



Emergency Humanitarian Aid Decision

23 02 01

Title: Emergency humanitarian aid for the victims of drought in Afghanistan.

Location of operation: AFGHANISTAN

Amount of Decision: EUR 2,500,000

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

Explanatory Memorandum

1 - Rationale, needs and target population.

1.1. - Rationale:

Large parts of Afghanistan are currently experiencing a severe drought situation, affecting populations who are still recovering from the severe drought that lasted from 1998 until 2004. In general in Afghanistan, based on historical observation, regular dry cycles of around 15 years are observed, during which one would expect 2 -3 years of drought conditions. In recent years, however, there has been a marked tendency for this drought cycle to occur more frequently than the model predicts, and since 1960, the country has experienced drought in 1963-64, 1966-67, 1970-71 and 1998-04¹. The situation has been exacerbated by declining rainfall over the same period, and without doubt the latest drought starting in 1998 was one of the worst ever recorded.

As a result, on 25 July the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations launched a joint drought appeal of USD 76.4 million (EUR 60,138,066). According to this appeal, the drought conditions will affect up to 2.5 million people living mostly in rain-fed agro-ecological zones affected by drought.

During the second quarter of 2006 concern grew following significantly less snowfall during winter and the failure of rains in much of the country during the critical months of April and May. Mainly because of this, there was a considerable reduction in the yield of wheat. A

¹ Local droughts are common in Afghanistan and have been addressed on a small scale by ad hoc decisions and global plans over the last two years. For details on this and the drought decisions in the period 1998-2004, see section 4: Previous interventions/decisions of the Commission within the context of the crisis concerned herewith.

shortfall of 1.2 million tonnes of cereals is recorded in 2006², as opposed to the original projection for 2006 of 500,000.

With water sources drying up, the drought also affected the availability of drinking water which in certain areas has already forced people to leave their villages.

It is worth bearing in mind that this is the 7th year of drought in the last decade; while 2005 was exceptional in that it had good rains, many of the coping mechanisms are severely weakened and require several good years in order to recover. Whilst the impact of the drought is exacerbated by the effects of years of war, chronic poverty and a lack of investment in development projects in certain areas (please see table on page 6), the recent pattern of drought in Afghanistan is certainly unusually severe, if not unprecedented, and as such constitutes an emergency. Immediate action is needed to help the most vulnerable households cope with food and water shortages.

This rationale is in line with the overall DG ECHO strategy for Afghanistan in 2006 to assist the victims of natural hazard.

1.2. - Identified needs:

On 2 August 2006, the DG ECHO Kabul office organised a meeting with DG ECHO partners in Kabul, in order to get a better overview of the situation and to co-ordinate a possible intervention. As the initial needs assessment in the joint Afghan government – UN drought appeal needed more information on the places of intervention and beneficiaries in order to decide on a possible ECHO intervention, the following needs assessment is mainly based on the partner's findings.

Food security:

Compared to the previous year, about 50 to 60% loss in yields of rain-fed wheat has been reported in the provinces in the North and North-East regions. The loss in yields of rain-fed wheat is 10-20% in the West-Central regions and 30 to 80% in other regions. The hardest hit areas due to crop failure of rain-fed wheat are the provinces in the North and North-East regions. Overall, the total national wheat production of 2006 is estimated at 3.71 million tonnes, a reduction of 13% compared to the previous year's total wheat production of 4.27 million tonnes. The domestic production of cereal for the year is estimated at 4.8 million tones. Afghanistan's cereal requirement is 6 million tonnes. Hence, the national cereals shortfall is now estimated by WFP to be 1.2 million rather than the original projection for 2006 of 500,000.

The most vulnerable people are mostly dependent on rainfall for irrigation and consequently a drought has devastating consequences. It not only directly reduces food production but more importantly the wage-earning opportunities of the poor and landless people. This dramatically reduces their capacity to purchase food and, as a consequence, they have to survive on a very poor diet of tea and bread. The most vulnerable households face a food gap of around 7 months.

