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**TEXTS ADOPTED**

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**Situation in Nepal after the earthquakes**

**European Parliament resolution of 11 June 2015 on the situation in Nepal following the earthquakes (2015/2734(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Nepal,
  - having regard to the joint statement of 25 April 2015 by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, the Commissioner for Development, Neven Mimica, and the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Christos Stylianides, on the earthquake in Asia, and to other official statements,
  - having regard to the statement of 30 April 2015 by the chair of its Delegation for relations with the countries of South Asia on the earthquake in Nepal,
  - having regard to the visit to Nepal of its Delegation for relations with the countries of South Asia on the occasion of the 9th EP/Nepal Interparliamentary Meeting held from 8 to 10 April 2015,
  - having regard to the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly of 13 May 2013 on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in Nepal,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966,
  - having regard to Nepalese post-earthquake initiatives such as the National Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Plan and the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment,
  - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the humanitarian situation affecting Nepal and the surrounding region following the devastating earthquake of 25 April 2015 and the subsequent earthquake of

12 May 2015 remains extremely grave, with more than 8 800 people reported dead to date and many more injured, and at least half a million houses destroyed, 2,8 million people displaced and millions in need of urgent humanitarian assistance;

- B. whereas, in addition, an estimated 1,7 million children have been affected by displacement, the death of one or both parents, or the destruction of their homes or schools; whereas orphans are at increased risk of starvation, sickness, abuse, neglect and trafficking; whereas the Nepalese police have reported cases of groups of children being taken by unrelated adults; whereas a travel ban for unaccompanied minors has been announced and international adoptions have been suspended;
- C. whereas in addition to the terrible loss of lives and the many injured, the earthquake has severely damaged the country's cultural, religious and historical heritage, including four out of seven World Heritage sites and thousands of monuments, temples and monasteries, representing a blow to national identity as well as affecting indispensable sources of revenue;
- D. whereas more than 500 major dry landslides have been reported across mountain regions, often blocking the flow of rivers, with a risk of flooding or glacial lake outburst floods; whereas the risks of further landslides, flooding and lake bursts are very high in light of the coming monsoon period;
- E. whereas there are serious concerns about the risk of outbreaks of communicable diseases, in particular in overcrowded areas and in areas where water, sanitation and hygiene systems have been disrupted;
- F. whereas the monsoon rains are expected to start very soon and will significantly affect relief efforts, in particular in the more remote areas;
- G. whereas the UN has estimated that 1,4 million people require food assistance owing to the severe damage to agriculture-based livelihoods; whereas the planting season starts this month and an estimated 236 000 people need agricultural inputs, including rice and vegetable seeds, and whereas the situation is aggravated by the large-scale loss of livestock; whereas farmers who miss this year's planting season will be unable to harvest until late 2016;
- H. whereas Commissioner Stylianides visited the affected areas together with UN Under-Secretary-General Valerie Amos from 30 April to 2 May 2015;
- I. whereas the EU and its Member States have provided significant financial assistance in response, with the immediate release of EUR 6 million for urgent needs and a total outlay to date of EUR 22,6 million on the part of the Commission, in addition to offering relief items and search and rescue teams through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism;
- J. whereas, however, the UN humanitarian coordinator stated on 4 June 2015 that international funding in support of Nepal remains unsatisfactory and that the UN has only received USD 120 million out of the total of USD 422 million pledged;
- K. whereas the recently inaugurated disaster relief centre and the humanitarian staging area which provided food rations for 200 000 people for two weeks, also supported with EU funding, have operated successfully and are good examples of the direction in which the government was moving before the earthquake;

