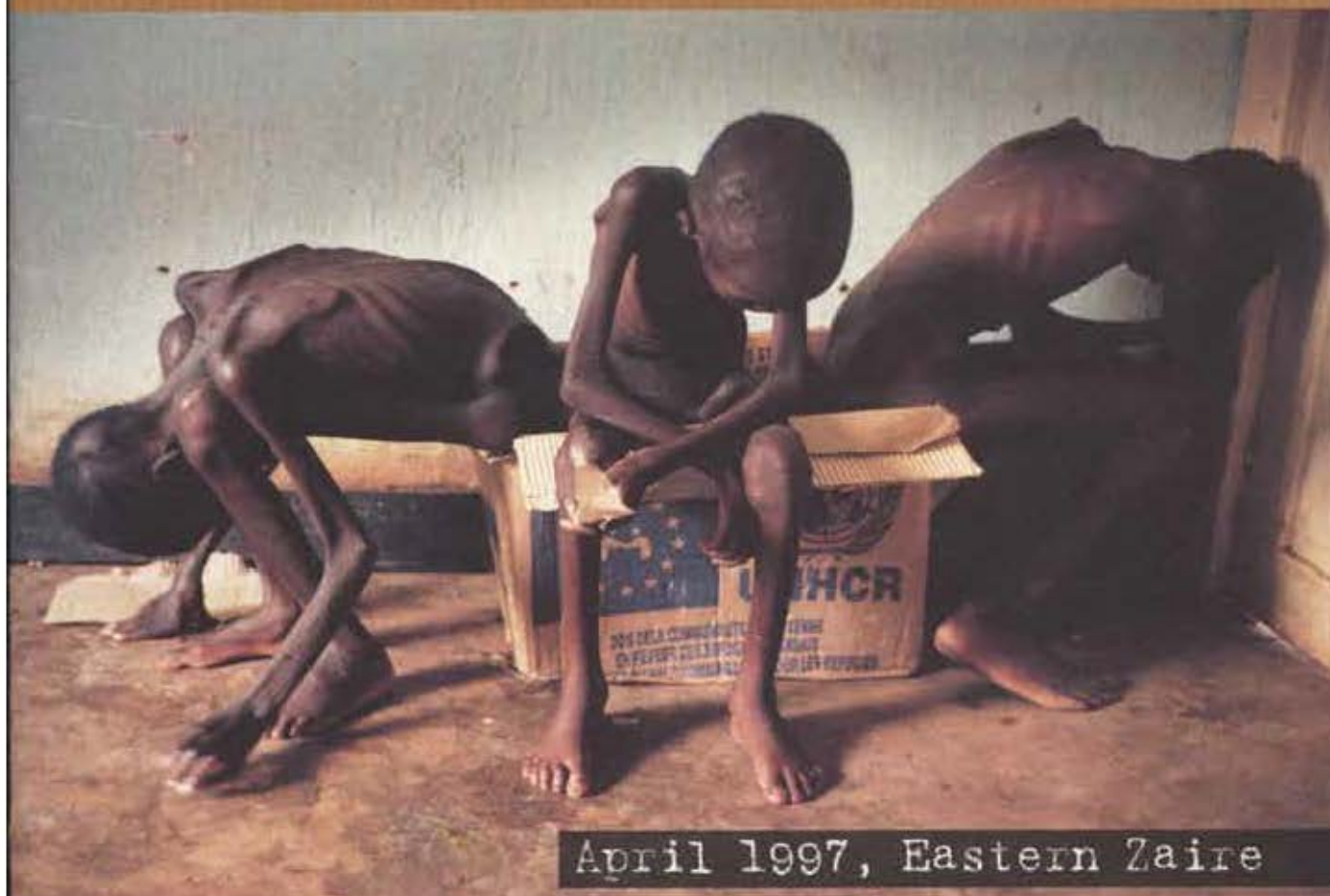




European Union  
action in humanitarian aid

# Forgotten



April 1997, Eastern Zaire

ECHO ■ ■ ■  
annual review  
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European Community  
Humanitarian Office





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## About ECHO

*Flooding in the Andes and Central Europe, famine in Chad, epidemics in Nicaragua: these were some of the crises to which the European Community Humanitarian Office responded in 1997. ECHO stepped in with humanitarian aid for 85 countries outside the European Union, responding to emergencies resulting from conflicts and natural disasters, making available funding worth a total of ECU 442 million.*



Roger Joo

As a European Commission service under the direct responsibility of Commissioner Emma Bonino, ECHO funds a wide range of assistance. Depending on the situation, ECHO can fund food, shelter and medicines, water supplies, war surgery, emergency repair work and vaccinations, as well as psycho-social assistance, air lifts and land mine clearance. ECHO also manages a disaster preparedness and prevention programme in high-risk areas. All ECHO-funded assistance is granted on a non-discriminatory basis, irrespective of race, ethnicity or religion.

Since it was set up in 1992, ECHO has worked in partnership with non-governmental agencies, the specialised agencies of the United Nations, and the Red Cross family. This cooperation has been formalised in the Framework Partnership Agreement, which over 170 organisations have signed. They include large and small organisations, specialists and all-rounders, based mainly in Member States, but also from third countries. ECHO's cooperation with its partners allows the European Commission to respond rapidly and flexibly to humanitarian emergencies.

In 1997, ECHO worked with about 170 partners. One of the advantages of its links with these organisations is the possibility of sharing information on complex emergencies, to enable greater operational efficiency. In order to help raise professional standards, ECHO also supports the training of personnel working in humanitarian aid operations via a specialist master's degree now available at seven European universities.





ECHO-PA/Janine

## The law of the jungle

*After much thought, we decided on a rather stark image of three Rwandan kids for the cover of this year's annual report because the despair on their faces could be that of anyone of any age. The photo does far more than words ever could to convey just how helpless people feel when faced with the day-to-day depravity of modern humanitarian crises: hunger, violated innocence, lost dignity and crazed conflict. A moral desert stretches out before us.*

Our world is in poor shape. Since the end of the Cold War stand-off, local conflicts have raged, with many regions still suffering the upheaval we thought would soon pass. And in the wake of wartime atrocities — systematic violations of international and humanitarian law — have come post-war abuses, such as the total segregation imposed on Afghan women by the Taliban.

Now into the fourth year of my term of office, not only do I see a world in increasing need of humanitarian assistance, but one which is crying out for some kind of morality, for political and diplomatic action grounded in respect for universal rules and values.

