

Statement on the hearing of the Commissioner-designate for DG HUMANITARIAN AID and CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The European civil protection covers three phases of the disaster management cycle: Prevention, Preparedness and Response. Water is one of the natural and/or man-made disasters that do not respect national frontiers. EU civil protection policies already address water extreme events through policy on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and the contribution to International Disaster Risk Reduction efforts – the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 .

- 1. The new Commissioner should ensure better collaboration with other DG's to guarantee a proper alignment of policies and actions to reduce risks caused by ever-more frequent extreme water/climate events. Thus, water needs to become a more prominent object of action in Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection.**

The IPCC report on “Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability” underlines, many key risks all of which are identified with high confidence, related to water: (a) risk of death, injury, disrupted livelihoods in low-lying coastal zones; (b) risk of severe disrupted livelihoods for large urban populations due to inland flooding; (c) systematic risks due to extreme weather events leading to the breakdown of infrastructure networks (e.g. water supply); (d) risk of food insecurity and the breakdown of food systems; (e) risks due to insufficient access to drinking and irrigation water and insufficient agricultural productivity. Therefore it should be highlighted that risks due to the extreme water-related events are calling for more coordinated joint policies and actions.

- 2. The new Commissioner should ensure that**
 - actions for water and sanitation during disaster response are prioritised;**
 - climate change effects on disaster response are assessed and appropriate preparatory measures are taken both in terms of preparedness and response.**

As limited water availability is considered to become a more important concern in the future, this is likely to have an impact on the provision of drinking water during immediate disaster response. Water imports and re-use may be important strategies to alleviate some of the immediate shortages.