The main coping mechanisms of the affected population are sending a member of the family to work in Iran and Pakistan, temporary migrations to big cities for survival, selling off

² Agriculture Prospects Report, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Economics and Statistics Division (FAAHM), Kabul, 15 June 2006, http://www.agriculture.gov.af/fills/APR_June_06.pdf Confirmed during ECHO Kabul-WFP meeting on 12 September 2006.

livestock (mostly sheep and goats), selling of land, early marriages of girls for income and obtaining credit at high interest rates. This does not provide a sustainable solution to this continuing problem, but rather creates a vicious circle. It has to be noted that after 7 years of drought, the most vulnerable families in particular have exhausted their coping mechanisms. Without external help, these people will no longer be able to cope with another year of drought and will not have access to food.

Livestock are also suffering from these successive climatic hazards, as grazing areas have become scarce due to the lack of sufficient rains allowing grass (fodder) rejuvenation. Areas normally used for grazing are also increasingly used for rain-fed agriculture, thus putting even more pressure on the remaining grazing lands. This might have irreversible negative effects on the ecological system. Over the years it is becoming harder to find fodder for livestock and people are forced to sell livestock because they are unable to find enough fodder to feed them. Fewer animals mean that the normal drought coping mechanisms are reduced even more. This negative effect is aggravated by the fact that most people have to sell their livestock at dumping prices in order to fill the food gap.

Water:

Due to the shortage of rainfall the underground water levels have receded drastically and open wells as well as bore-wells in many areas have dried up. In other areas, no new and sufficiently deep wells have been constructed over the last years. The only access to water these populations have is to existing badly maintained springs. These springs now only produce a limited yield of unsafe water of which only a small percentage is being used for irrigation.

Unavailability of water has been reported by DG ECHO partners in several districts. Distances to water points are increasing to a point that people risk becoming displaced in order to assure access to water. People are restricting the use of available water for drinking purposes only. Afghanistan is a country where quality and access to clean/potable water has always been problematic. A significant part of the population still has poor hygiene practices despite the international humanitarian community's efforts in this field. Humans and cattle share the same open contaminated sources of drinking water.

The Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) identified 59 districts in 12 provinces where water tankering is required to address drinking water shortages. On 10 September, water tankering was provided in only 24 districts. The MRRD still needs 126 tankers to cover the identified areas.

1.3. - Target population and regions concerned:

The area affected contains the following Northern, Western, Central and North-Eastern provinces. The seriousness of the effects of drought varies greatly from district to district, one valley to the next. Given the patchwork nature of the impacted areas and communities, a large-scale response aiming to assist entire districts is not appropriate. What is required are targeted responses based on the detailed knowledge of DG ECHO's partners of the exact conditions in the field due to their long presence. The most vulnerable people to be targeted under this decision are those who have reached the limits of their coping mechanisms, therefore lacking basic levels food and water, being subject to displacement and destitution. Special attention will also be given to disabled persons and female-headed households.

1.4. - Risk assessment and possible constraints:

The achievement of this Decision's objective could be affected by the following risks:

- Deterioration in security situation in the areas of activity limiting access to these areas.
- Early onset of winter and landslides could block access to remote places.

2 - Objectives and components of the humanitarian intervention proposed³:

2.1. - Objectives:

Principal objective:

To give emergency assistance to the most vulnerable population of the drought-affected areas of Afghanistan

Specific objective:

To provide emergency food and access to basic water supplies in drought affected communities

2.2. - Components:

Food security

Food security measures will be taken to cover the food gap of around 7 months.

In most places a Cash-for-Work (CFW) approach is likely to be the best option, partly as this has proved to be successful in the past, and is known and understood by communities in Afghanistan in general. The main and targeted impact of CFW will be measured against the displacement, debt and asset reduction leading to destitution that would have happened without humanitarian assistance. To address food and water deficiencies by generating employment that will provide cash income that can be used to cater for immediate needs for the most vulnerable who would otherwise not have access to food and become destitute and be displaced. As a secondary effect, it will mitigate drought impact by improving access to markets and rehabilitation of critical rural infrastructures. This may be more efficient in the long run since it allows local markets to operate to supply demand, without having a negative effect on the local markets, and concentrate efforts on giving beneficiaries the wherewithal to generate this demand effectively. The food distributed will be both appropriate and purchased locally where possible. The labour-intensive schemes will permit beneficiaries to purchase additional essential foods where required, as well as other essential items such as cooking fuels and medicines.