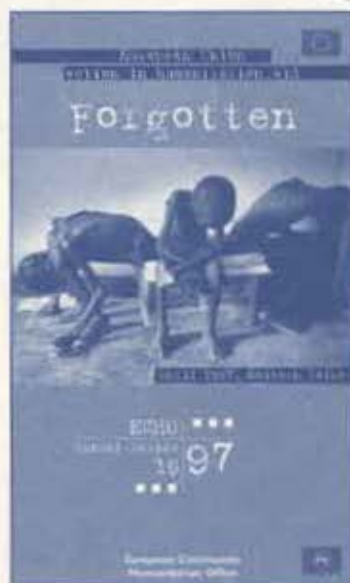
For some years now, expressions such as 'preventive diplomacy' or 'conflict prevention' have been bandied about as if they referred to an exact science, a time-honoured skill that could pave a sure way to a better future. The reality is very different. However, though the international community apparently cannot manage to avoid conflict, it should, if nothing else, devote itself to the more humble goal of staving off — or at the very least stemming — humanitarian crises by demanding that international and humanitarian law be obeyed always and everywhere and by denouncing always and everywhere the violations it witnesses.

Rules, conventions and institutions are not incidental or optional extras for the survival of an organised community of nations. Let us not forget that without them, international relations would be governed by the law of the jungle — the very same law in fact which has literally and figuratively left three Rwandan kids sitting on a consignment of humanitarian aid.

Emma Bonino

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## Working together to boost our response

*In my first year as Director of ECHO, I learned to expect the unexpected. In managing our responses to crises, one of my main goals has been to involve all parties concerned very closely: non-governmental organisations, international institutions, donors and beneficiaries. That goes both for emergencies and for longer-term strategies which we set out last year in a formal ECHO Strategy Paper for the first time.*

Our aim is to reach more people with better help if we can. During the year under review we tried to improve coordination with our Red Cross and NGO partners and all UN relief agencies, but also with Member States. We went some way to achieving this during eight Brussels meetings of the Humanitarian Aid Committee. I am encouraged by the active response and significant contributions that members of this Committee are now making to our initiatives. A spirit of positive dialogue now marks these meetings and I hope it will develop into a forum to exchange experiences, to select issues for advocacy and to develop strategies for humanitarian action on behalf of the European Union. I also welcome the appointment of a new Emergency Relief Coordinator at the United Nations. This new office should reinforce the links ECHO already has with UN relief agencies. In the first half of the year, I led ECHO teams that met both government and non-governmental representatives responsible for humanitarian aid in all Member States. It was an opportunity for us to explain ECHO's initiatives and way of working, and for our partners to contribute their ideas and to voice their concerns. The same thinking was behind the strengthening of the "Dialogue Group" whose membership covers all our operational partners. Together, we can do more to improve the quality of aid delivered. Helping all involved to work together is a major part of what ECHO can contribute in 'added value' to humanitarian operations world-wide.

The revision of the Framework Partnership Agreement took place in a climate of consultation with NGOs and should enable contracts to be processed faster and more efficiently, using the experience gained over the past five years. The strengthening of our network of field experts is another priority. Last year, ECHO opened offices in Colombia, North Korea, the Middle East (Amman) and South East Asia (Bangkok), bringing the number of experts to about 70. During 1998, we will expand the network further to enable better co-ordination between HQ and operations in the field. We have also tried to place special emphasis on disaster preparedness and prevention, as it is very clear that prevention is better than cure. In this strand of our activities, the 'El Niño' freak weather phenomenon concentrated our minds at the end of 1997, and its effects look set to pose major hazards to life and property world-wide well into 1998.

What of the overall picture? ECHO made available ECU 442 million compared with ECU 657 million in the previous year. That might give the false impression that the world was less troubled. But, we should not forget that relief agencies were deliberately prevented from assisting those in desperate conditions in Eastern Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) and in Afghanistan. We cannot hide our frustration in face of such a situation. The workload at ECHO has continued to rise. Our operational desks signed over 1300 contracts during the year, accounting for some ECU 612 million, compared to ECU 557 million in 1996. Some of these of course related to funds made available at the end of 1996. The European Union continues to be the biggest donor of humanitarian aid in the world. And ECHO tried to contribute to raising awareness of vital issues underlying its activities through advocacy campaigns, for instance, on landmines, or the need for a permanent international court.

In the minds of many, the European Union is mainly about business, not people. We at ECHO have a mission to invest in lifelines. The decisions we make can mean the difference between life and death for those receiving our aid and some of their stories are told in the following pages. We can only be glad we collectively made that possible.



*'The decisions we make can mean the difference between life and death for those receiving our aid and some of their stories are told in the following pages. We can only be glad we collectively made that possible'*





Ex-Zaire

## Desperate rescue attempt in Eastern Zaire

Philippe Lemaître, *Le Monde*

*It is early February in Tingi-Tingi. Tens of thousands of Hutus line up patiently along the refugee camp's makeshift airstrip to welcome Emma Bonino. They know they are in mortal danger from the Zairian — chiefly Tutsi — rebels backed by the Rwandan army. In December 1996 the rebels encircled the camps in Kivu where the refugees had been holed up for two years and are now heading inexorably westwards, scarcely slowed down by Zairian troops in total disarray.*



M. Pons/Le Monde

**'There is little doubt that most of Tingi-Tingi's children have been slaughtered'**



Jean-Michel Tjebk/Photomontage

In December, upwards of a million Hutu refugees from the Kivu camps fled the fighting, returning to Rwanda and an uncertain future. Several hundred thousand more fled westwards, into the forests, covering huge distances in appalling conditions.

There they wait in three or four improvised camps an hour's flight from Kisangani as the fighting gets ever nearer. The camps are a target for the troops of Paul Kagamé, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Rwanda's Tutsi regime, because they shelter — in among all the refugees — soldiers and militia of the former Rwandan regime responsible for the spring 1994 genocide to which more than 500,000 Tutsis fell victim.

Emma Bonino's objective is to try and save these people. The international community, the Americans first and foremost, seems ready to wash its hands of them. Did not the United States in December head off an international military and humanitarian intervention in Kivu, to which the United Nations had given the green light, on the pretext that the bulk of the refugees had returned to Rwanda? Moreover, the U.S. ambassador in Kigali wondered if there was any point in seeking to get fresh supplies to people guilty of genocide and their accomplices!

### Protests against war

"These words are not worthy of a representative of a civilised country," exclaimed an indignant Emma Bonino. Can these thousands of beaming, almost joyful children, given a fresh lease of life thanks to the humanitarian efforts of Médecins sans Frontières, Caritas and other NGOs, really be guilty of genocide? "No to War!", "Protect our Rights!" read the placards the kids hold aloft. Older people are much less resilient and many are the poor wretches who stretch out their hands to Europe's envoy. Further on, in a corner on their own, are the sick, the dying and those who have just emerged exhausted from the forest.

### Need to alert public opinion

There is a limit to what the European Commissioner can do. The main thing is to alert public opinion and stave off the risk of slaughter. "We are here among people who do not exist, people invisible to the radars of the world's most powerful armies. In December, we were told it was pointless going there as almost all the Hutu refugees had gone home, to Rwanda; they said we were seeing things. The international community must recognise that it was wrong. The dossier has to be reopened".

