



Resolution 1422 (2005)¹

Europe and the Tsunami Disaster

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly was deeply shocked by the disaster which struck Southeast Asia and the countries surrounding the Indian Ocean, and which claimed 280 000 lives and displaced 5 million individuals.
2. It would like first of all to express its immense sorrow at these tragic deaths and its deep sympathy with the families and close relatives of the victims in both the countries affected by the earthquake and the rest of the world, and in particular in European countries.
3. The Assembly welcomes the generosity with which the international community has reacted. States and international institutions have pledged large sums of money and agreed to wipe out or to place moratoria on debts. Thousands of enterprises and millions of individuals worldwide have made donations. In this connection, the Assembly stresses the need for the utmost transparency during the dispatch of these funds.
4. In view of the importance that pledges be fully met through actual disbursement – and aware that such has not always been the case after similar disasters in the past – the Assembly resolves closely to ensure that the pledges are scrupulously honoured, without jeopardising aid allocated to other areas.
5. The same holds for the timing and co-ordination of the assistance – from immediate relief to medium and long-term support – to the remote regions. The Assembly in this context welcomes the offer of the European Union, the United States and Japan to assist the region in installing a state-of-the-art tsunami early warning system.
6. The Assembly welcomes the decision taken during the donors' conference to designate the United Nations as co-ordinator of humanitarian aid. It is important that the United Nations take up this challenge by co-ordinating activities on the ground, assessing priorities and delegating responsibilities to the best-placed specialised agencies, as well as to the NGOs, and in close co-operation with the local authorities.
7. Most of the infrastructures, transport links and energy sources have been destroyed. This has left the majority of victims without any means of subsistence, housing or livelihood.
8. Furthermore, the damage caused by the tsunami, which has also had an impact on marine fauna and flora, including the mangroves and coral reefs, is having an enormous effect on local populations whose resources stem mainly from fishing and tourism.
9. The ensuing flooding has given rise to risks of such diseases as cholera, yellow fever and malaria. The poor health conditions and the lack of drinking water have contributed to the risk of epidemics. It is therefore urgent to install an epidemiological monitoring system, particularly in the more remote areas.
10. Under these circumstances, it is essential that the United Nations make a co-ordinated vaccination and health campaign geared to preventing cholera and the other waterborne diseases.

1. Assembly debate on 27 January 2005 (7th Sitting) (see [Doc. 10428](#), report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Ms Paoletti Tangheroni ; [Doc. 10438](#), opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Högmark; [Doc. 10437](#), opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, rapporteur: M. Hagberg; [Doc. 10446](#), opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mr Jonas; and [Doc. 10442](#), opinion of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Ms Westerlund Panke). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 January 2005 (7th Sitting).



11. In addition, the protection of the children who have been orphaned by the disaster must be a major priority for the humanitarian agencies.

12. According to Unicef estimates, the number of children affected by the disaster amounts to around 1.5 million. The international community must act to prevent these children from becoming targets for trafficking, physical violence, sexual exploitation or recruitment by sects. In this context, the Assembly backs Unicef's proposal to identify all the children as quickly as possible and to implement measures to prevent trafficking in children.

13. The Assembly considers that child sponsorship must be promoted and established in order to protect the children from other traumas. In accordance with [Recommendation 1443 \(2000\)](#) on international adoption: respecting children's rights, the Assembly reiterates that international adoption must be used only as the very last resort.

14. The Assembly supports the appeal launched by the United Nations donors' conference for the donation pledges to be honoured and it stresses at the same time that this should not lead us to forget the victims of other crises which have affected or still affect different regions of the world.

15. It must be recalled that 1.2 billion people worldwide live in poverty and that almost 1 billion, including over 150 million children under the age of five, suffer from malnutrition. In this context, the Assembly recalls the need for Council of Europe member states and all the donor countries of the international community to endeavour to achieve the objective set in Monterrey to earmark 0.7% of their GDP for public development aid.

16. Consequently, the Parliamentary Assembly asks the member states of the Council of Europe, as regards :

Pledges and assistance

- a. *to honour the commitments entered into in connection with pledged funds and assistance to the states struck by the tsunami, without prejudicing aid allocated to other areas ;*
- b. *to support the activities of the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs in its co-ordinating role ;*
- c. *to facilitate the granting of the funds needed for reconstruction and rehabilitation, including the use of micro-loans ;*
- d. *to implement the decisions taken during the Kobe Conference ;*
- e. *to establish an early warning and prevention system to detect earthquakes and tidal waves in co-operation with the Council of Europe's Co-operation Group for the Prevention of, Protection Against and Organisation of Relief in Major Natural and Technological Disasters (EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement) and concurrently provide education and training for the populations concerned ;*
- f. *to support the proposed creation of a European civil intervention force ;*

Protection of children and vulnerable groups

- a. *to provide psychological support for children and orphans ;*
- b. *as far as possible to place children in homes in their own community or extended family and to undertake the necessary measures to establish a regular check on their placements and lifestyle as quickly as possible ;*
- c. *to ensure that displaced children are registered as quickly as possible and prohibit minors from leaving the country with an unauthorised person ;*
- d. *to implement the necessary measures for sponsoring orphans ;*
- e. *to take the necessary measures for the protection of the elderly and the disabled ;*

Health

- a. *to guarantee provision of medicines and medical care ;*
- b. *to introduce an epidemiological warning system ;*

Environment and local affairs

- a. *to take the necessary measures to rebuild and rehabilitate housing and natural ecosystems ;*

b. *to encourage twinning arrangements with the stricken regions and towns in close co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.*

17. The Parliamentary Assembly invites the governments of the countries affected by the disaster:

to facilitate the humanitarian organisations' aid distribution work ;

to take the requisite steps to guarantee access by the needy to aid, irrespective of the victims' political conviction or ethnic or religious affiliation ;

to take the requisite steps to facilitate the operations and activities of the humanitarian agencies.

18. The Parliamentary Assembly proposes to take stock, within one year, of the real aid situation given by Europe, the United Nations and its specialised agencies, as well as of the needs, and to examine, in this context, the response provided and the responsibility taken on by Europe in the face of humanitarian disasters within and outside the borders of Europe.