



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 2.9.2021
C(2021) 6542 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles {COM(2021) 110 final}. The Commission would also use this opportunity to thank Romanian government for their steadfast support when responding to different crises in and outside of the European Union. It is our hope that with growing humanitarian needs around the globe, all the Member States will further increase their commitment also in the humanitarian aid.

The Commission welcomes the broad support of the Camera Deputaților for the Commission's approach laid out in this Communication. In a world where the footprint of conflicts and disasters is expanding steadily, the EU's global engagement and leadership in humanitarian affairs has never been more needed. This is why the Communication sets out how the EU, working across its institutions with partners and donors, can deliver better in a 'Team Europe' approach with a view to providing assistance even more efficiently and effectively to reduce humanitarian needs.

To serve this aim, deeper links between humanitarian, development and peace policies will be established. Crisis and disaster prevention, including by political and diplomatic engagement, will be a cross-cutting priority. International humanitarian law is at the heart of the EU's external action to address the severe and persistent violations in a number of major crises. The Commission will also focus more intensively on climate change and its consequences on humanitarian needs.

The EU's humanitarian aid is a key pillar of the EU's external action and an important element of its ability to project the Union's values globally. In pursuing the policies outlined above, the Commission wants to enhance the EU's impact on global humanitarian aid. The Commission values its dialogue with the Camera Deputaților and is pleased to note its engagement on the important issues raised in the Opinion.

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In response to the more technical comments in the Opinion, the Commission would like to refer to the attached annex.

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

Yours faithfully,

Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President

Janez Lenarčič
Member of the Commission

Annex

The Commission has taken good note of the points to which the Camera Deputaților has drawn the Commission's particular attention and is pleased to offer the following clarifications.

Point 3: The Commission strongly supports resilience building. It considers that response preparedness is critical to the quality and timeliness of response operations. Preparedness contributes to improving anticipation. It complements humanitarian assistance in saving lives, reducing suffering and pre-empting or decreasing humanitarian needs. The Commission has recently issued a new Disaster Preparedness Guidance¹ to facilitate and promote disaster preparedness and optimise a risk-informed humanitarian response.

Point 4: The Commission strongly promotes preparedness to all types of risks (natural hazards, conflict-related violence, epidemics and biological hazards, etc.) across its actions – including humanitarian operations. Comprehensive risk and vulnerability analysis will be consistently pursued in order to inform preparedness operations and trigger anticipatory actions.

The effects of climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly integrated into all interventions to take account of their role as risk multipliers. While the Commission invests further into preparedness, it also calls for managing better the increasing risks related to climate change and fragility. Prevention and development-oriented disaster risk reduction are prime tools to address the structural causes of humanitarian crises. The Commission therefore stresses the importance of a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach to help address vulnerabilities in an integrated and sustainable manner.

The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's support for strengthening the linkages between humanitarian, development and peace actors. The Commission is committed to scaling up the EU's urgent relief efforts by closely delivering together across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. The nexus provides an opportunity to help bridge the global gap on education, alongside sectors such as health, food security, disaster preparedness and climate resilience.

Points 3, 4 and 5: To acknowledge the importance of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in achieving sustainability and promoting resilience, all European Union services will continue to work closely together to promote complementarity and mutual reinforcement between humanitarian and development initiatives.

Points 7, 9 and 13: The Commission acknowledges that effective education support requires joint efforts and a comprehensive approach to children's needs, especially those most vulnerable, affected by conflicts and crises. The Commission remains committed to investing in quality and equitable education for children in emergencies, to integrating

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/default/files/dg_echo_guidance_note_-_disaster_preparedness.pdf

learning with psychosocial support and protection, and to ensuring effective pathways between non-formal and formal education.

Point 11: The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's support for the view that international humanitarian law must be regarded as a cross-cutting priority. International humanitarian law is systematically addressed in the European Union's contacts with external actors. The Commission remains committed to promoting international humanitarian law through all the tools at its disposal and looks forward to cooperating with Member States, including Romania, in this endeavour.

Point 14: The Commission notes the recommendation to update the Safe Schools Declaration and to address new challenges affecting education including where it intersects with protection needs.