Reopening the dossier also means getting food and medicine to the refugees. The humanitarian organisations complain that the aid delivered by UN agencies is just trickling in. Some claim that this is a deliberate attempt by the remnants of Mobutu's Zairian administration and the Americans to stop the camps taking root again. Emma Bonino thinks this suspicion is justified and her anger rises again.

### Already too late

It is too late, and she knows it. In December, the Europeans, divided among themselves and incapable of standing up to the Americans, some of them weighed down by the burden of past errors, passed up the chance to react. Kisangani will fall and Laurent-Désiré Kabila's rebels, with the backing of their Rwandan allies, press on to "liberate" Kinshasa. Few have raised their voices at the United Nations or in Brussels in favour of the refugees. Another act of cowardice that will be quietly forgotten. There is little doubt that most of Tingi-Tingi's children have been slaughtered.



## Where life and death live side by side



Seamus Folch/PSY/Gamma

*Xavier Vidal-Folch, Brussels correspondent of El País*

*We are in the jail in Rwanda's capital, Kigali. 7,000 prisoners are packed into 6,000 square metres. Several dozen of them are children, children accused of genocide. When the tropical rainstorms come, they are drenched and quickly die. The place smells acridly of soap and misery. The public prosecutor complains of having no money to buy typewriters to get trials under way, and of having no secretarial backup.*

*You will probably never forget the sad, hollow and sometimes cruel eyes you are looking into. They belong to people who are both killer and victim. You have never managed to unravel what are probably the only essential riddles of the situation.*

*A stone's throw from the jail is the church where one of the biggest massacres took place. One year on, it is still permeated by a sickly, dense, sweet and sulphurous smell of dead bodies. The survivors share their space with skulls and bones, interspersed with fresh flowers, in a place where the word "future" died.*

*You will never sleep the way you used to. The smell will wash over you, making you sick as it mixes with the smell of damp earth, a mixture of red and green. You see life and death side by side, and hear from afar a black, syncopated beat.*

### Armchair critics forgive so little

*Across the Zairean border is the refugee camp at Goma. The Hutus who have fled are doubly put-upon: they have to cope with defeat, misery and separation, but also with their military leaders, who are using them as a human shield. Those who try to escape often return with their throats cut. Young, dedicated aid workers battle to tackle the effects of this disaster, fully aware that time, geopolitics and lack of money are working against them. And still there are idle comments from armchair critics whose conservative guilty consciences forgive so little.*

*But you have witnessed their situation, talked to them, shared their food and watched them die, whether here or in other places like Iraq, where the day you arrived with an ECHO mission in August you saw Latif, a Kurdish sapper, blown up by an anti-personnel mine which he was trying to deactivate. You know that this is the reality, and you know that such people are a rare source of hope in this place and places like it that have even lost faith in the present.*

*Back in Brussels the ministers wrangle about the wording of insignificant sentences, experts in obfuscation triumph in the corridors of power, sentences tie themselves in knots and the reaction to the tragedy emerges in the form of skilful and ambiguous statements. Meanwhile, you entertain your readers with discussions about inconsequential nothingnesses.*

*Yet you know that Europe is capable of expressing itself in an entirely different way, through its aid workers, rebels with a cause, who work to limit the extent of the disaster. It is the Europe of this Commissioner, the Commissioner in charge of ECHO, which delivers the same message to the winners and the losers, to the innocent and the guilty, to the military leaders and to the desperate. It is a message of respect, reconciliation, peace, freedom and rebuilding. The same message is taken to palaces and shacks. Nothing is lost, except perhaps sleep, and even then, the dreams remain.*



## From a special correspondent

### Afghanistan

'No amount of humanitarian aid can be more than a band-aid on this wound'

William Shawcross, freelance journalist

*Early one morning in autumn 1997, I drove in the dark out of Kabul and up the road to the front line where the Taliban, the most extraordinary Islamic fundamentalists in the world, faced their enemies in the darkness beyond. An old watchman sleeping in a little hut by the a roadblock a couple of miles from the front line stopped us and then was persuaded by our driver to let us through. We drove on without headlights. I was with a television camera crew who had been here a few months before. They were looking for a small hillock where a tank was dug into the crest of a little rise, about 50 yards off the road.*

### A futile exercise

When we saw the tank, we walked gingerly across the sand, putting our feet only where the tank tracks showed, for fear of mines. In the dark of the valley before us, tracer fire flashed across the sky. Five young men emerged from their bunker next to the tank, wrapping their scarves around their heads. The cameramen with me produced a photograph he had taken of them and their tank on their previous visit. The soldiers looked at it and pointed to one of the company and shook their heads. "Dead." Just before the dawn came up, they insisted on firing their tank, no doubt for our benefit. The ground shook with the force of the explosion. I worried that someone across the valley had been killed because of us. I also worried that the tank would now itself be a target. The whole exercise seemed futile, pointless. That is how war almost always appears, but the war in Afghanistan is even more damaging and futile than most. In the last two decades the country has disintegrated as waves of troops in ever-shifting, perplexing alliances have swept back and forth across it. Many countries have neighbours and more distant powers intervening, interfering in, exploiting and exaggerating their conflicts. But few suffer more from this than land-locked Afghanistan. The Taliban tank was firing at the forces of General Massoud, the greatest warlord in the country. It was he who had led the resistance to the Soviet invasion of 1979. Now the Russians are supporting him against the Taliban, fearful lest their fundamentalism infect the newly independent states that used to be Soviet and now cluster around Russia — the Stans: Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. Allied with Russia against the Taliban is Iran. On the Taliban side are, above all, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. But drugs are an even more important source of finance. Under the Taliban, Afghanistan has become one of the greatest exporters of heroin in the world.

### Latest assault on women

Back in Kabul for breakfast, we drove through streets that have been smashed flat by civil war, where ruins of houses have been sown thickly with antipersonnel mines, which demining agencies are painstakingly trying to clear. The men of Kabul are conspicuous for their beards. The Taliban have decreed that these must be grown as long as possible and never trimmed, let alone shaved. The women are conspicuous by their absence. They are discouraged from appearing at all on the streets, and if they do so, only enveloped in the bell-like tents which cover them from tip to toe. Gangs of Taliban thugs roar around town in expensive cars jumping out to set upon men or women who have offended these and other codes. Men whose beards are thin are at risk, and women if they are showing so much as an ankle below their cloaks. Later that morning, I visited a women's "hospital" with Emma Bonino, the European Union's Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs. The Taliban had just decreed that no women could be treated in a hospital where men were present, either as patients or staff. Women patients were being moved to this one facility — where there was inadequate water, electricity and equipment. Emma Bonino, a feisty person at the quietest of times, was infuriated by this latest assault by the Taliban on women. (Girls cannot go to school in Taliban controlled areas of Afghanistan, women cannot work.) She took with her into the clinic a French camera crew, another led by Christiane Amanpour of CNN, and a number of foreign aid workers resident in Kabul. It was a bit of a crowd and, furthermore, television is banned by the Taliban — along with audio cassette tapes. Perhaps it was not surprising that the woman director of the hospital panicked at the thought of what might happen to her if she allowed our visit, and called the Taliban police. We were arrested and spent the rest of the morning in the courtyard of the central police station, until senior ministers, no doubt worried that Bonino might cut off aid, had us released.