³ Grants for the implementation of humanitarian aid within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC) No.1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid are awarded in accordance with the Financial Regulation, in particular Article 110 thereof, and its Implementing Rules in particular Article 168 thereof (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002, OJ L248 of 16 September 2002 and No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, OJ L 357 of 31 December 2002).

Rate of financing: In accordance with Article 169 of the Financial Regulation, grants for the implementation of this Decision may finance 100% of the costs of an action.

Through labour-intensive activities, it is also expected that the partners will rehabilitate water sources and irrigation assets in order to mitigate the effects of the next droughts. Labour-intensive activities such as road rehabilitation will have a positive influence on the accessibility of people who are normally cut off from markets and urban centres.

In places where this local market mechanism is not operating, direct food distribution or a Food-for-Work (FFW) approach to cover the predicted gap will be appropriate. WFP is also responding to this drought and will make food available for some partners to distribute.

Given the absence of fodder in certain areas, fodder distribution will be envisaged. The fodder banks will work through purchase of fodder from areas where this is available, and transport to communities in affected areas.

Apart from addressing the immediate food needs, LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development) will be ensured through seeds and fertilizer distribution which will target the next year's harvest. With food already in short supply in certain areas, some families will have to resort to consuming wheat they would otherwise keep for sowing next year. It is worth noting also that in many areas the local wheat seed is now of very poor quality, with genes governing yields and resistance to pests and diseases which have been diluted and mutated over several generations of use. In order for families to be in a better position to provide for their needs in the coming year, it may be appropriate in some areas to consider a seed distribution of good quality wheat which in an average year would boost production.

The rehabilitation of water sources, irrigation assets and roads under the CFW activities will also contribute to LRRD.

Water

Clean water for beneficiaries in some drought-affected villages lacking a water source and therefore forced to leave the area, will be provided, thus preventing drought related displacement. Provision of water will be done through drilling of wells or water tankering.

3 - Duration expected for actions in the proposed Decision:

The duration of humanitarian aid operations shall be 6 months.

Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from **1 August 2006**.

If the implementation of the actions envisaged in this Decision is suspended due to *force majeure* or any comparable circumstance, the period of suspension will not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the humanitarian aid operations.

Depending on the evolution of the situation in the field, the Commission reserves the right to terminate the agreements signed with the implementing humanitarian organisations where the suspension of activities is for a period of more than one third of the total planned duration of the action. In this respect, the procedure established in the general conditions of the specific agreement will be applied.

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

List of previous DG ECHO operations in AFGHANISTAN

Decision Number	Decision Type	2004 EUR	2005 EUR	2006 EUR
ECHO/-AS/BUD/2004/01000	Non-emergency	35,160,000		
ECHO/-AS/BUD/2005/01000	Non-emergency		10,791,000	
ECHO/-AS/BUD/2005/05000	Non-emergency		9,209,000	
ECHO/-AS/BUD/2006/01000	Non Emergency			20,000,000
	Subtotal	35,160,000	20.000.000	20.00.0000
	Grand Total	75.160.000		

Dated : 13/09/2006
Source : HOPE

All the funds under these decisions have been allocated.

During the period 1998-2004, DG ECHO took several decisions (partly) in response to the drought:

ECHO/TPS/210/2000/14000 (5.500.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2000/19000 (4.000.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2001/17000 (7.815.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2001/24000 (15.000.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2001/27000 (8.500.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2002/07000 (17.085.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2002/11000 (9.250.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2002/15000(16.724.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2002/22000 (10.000.000EUR), ECHO/TPS/210/2003/18000(6.270.000EUR).

