concerning the Assemblée nationale's call for the diversification and an increased rescEU reserve, it should be noted that the Commission works constantly on making the mechanism more flexible and more fit to face a rapidly changing European risk landscape. In the context of rescEU, the Commission works closely with Member States and their experts on identifying new capacities to be developed, thereby strengthening rescEU's response potential. It should be noted that the recent development of new capacities includes temporary shelter, transport, logistics, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear detection, sampling, identification and monitoring, and mobile laboratory capacities.

As regards a potential establishment of a civil protection agency, the Commission considers that the current organisational structure under the responsibility of the European Commissioner for Crisis Management ensures adequate coordination and allows the maximisation of synergies in providing assistance, also in response to disasters occurring outside the European Union.

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The Commission takes note of the general proposals of the Assemblée nationale aimed towards further evolving the European Union's crisis management capabilities. The first step was already taken two years ago when the Commission proposed¹ targeted amendments allowing for a more ambitious and wide-ranging crisis management system within the European Union, with a view to further strengthening the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. The main objective of that proposal - that was adopted by co-legislators in 2021² - was to complement and support Member States' response in large-scale high impact emergencies where several Member States are impacted at the same time. Building on the outcome of that reform and the experience with the recent emergencies, the Commission will consider whether further steps towards an even more effective mechanism are necessary.

The Commission would also like to acknowledge the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union and its key role in advocating a more climate-centric approach to organising the European Union's civil protection activities, specifically in guiding the Council in adopting its 3 March 2022 conclusions on civil protection in the face of climate change³. The effects of climate change on our environment and on the rise of increasingly frequent emergencies is evident. The Commission commits to upholding efforts to meet the principles expressed in the Council conclusions in the European Union civil protection.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Assemblée nationale and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

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Vice-President*

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Member of the Commission*

¹ Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, C(2020)220.

² Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, OJ L 185, 26.5.2021, p. 1

³ Council conclusions on civil protection work in view of climate change, 7146/22.