### Fight to the last bullet

Then, in one of those modern technological wizardries that the Taliban abhors, Bonino was immediately interviewed by CNN on a satellite link. She said that it was rather surprising for a representative of the largest aid programme in the country (the EU has given over \$200 million to Afghanistan in the last two years) to be arrested. She said she had experienced a little of the random terror that the people of Kabul suffer every day. Unlike them, we flew out to Pakistan, and the next day up to Faizabad, a northern town of great beauty under the control of warlords allied to General Massoud. It was much poorer than even Kabul, but girls were at school and women were teaching. There was none of the fear that citizens of Kabul exhibited. There seems little prospect of a negotiated compromise to end the war. All the United Nations' attempts to mediate have proved hopeless. Towards the end of 1997, the latest UN Special Envoy, a German diplomat named Norbert Holl, resigned saying that all of Afghanistan's political and military leaders were to blame. "They want to fight to the last bullet. The last five years is a history of permanent failure." But he blamed outside powers even more than the warring Afghans themselves, saying "There is animosity between the Afghans but it is fuelled from the outside." No amount of humanitarian aid can be more than a band-aid on this wound.



## A war without end

Fergal Keane, BBC

*We were crouching beneath the meagre cover of some bushes, next to the ruins of a house that had been demolished in the bombardment of the past twenty-four hours. On a ridge just across the valley, the Taliban gunners were firing off a salvo of shells. Then a jet appeared out of the sun, swooping in from the direction of Kabul and dropping a carpet of high explosive on the valley floor. 'Cluster bombs,' shouted one of my colleagues as we watched the ground ignite in a whirlwind of dust and stones. A lorry appeared out of the dust, speeding past us with a cargo of dead and wounded men. Afghanistan, 1997. Three years away from the end of the century and still a war without end, a suffering beyond imagining.*

And then as suddenly as it had begun, the shelling stopped and soon birds began to sing again and there were furtive shufflings in the hedgerows and among the trees. People who had been hiding throughout the attack began to appear. They were farmers and their families, grimly trying to hold on to their land as the Taliban resisted the advance of their enemies from the Northern Alliance under the command of the legendary Ahmed Shah Masood. Both sides profess concern for the civilians killed, wounded, displaced and impoverished by the war. But the truth is that Afghanistan has become a tyranny of factions. Here the culture of the gun is dominant. Power is seized through killing and maintained through killing. This is also a place where male power in its most raw and brutal form reigns supreme. The mitigating tenderness of women is scorned by the warlords. I saw little evidence that the rights of ordinary people mattered to the gunmen.

### Beaten because her shoes squeaked

As we settled down to await the next round of the battle we heard a commotion from the roadway. We wandered out of the shade and into the blistering midday heat. A man, a woman and a small child were being searched by some of Masood's troops. They looked hungry and tired and the man was talking in rapid sentences. 'Where have you come from?' I asked. He explained that he and his family were Tajiks (the same ethnic group as Commander Masood) and that they had fled Kabul in fear of their lives. 'The Taliban are rounding up all the Tajiks,' he said. The Taliban movement is dominated by members of the Pashtun group and has launched frequent search and arrest operations against other ethnic groups in Kabul. The man told me his wife had been beaten in the street because her shoes had made noise. 'They say to her this is immoral, for a man to hear a woman's feet walking and so they beat her with whips. I became too afraid. It has changed too much so we decided to leave,' he

added. More groups of refugees began to arrive at the checkpoint. Most had similar stories. They described a regime of fear in the capital with women forced back into the home, girls exiled from school and regular beatings and arrests of those who defied the rules of the clergy. It was then that I thought of my last visit to the Afghan capital just eighteen months previously. Then the Taliban were the besieging force and Commander Masood was clinging to power inside the city. We could see the Taliban lines from the heights of Television Mountain inside the city and we could feel the thump of their artillery as shells landed in the suburbs.



R.A. Cretek

### 'No learning and no future'

I remember visiting a girl's school amid the ruins of one of the city's suburbs. The years of warfare, first against the Soviets and then the civil war, have reduced much of Kabul to a haunted rubble. But the school was a model of neatness and order. The girls, all of them wearing white headscarves, gathered for morning prayer and assembly before filing off quietly to their classrooms. There was very clearly a hunger for knowledge here. I remembered speaking to one young girl — she was only sixteen years old — about the Taliban. 'I can only hope they do not come. They want to push us back to the middle ages. If they come, what will happen to me and to my friends? All day at home, no learning and no future,' she said. And then she asked me whether I thought Taliban would take power. I told her that there seemed a very strong chance that they would and that many people seemed to support their efforts to end the endemic lawlessness in Afghanistan — the robbery, murder and rape which had become commonplace in the chaos of the war. 'So you really think they will come to power? Then I must get ready to leave,' she said.

I don't know if she did ever manage to leave, if she did join the long trail of refugees fleeing to the relative safety of the north. It is a difficult and dangerous journey with numerous roadblocks, minefields and the danger of bandits along the way. Perhaps she is still in Kabul, locked in the Taliban's fundamentalist prison and waiting for the day when the mullahs become more moderate or the day when they are overthrown. It may be a very long wait.



## West Bank and Gaza

'The good thing now is:  
I have a job... I can help people  
at their most vulnerable'

*Ibrahim Al-Gholi, 27, from Betanin on the West Bank*

*'I spent six months in Israeli jails before I moved to Jordan to train as a lab technician. When I came back [to the West Bank] I couldn't find a job in my field, so I had to work here and there, sometimes as a stone crusher, sometimes as a waiter. In 1994, I got married, and now I have two children.'*

'Before I joined the Emergency Medical Training (EMT) course, I had no idea what the service was about. But I was very drawn to the field of medicine, and the training was excellent: very good equipment, professional instructors. It wasn't easy, as I was studying during the day, and had to work in a newspaper warehouse at night just to get by. When it came to three-shift internships in the hospital and the Emergency Medical Service station, I had to quit my night job. It was a difficult decision, but I decided to pursue the EMT certificate rather than going on with the unskilled job.

The first day in the emergency room was a terrible shock. They brought in a patient whose pants had got caught in the engine belt of his tractor. Half his leg had been pulled into the wheels. Kids had found him and had called for help. When we lifted the blanket, I went paler and paler and fainted (so they tell me). After a few minutes, I came round and I tried to make an escape from the emergency room, but the doctor insisted that I be the one to hold the limb while he performed an amputation. The only connection between the man's lower leg and the rest of his body was a thin layer of skin. I will never forget this moment. It was really terrible, my muscles were so weak that I really had trouble controlling myself. Yet it was a lesson in discipline and self-control that I would not have missed for anything.