LRRD

The LRRD component (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development) will depend on the different areas where projects will be implemented. In some provinces no other donors are present and no other post-emergency programmes are being implemented, making an emergency drought intervention even more necessary.

Overview of presence of other donors and ongoing programs in provinces where ECHO is active and provinces this decision is targeting:

Provinces with Echo funded project	Type of activities funded by Echo	Other donors present in the province	Ongoing Post emergency activities
Balkh (Mazar)	2006/01007 ICRC – WatSan 2006/01021 IFRC – Disaster Preparedness	ADB KFW SDC	NSP, NEEP, REACH, DDR and BDN
Herat	2006/01007 ICRC – WatSan	ADB KFW SDC	NSP, NEEP, REACH, DDR and BDN
Farah	2006/01010 OI - Refugees + shelters	None	NSP, NEEP, REACH, DDR and BDN
Ghor	2006/01014 MADERA - WatSan + Rehabilitation irrigation channels 2006/01020 ACF - Watsan	None	NSP, NEEP, REACH
Baghlan	2006/01018 AKF – Watsan 2006/01021 IFRC – Disaster Preparedness	GTZ	NSP, NEEP, REACH, DDR
Saripul	2006/01019 GAA – WatSan	None	No other post emergency operation
Badakhshan	2006/01021 IFRC – Disaster Preparedness	EC	NSP, NEEP, REACH, DDR
Samangan	2006/01021 IFRC – Disaster Preparedness	None	no other activities

NSP: National Solidarity Programme; NEEP: National Emergency Employment; programme; REACH: Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-based Healthcare; DDR: Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration; BDN: Basic Development Needs (for sustainable community development). ADB: Asian Development Bank; KFW: German Development Bank; SDC: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.; GTZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit.
Most of these programs (NSP, NEEP, REACH and BDN) do not address problems related to the present drought.

5 - Overview of donors.

The combined United Nations/Afghan Government drought appeal which was launched on 25 July 2006. On 11 September it was funded up to 52.8% (see table in annex 3).

Funding status Afghanistan Drought Response - 11 September 2006				
Project Proposals	Requested funds (US\$)	Commitments	Donor	% covered
Emergency Employment Creation Programme - Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)	7.000.000	4.000.000	CNTF	57,1
Emergency Supply of Livestock Concentrate Feed - Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI)	5.000.000	0		0,0
Emergency Provision of Animal Feed - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	3.976.457	0		0,0
Provision of Wheat Seed and Fertilizer - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	6.785.527	1.670.298	CERF	24,6
Emergency Response to Drought Affected Families - World Food Programme (WFP)	49.922.174	14.784.080	US	65,4
		806.452	Switzerland	
		500.000	Japan	
		637.755	Belgium	
		10.000.000	CERF	
		1.275.510	France	
		2.410.000	Netherlands	
		1.275.510	Germany	
		957.000	Sweden	
Water Provision in Drought Affected Areas (UNICEF)	1.682.450	500.000	CERF	86,6
		957.000	Sweden	
Communicable Diseases Control (CDC) and Nutritional Interventions in Drought Affected Areas of Afghanistan (WHO and UNICEF)	1.259.390	200.000	CERF	15,9
		398.040	CERF	
Emergency Drinking Water for Drought Affected Communities - (DACAAR)	765.756	0		0,0
Total Drought Appeal	76.391.754	40.371.645		52,8
Emergency Water Tankering (MRRD)	50.400	50.400	OCHA	100,0
Total Drought Response	76.442.154	40.422.045		52,8%

CNTF:Counter Narcotics trust Fund

CERF: Commanders Emergency Response Fund

DG ECHO Technical Assistant in Kabul held a meeting with WFP, MRRD, FAO and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on 12 September 2006 where WFP presented an update on the drought appeal. WFP had appeals from the Afghan government to intervene in 23 provinces and is currently in the process of buying food on the international market. No projects to relieve the drought victims have effectively started to date. The DG ECHO Kabul office will stay in regular contact with MRRD to coordinate the relief efforts in order to make sure there will be no overlap.