- L. whereas, however, the relief effort has been hindered by limited and damaged infrastructure, but supply routes have been set up through neighbouring countries, in particular India through its 'Operation Friendship';
- M. whereas, although partly resolved, problems still exist with regard to lengthy customs procedures for humanitarian supplies sent to Nepal by official and private donors; whereas a 30-day import duty waiver has expired and has been replaced by a list of items fully or partly exempt from import taxes, and as a result import duties are now levied on some of the relief items;
- N. whereas thousands in need of aid following the earthquakes risk being left to fend for themselves amid worrying signs that gender, caste and ethnic discrimination is inhibiting the aid effort; whereas more than half the country's Dalit community is still waiting for shelter and food rations;
- O. whereas estimates by Nepal's Finance Ministry put the cost of reconstruction at around USD 10 billion, which is half the country's annual GDP;
- P. whereas the Government of Nepal has announced that it will hold an international conference on 25 June 2015 in Kathmandu in order to mobilise international financial support for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country;
- Q. whereas Nepal, which is among the poorest countries in the world, has only recently and slowly emerged from a 10-year civil war; whereas, nevertheless, the government has made efforts in recent years to prepare for the expected event of a major earthquake;
- 1. Expresses its deepest condolences to all those affected by this terrible tragedy, including the families of the more than 8 800 people who lost their lives in Nepal, India, China and Bangladesh;
- 2. Applauds the efforts of Nepalese institutions and society in the aftermath of the earthquakes;
- 3. Welcomes the swift aid provided by the Commission and the Member States to Nepal and calls on the international community to continue to assist the Government of Nepal with short-term humanitarian support and long-term recovery and rehabilitation efforts, with a special focus on the agricultural sector and hard-to-reach areas, and to honour its pledges;
- 4. Stresses the importance of emergency healthcare and of the measures aimed at preventing the outbreak of communicable diseases; calls on the EU and the international community to support the revitalisation of health facilities and services in the country, in particular in remote areas, including through the delivery of medical tents and equipment for damaged or destroyed health facilities;
- 5. Calls on the Government of Nepal and the international community to ensure that children who have been separated from their families are reunited with them as quickly as possible and to place children at the heart of the humanitarian intervention; calls, furthermore, for special attention to be paid to the particularly vulnerable situation of children, including the many cases of malnutrition and the risks of abuse and trafficking; stresses the importance of bringing children back to school;

6. Is concerned at reports of abuse and harassment of women and children in makeshift camps, and calls on the Government of Nepal to take additional measures to ensure the safety of vulnerable people and the swift investigation of such reports;
7. Calls on the international community to assist the Government of Nepal with salvaging and restoring damaged cultural, religious and historical heritage;
8. Highlights that the UN estimates that an additional USD 298,2 million is urgently required in order to provide humanitarian assistance, in particular in light of the approaching monsoon season, and calls for a renewed global effort to meet these urgent funding needs;
9. Urges the Government of Nepal to resolve the remaining problems with customs procedures for humanitarian supplies, to lift any so-called 'relief taxes' being levied on humanitarian supplies by local police at Nepal's borders, and to work alongside aid agencies to ensure that the aid swiftly reaches the places where it is needed;
10. Expresses its concern at reports of discrimination in the distribution of humanitarian aid, and calls on the Government of Nepal to ensure that aid reaches those who need it, regardless of who they are and where the aid is coming from; calls, furthermore, on the Vice-President/High Representative to address this issue at the highest possible political level in her contacts with Nepal;
11. Commends governments in the region, in particular the Government of India, for their assistance in the international aid effort; calls on the Commission, the Member States and international stakeholders to continue to work with the Government of Nepal and other governments in the region on the issue of improving preparedness and resilience in the face of natural disasters, including with regard to building codes, infrastructure and emergency plans; stresses that the National Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Plan should also address other key issues, including the fight against poverty, environmental protection and climate change;
12. Stresses that Nepal, as a post-conflict country, needs further domestic efforts and international support in its transition towards democracy; calls on the Nepalese political forces to work together in a spirit of constructive cooperation and compromise-seeking with a view to the adoption of a new, democratic and inclusive constitution which meets the aspirations of the Nepalese people, as a milestone in the peace process and a significant contribution to a swift and successful post-disaster recovery; welcomes, in this connection, the agreement reached on 8 June 2015 by Nepal's main political parties;
13. Stresses that it is of primary importance to organise the long overdue local elections, given that successful reconstruction efforts will be dependent on the administrative capacities of local authorities;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Constituent Assembly of Nepal, the governments and parliaments of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.