It was good training for life as an emergency medical technician on an ambulance. One of my first cases in the field was a baby, just a few months old. Its mother had been boiling water for a bath, the pot fell, and the baby was scalded, 50 percent burns, third degree. I have to admit the job scared me at first, and at times I was not sure if I was stable enough to go on doing it. But my self-confidence is developing. The good thing now is: I have a job. I have specialised knowledge and I can help people at their most vulnerable. I hope there will be ways of maintaining and advancing our level of training. Training is the basis for everything, for self confidence, and for performing well on the job.'

*Ibrahim Al-Gholi qualified as an Emergency Medical Technician on a Palestine Red Crescent Society programme in 1997*

## Voices



**ECHO is funding  
programmes in a  
divided land**



## Albania

'I don't know who ECHO is, but I know that the people of Europe are helping us'

Lula, after flooding in Lezhe, December 1997

*'Our farmlands in Lezhe were flooded, and my children have only the clothes they are standing in, your blankets and your food. Everything else is gone. For the past six months, since my husband was killed in a clan vendetta and we had to move from our mountain village, me and my five children, all aged under 10, have been receiving food from InterSoS. It has saved our lives. We had a cow, but we had to eat it, and now our wheat is underwater.'*

'Two months ago, my youngest was vaccinated against polio. I saw the ECHO poster in the health centre, and realised ECHO was involved there as well. Not just for the vaccination but for everything that happened there — the rebuilding, the equipment, even the bandages. My neighbour's son was shot a few months ago, and had to be operated on in the district hospital. She said that you were involved there, too.'

The elementary school which two of my children go to was rebuilt recently. I thought it was the government that did it, until I saw the ECHO sign outside. I don't know who ECHO is, but I know that the people of Europe are helping us. The drinking water from the tap that comes on twice a day, you provide the chlorine that makes it safe to drink. Is there anything you can't do? I did get told ECHO can't replace the drainage pumps that were stolen during the spring crisis, and that without them, our fields will be flooded again for sure...'



*ECHO stepped in as civil society collapsed in Albania*

'Thank goodness we have a hospital and a school running now'

Gjergj, in Ungrej, a mountain village outside Lezhe

'Thank goodness the European Community has opened up the hospital which was used as a pigsty for months before that. Now the sick can be treated here and women don't have to go to Lezhe to give birth — it's hard to get there, because the road's bad and it's dangerous. We also get free medicine at the hospital, so we don't need to spend the little we earn on that. The school is running, and for our children, it's not as cold as last winter, because there are windows and doors, bathrooms, water and electricity. The students can sit at new desks and concentrate on their lessons in peace!'





## Montserrat Island

'The ash emissions, which fell more frequently than rain, were disgusting'



**Montserrat's Soufrière volcano erupts — a 3,000-metre column of smoke rises above the ocean**

*Jennifer Burke, family of four, now in Antigua*

*'Life on Montserrat was a splendour. It was like living in the Garden of Eden. Montserrat, the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean, was an island of lush green vegetation, and friendly, hospitable people, a place of peace and quiet. On July 18, 1995, the Soufrière Hill Volcano came to life — steam from mountain vents, then came the ash and the earthquakes.'*

*'After several weeks of uncertainty, the authorities gave the order to relocate. The first time, my family and I were so scared we went to Antigua, where we faced Hurricane Luis, which totally destroyed the house we were staying in. We had no choice but to go back to Montserrat, where we had two further moves, got settled, then were told to move back to our original homes. We decided to stay in the north, as houses were becoming very scarce.'*

The ash emissions, which fell more frequently than rain, were disgusting. They came at the most unexpected and inopportune times, just as the weekly washing had been hung out to dry, for instance. The ash makes your nostrils and skin itch, it makes your eyes smart, and very often, it leads to an annoying cough. Cleaning up after ash falls was an ordeal. No sooner had one cleaned up the house and surroundings, down came another ash fall! I went on working as usual, but the ash was a big problem. In spite of all my efforts to keep the ash at bay, it started to affect me and my child, who is asthmatic.

## Deadly eruption killed 19 people

The Government helped those of us who had moved north with food packages. This was helpful, but they did not provide fresh meat or vegetables, and tinned food does not make for a healthy lifestyle. Then we got food vouchers. This too was helpful, but shopkeepers, uncertain of the future, were not stocking their shelves as they used to do. I tried to make the best of life, wondering when all this would be over. However, this was not to be. On June 25, 1997, the volcano took the lives of 19 unfortunate people.

## Decision to relocate overseas

My family and I had to make the most heavy-hearted decision to relocate overseas. It was not easy — we had to give up our jobs, and were not certain of finding work. For several weeks, we were accommodated by the pastor and members of a church until we got a place to rent. We applied for a relocation package, which came in very handy in purchasing things we needed, but the expense of starting life from scratch is much more than would appear. The cost of rent alone is outrageous for a Montserratian when the head of the household has no steady income.



The Red Cross in Antigua has begun issuing food vouchers, a programme I understand is facilitated by ECHO. These food vouchers are a big help. I'm grateful to the Red Cross and ECHO for helping to ease the many stresses as we try our best to cope with the changes we have to face. There does seem to be a ray of hope behind the dark cloud which now envelops us. Many thanks for caring and sharing.'



# Voices

Poland

'The house was flooded for over a week... Everything stank of dead fish. Then came a plague of mosquitoes...'

Gizela Stanczyk, 34, from Oswiecim

*'We've had floods here before, but never anything like this. This year, the new flood defences got washed away, and we were exposed. Four of us live in a two-room house, the lowest-lying of three, so mine is always the first to get flooded and it was the worst affected this time too. The neighbours always check what's happening here, and they get out when they see it's bad.'*