The EC Delegation in Afghanistan is currently not planning to intervene with food aid.

Donors in AFGHANISTAN the last 12 months

1. EU Members States (*)		2. European Commission		3. Others	
	EUR		EUR		EUR
Austria		DG ECHO	6,666,667		
Belgium	500,000	Other services			
Cyprus					
Czech republic	874,126				
Denmark	7,105,638				
Estonia					
Finland	1,300,000				
France	1,000,000				
Germany	12,173,603				
Greece					
Hungary					
Ireland	615,000				
Italy	1,500,000				
Latvia					
Lithuania					
Luxemburg	127,500				
Malta					
Netherlands	6,500,560				
Poland					
Portugal					
Slovakia					
Slovenie					
Spain	246,589				
Sweden	6,263,908				
United kingdom					
Subtotal	38,206,924	Subtotal	6,666,667	Subtotal	0
		Grand total	44,873,591		

Dated : 13/09/2006

(*) 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.

6 - Amount of decision and distribution by specific objectives:

6.1. - Total amount of the decision: EUR 2,500,000

6.2. - Budget breakdown by specific objectives

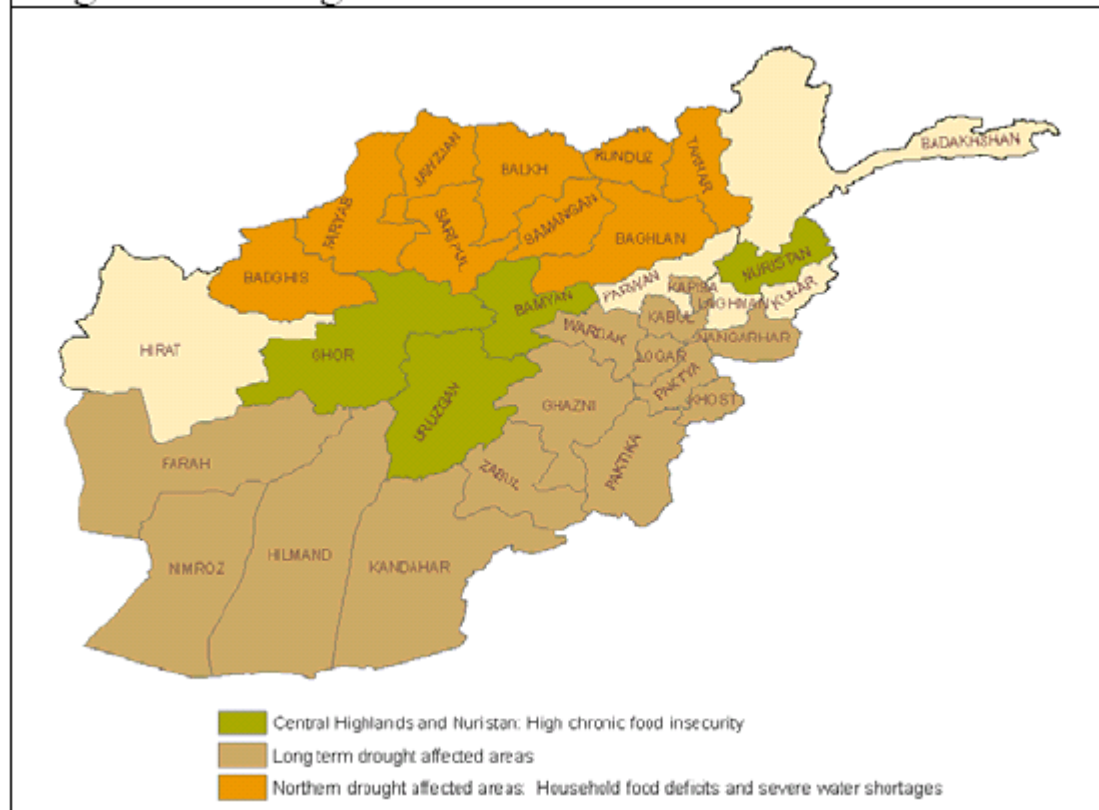
Principal objective: To give emergency assistance to the most vulnerable population of the drought-affected areas of Afghanistan			
Specific objectives	Allocated amount by specific objective (EUR)	Geographical area of operation	Potential partners⁴
Specific objective 1: To provide emergency food and access to basic water supplies in drought affected communities	2,500,000	Afghanistan	- ACF - FRA - ACTED - ACTIONAID - AGA KHAN - CARE - UK - CHRISTIAN AID - UK - DRC - GERMAN AGRO ACTION - HELP - IRC - UK - MISSION OST - DNK - OCKENDEN INTERNATIONAL (OI) - OXFAM - UK - PEOPLE IN NEED - SOLIDARITES - WORLD VISION - UK - WORLD VISION DEU
TOTAL	2,500,000		