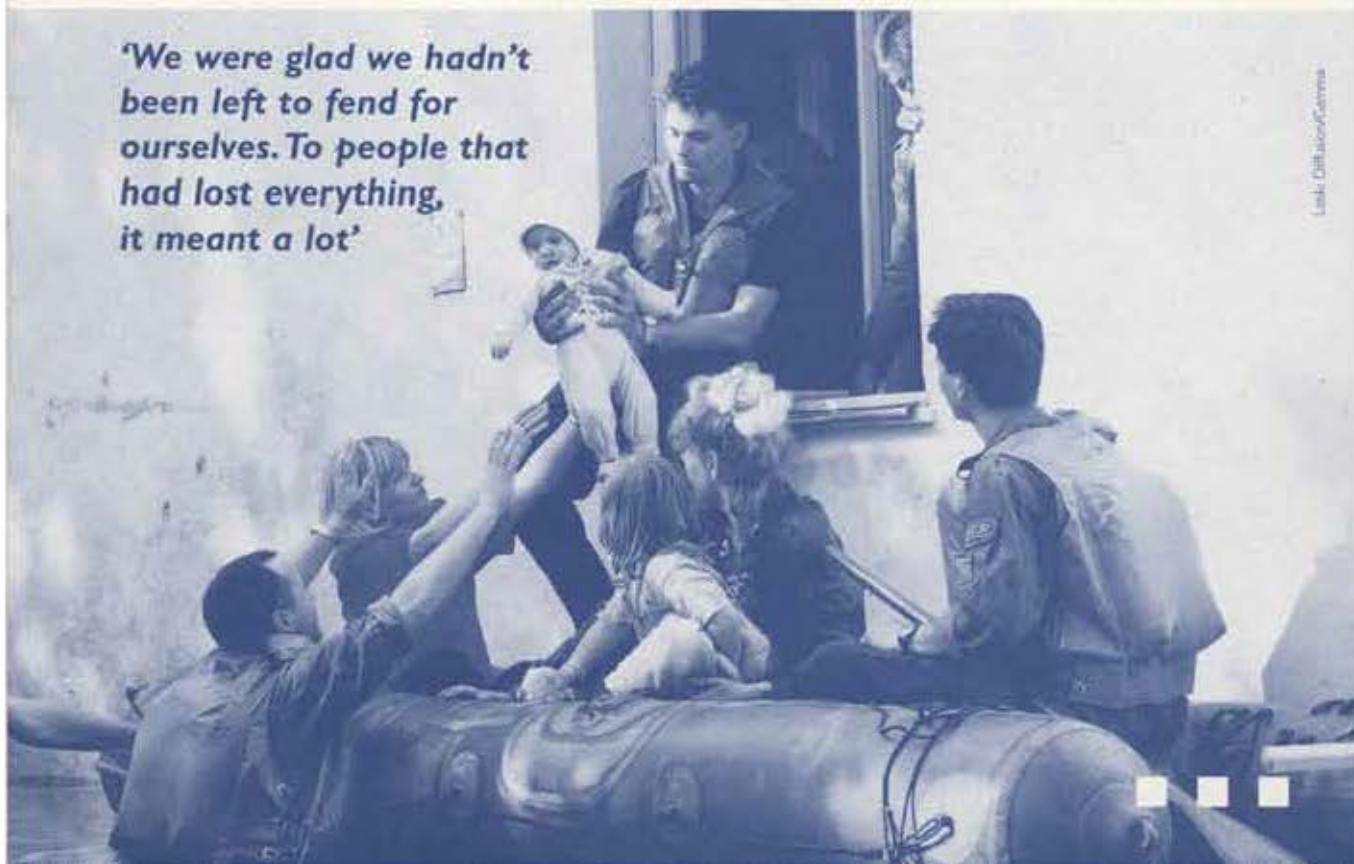
That day, I was supposed to go to work at the factory on the afternoon shift, and I called in to ask for leave in case we got flooded. At first, the water crept up to the doorstep. Then came the big wave. In just half an hour, we had over a metre of water in the house. We only had a few minutes to rescue some of our things, we saved what we could. My son and I moved in with one neighbour, my husband and the horse with another. We managed to save the horse, and fortunately, no-one in our neighbourhood died.

The house was flooded for over a week, the ground around it for much longer. Everything stank of dead fish. It was awful. Then came a plague of mosquitoes — that was unbearable. But we came back as soon as we could, to clean the slime and mud that covered everything in the house. Luckily, the house was not condemned, and we have been trying to renovate it as best we can, but it's far from easy — there's mould and rot everywhere. We don't know what will happen when the frosts come. The winter's been quite mild so far, but if there is a cold snap, the walls could crack under the strain.

As for the future, I don't know how we'll cope. My husband is out of work, and I'm the one that has to keep things going. They may be making people redundant soon at the chemicals factory where I've worked for 14 years, so I don't know if I'll have a job either. Just before the floods, I'd bought some furniture that I was paying off in instalments.

I've seen floods before, of course, but I've never lived through an experience like this. It brought us all close to breakdown. Through the Red Cross, we got some help — macaroni, saucepans, bedclothes, blankets, cleaning products, medicines, kitchen furniture, coal, some paint. I took things round to elderly people who could not get around. We were glad we hadn't been left to fend for ourselves. To people that had lost everything, it meant a lot.'

**'We were glad we hadn't been left to fend for ourselves. To people that had lost everything, it meant a lot'**





## Cambodia

'When my stump is too painful, the neighbour gives me a hand'



**'I've been able to work, I've recovered my dignity, and I know it's even hard to tell that I have an artificial limb'**

**Pan Tol, farmer, Takeo**

*'I was wounded in 1984, while I was clearing brushwood in a forest to make way for a new road. The government was drafting people to work on such projects at the time, I had no choice. I had to leave my village, Prey Sabat, in Takeo, to go to work, and I returned as an amputee. I have had three prostheses since 1984. They have enabled me to go on working on my land.'*

When my stump is too painful, the neighbour gives me a hand. When we're planting or harvesting the rice, the whole family comes out to work — I have six daughters. We just about manage to feed everyone, though if I could afford fertiliser, I could double the yield. But for the first time this year, I haven't climbed up my sugar palms to harvest the sap that we take from the tops of the trunks.

### No more climbing

I feel a bit old, I don't feel like climbing them any more, though I've done so until now, even with my artificial leg. I'm afraid of falling, so I won't do it any more, and I don't have a son to help. That's a pity, as it means we won't make any 'knot chu', a kind of beer, from the juice. We could have done with the extra income.

My eldest daughter, who is about 15, has had to stop going to school because we couldn't afford to pay for books. So she's working at home, with her mother, and helping in the rice paddies. We can only afford to send three of our children to school at any one time. Still, things could be far worse. When I lost my leg, my wife didn't leave me, as often happens to amputees. Many families fear that a handicapped man will just be a drag on their resources, and they abandon them, leaving them to beg if they can. I've been able to work, I've recovered my dignity, and I know it's even hard to tell that I have an artificial limb.

*Pan Tol, 37, was fitted with a new artificial limb at Handicap International's Takeo centre shortly after this interview. Handicap International, an ECHO partner, produces about a thousand prostheses a year in its seven centres in Cambodia. There are about 40,000 amputees in the country, about one in 236 of the population. About 200 new land mine accidents are reported every month.*



**Children are among the new civilian victims of landmines today**

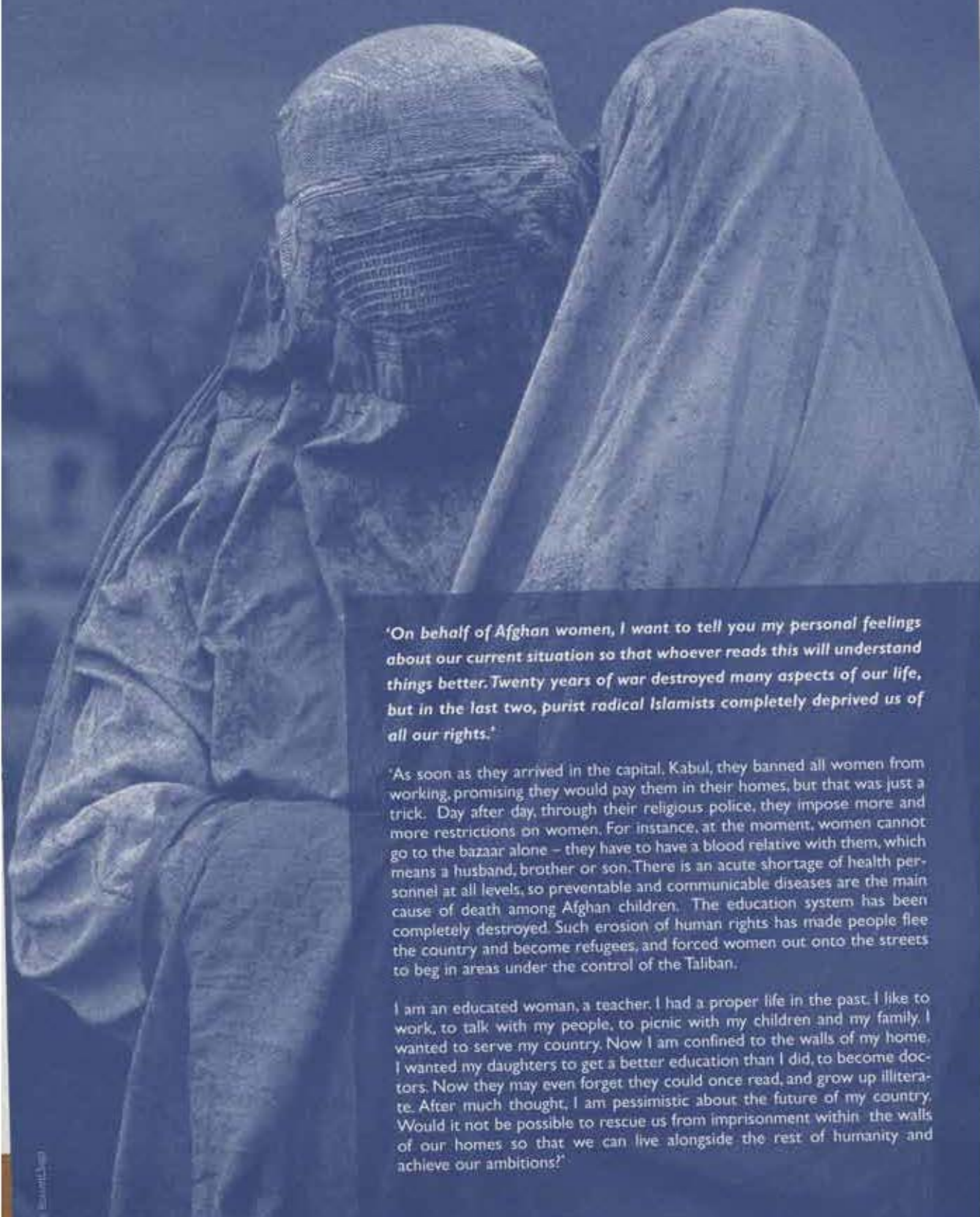


# Voices

## Afghanistan

'Would it not be possible to rescue us from imprisonment within our own homes?'

*Bilqis, 34, mother of four, formerly a teacher in Kabul*



*'On behalf of Afghan women, I want to tell you my personal feelings about our current situation so that whoever reads this will understand things better. Twenty years of war destroyed many aspects of our life, but in the last two, purist radical Islamists completely deprived us of all our rights.'*

'As soon as they arrived in the capital, Kabul, they banned all women from working, promising they would pay them in their homes, but that was just a trick. Day after day, through their religious police, they impose more and more restrictions on women. For instance, at the moment, women cannot go to the bazaar alone – they have to have a blood relative with them, which means a husband, brother or son. There is an acute shortage of health personnel at all levels, so preventable and communicable diseases are the main cause of death among Afghan children. The education system has been completely destroyed. Such erosion of human rights has made people flee the country and become refugees, and forced women out onto the streets to beg in areas under the control of the Taliban.

I am an educated woman, a teacher. I had a proper life in the past. I like to work, to talk with my people, to picnic with my children and my family. I wanted to serve my country. Now I am confined to the walls of my home. I wanted my daughters to get a better education than I did, to become doctors. Now they may even forget they could once read, and grow up illiterate. After much thought, I am pessimistic about the future of my country. Would it not be possible to rescue us from imprisonment within the walls of our homes so that we can live alongside the rest of humanity and achieve our ambitions?'



# Voices

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

'I am no longer afraid about what the future holds. Today, I got a cow...I feel safe again'

Mate Kafadar, Bosnian Croat

*'I'm a Bosnian Croat, born 60 years ago in the village of Donji Prici, Ovcarevo parish, on the road between Turbe and Travnik. Before the war, my life, like that of everyone in the remote villages of Bosnia, was a difficult one. My village was mixed, with Muslims and Croats living together. Relations among us were good and though we had to struggle to survive, we managed to enjoy life.'*

I do not remember the first days of war, but I do remember the first clashes in Croatia, and worrying that they might spread to affect us too. At the time, I said to myself, that is so far away, and I tried not to dwell on such black thoughts. Muslims and Croats had lived together for so long that I did not think it would affect me and my neighbours. I first learned of conflict between Croats and Muslims in Mostar and the surrounding areas, and it spread very quickly. At the start, we still did not think it would be serious in our villages, but the fighting escalated day by day in my parish.

When the first shells exploded here and I was wounded in the leg, I decided to leave. I left with my mother and my wife Ana for Ljubuski in 1993. In just one day, my whole life was left behind on the doorstep. Everything I had been building up there over a lifetime of 60 years was lost in a minute. I headed for Ljubuski, where I knew nobody and did not have anything. I went into the unknown, fearing for myself and for my family.

### Return to Travnik

When I arrived in Ljubuski, a Muslim offered me a home in his house. Although he was a Muslim, he had decided to stay in Ljubuski, and I thought to myself that he was a brave man — unlike me, he had decided to stay in his house. I lived there for three years. During my stay, I was offered all the hospitality and friendship I had always had from my fellow countrymen. With the first signs of improvement in the situation in Travnik, I decided to return. I was the first one to go back. I was not able to return to my own house, since it was completely destroyed, so I got in touch with my neighbour from the nearby village of Pesevici, who was at the time living in Croatia, and he let me move into his house. It was very difficult to start again, but thanks to the aid I got from Solidarités, I managed to survive the hardship. Today, I am a very happy man, and I am no longer afraid about what the future holds. I got a cow from Solidarités and for the first time since the war broke out, I feel safe again. I live for the day when I can return to my home and pick up where I left off.