⁴ ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, (FR), ACTIONAID (GBR), AGA KHAN FOUNDATION (United Kingdom), AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT, (FR), CARE INTERNATIONAL UK, CHRISTIAN AID (GBR), Clovek v tísní - společnost při České televizi, o.p.s., DANSK FLYGTNINGEHAELP, DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE / GERMAN AGRO ACTION, (DEU), HELP- HILFE ZUR SELBSTHILFE E.V. (DEU), International Rescue Committee UK, MISSION OST, OCKENDEN INTERNATIONAL (GBR), OXFAM (GB), SOLIDARITES, (FR), WORLD VISION - UK, WORLD VISION, (DEU)ggg

7 - Budget Impact article 23 02 01

	EC (EUR)
Initial Available Appropriations for 2005	470,429,000
Supplementary Budgets	90,000,000
Transfers	-
Total Available Credits	560,429,000
Total executed to date (19 September 2006)	530,367,000
Available remaining	30,062,000
Total amount of the Decision	2,500,000

Figure 1: Drought Affected Areas



This map was included in a Few's Net warning on Afghanistan dated July 20th 2006 (source: <http://www.fews.net/resources/gcontent/pdf/1001072.pdf>). The situation has changed slightly since and drought has also affected Central highlands and Badakhshan.

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

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 aid⁵, and in particular Article 13 thereof,

Whereas:

1. Large parts of Afghanistan are experiencing a severe drought situation, at a time when populations are still recovering from a severe drought that lasted from 1998 until 2004;
2. Less snowfall during last winter and the failure of rains in much of the country during the critical months of April and May caused considerable reduction in the yield of wheat;
3. The coping mechanism of the most vulnerable populations is exhausted after years of drought and war;
4. A food gap of around 7 months has been developing;
5. Access to drinking water is seriously restricted in certain areas;
6. On 25 July the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations launched a joint drought appeal of USD 76.4 million;
7. Humanitarian aid operations financed by this Decision should be of a maximum duration of 6 months.
8. It is estimated that an amount of EUR 2,500,000 from budget line 23 02 01 of the general budget of the European Union is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to over **300,000 of the most vulnerable drought-affected people** taking into account the available budget, other donors-contributions and other factors.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

1. In accordance with the objectives and general principles of humanitarian aid, the Commission hereby approves a total amount of EUR 2,500,000 for emergency humanitarian aid operations to provide the necessary assistance and relief to **the most vulnerable drought-affected** people in Afghanistan by using line 23 02 01 of the **2006** general budget of the European Union.
2. In accordance with Article 2 (a) of Council Regulation No.1257/96, the humanitarian operations shall be implemented in the pursuance of the following specific objectives:

To provide emergency food and access to basic water supplies in drought affected communities.

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

Article 2

1. The implementation of humanitarian aid operations funded by this Decision shall have a maximum duration of 6 months from their starting date.
2. Expenditure under this Decision shall be eligible from **1 August 2006**.
3. If the operations envisaged in this Decision are suspended owing to force majeure or comparable circumstances, the period of suspension shall not be taken into account for the calculation of the duration of the humanitarian aid operations.

Article 3

This Decision shall take effect on 11 October 2006.

Done at Brussels,

For the Commission

Member of the Commission