ECHO has spent ECU 1.5 billion in former Yugoslavia since 1992

For every family that goes back home, there is another that has to find a new roof





## Andean Countries

Many countries in the Andean region endured heavy flooding, mudslides and high tides, believed to be caused by the El Niño phenomenon of freak weather patterns. This disruption in climatic patterns looked set to go on into 1998.

### Bolivia

During the spring of 1997, Bolivia withstood torrential rains for over two months, resulting in serious flooding in much of the country. Some parts of the country experienced drought. Some 5,000 families were left stranded and approximately 30,000 hectares of arable land were destroyed in flooding. ECHO provided relief and medical assistance.

Funding made available: ECU 3.6 million.

### Colombia

Long-running internal conflicts continued to affect the country, and about a million people were forced to leave their homes because of them. ECHO provided them with basic survival kits, food and medical aid.

Funding made available: ECU 4.5 million.

### Ecuador

El Niño provoked heavy flooding, landslides and high tides. ECHO-funded partners distributed food and medical aid, as well as providing temporary shelter and water and sanitation in the regions worst affected.

Funding made available: ECU 2,490,000.

### Peru

Many thousands of people uprooted by internal conflicts started returning once the situation stabilised. ECHO helped rehabilitate housing and provided sanitation facilities and medical support for about 200,000 people. Flooding and mudslides left many thousands homeless, and ECHO helped by funding food distribution.

Funding made available: ECU 5.535 million.

### Venezuela

Although Venezuela was not affected by El Niño in 1997, ECHO implemented a disaster preparedness programme in case of emergency.

Funding made available: ECU 200,000.

## Angola

Humanitarian aid helped to launch reconstruction after 30 years of war, though there were still skirmishes in some parts of the country. ECHO's programme included medical aid, clean water and sanitation facilities. As a result, an estimated 2.3 million people were able to gain access to healthcare in 11 provinces.

Funding made available: ECU 14 million.

## Armenia/Georgia/Azerbaijan

Though the economic situation improved in these countries, many people remained vulnerable, especially in areas of conflict such as Nagorno-Karabach, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. ECHO provided help for elderly people, the handicapped, and large families. Food and medical aid were priorities, as well as drinking water, and the rehabilitation of sanitation facilities and schools.

Funding made available: ECU 14 million.

## Bangladesh

The country was hit by a devastating cyclone in May 1997. Over 100 people died and more than 500,000 were left without homes. ECHO provided materials for approximately 4,500 families to rebuild homes.

Funding made available: ECU 350,000.

## Bulgaria

A political crisis resulted in an appeal for humanitarian assistance. ECHO responded with aid in the form of medical supplies and food.

Funding made available: ECU 1.8 million.

## Chad

Famine struck the northern city of Kanem, where over a fifth of the population suffered malnutrition. ECHO helped by supplying food and special products for young children. ECHO also provided aid to combat the cholera that swept the capital, Ndjamena, and the Logon region. Elsewhere, there were grants to combat insect pests which threatened harvests.

Funding made available: ECU 1.375 million.



### Congo (Democratic Republic of, formerly known as Zaire)

After the capture of Kisangani in March 1997, assistance to the local population and to refugees continued, but became increasingly difficult logistically. ECHO continued medical and nutritional programmes to help those in need. It also helped with the repatriation of Rwandan refugees by air, especially from Kisangani, Mbandaka and Loukolela.

Funding made available: ECU 60 million.

### Cuba

Lack of food and medical supplies were major concerns throughout the country, and an epidemic of dengue fever broke out in the south-east. ECHO's humanitarian aid targeted those most in need: children, women, the elderly and the sick. Healthcare was also provided in remote parts of the country.

Funding made available: ECU 10 million.

### Guatemala

ECHO funding helped to resettle those returning home after a civil war that had dragged on for 36 years. Food aid and water and sanitation projects were among the priorities.

Funding made available: ECU 8.05 million.

### Honduras

Infant mortality stayed among the highest in Central America, despite efforts to improve public health standards. ECHO developed a health programme to prevent epidemics and improve sanitation, especially in isolated communities.

Funding made available: ECU 0.9 million.

### Jordan

For the first time, ECHO gave aid for Palestinian refugees living in camps near Amman. Basic food aid, medical aid and emergency rehabilitation were the priorities.

Funding made available: ECU 0.8 million.

### Kyrgyzstan

The country was one of the poorest in the former Soviet Union, and has been struggling since the break-up of the bloc. ECHO funding covered the supply of medicines, medical equipment and food to those most in need, especially the elderly and disabled.

Funding made available: ECU 2.75 million.

### Lebanon

Humanitarian aid was essential for many of the 350,000 Palestinians living in camps within Lebanon. ECHO provided basic supplies for hospitals and clinics for them. It also helped the Lebanese population, about a quarter of which is living below the poverty line, with medical aid and food aid, as well as rehabilitation.

Funding made available: ECU 3.7 million.

### Liberia

The country saw peace at last after a civil war that lasted more than seven years. Rehabilitation and resettlement programmes were a priority. ECHO focussed on medical aid, and planned to withdraw by February 1998.

Funding made available: ECU 1 million.

### Mexico

Hurricanes Pauline and Rick struck in October 1997, leaving 122 dead in its path. The states of Chiapas, Oaxaca and Guerrero were those worst affected. ECHO funding covered basic necessities, food aid and materials for emergency repairs.

Funding made available: ECU 1.2 million.

### Nicaragua

The country is still struggling to recover from its civil war, and healthcare systems have been among the casualties. ECHO responded to the government's appeal for help in the battle to control epidemics of diseases including malaria, cholera and dengue fever.

Funding made available: ECU 3.8 million.

### North Korea

The country suffered increasingly severe food shortages in 1997. A giant tidal wave left about 29,000 people without homes in August 1997. ECHO provided medical assistance, shelters, clean water and sanitation to assist 2,000 families left homeless.

Funding made available: ECU 20.215 million.



ECHO's global reach



## Palestine

With the peace process almost at a standstill, two million Palestinians living on the West Bank and Gaza Strip stayed in need of humanitarian aid. ECHO provided medical aid to hospitals, clinics, specialised health facilities and kindergartens.

Funding made available: ECU 8.65 million.

## Russia, Including Chechnya

Chechnya is still reeling from damage inflicted during its war with Russia. There has been little reconstruction, and great difficulties in providing survivors with enough drinking water or adequate sanitation. ECHO provided the capital, Grozny, and other cities with essential medical supplies and chlorinated water, as well as carrying out vital repairs to the water and sanitation system.

Funding made available: ECU 3.1 million.

## Sierra Leone

A coup d'Etat in May 1997 led to a period of chaos before an uneasy peace settlement in October. However, at the end of 1997 the situation was more precarious than ever, but ECHO was able to support food and medical aid.

Funding made available: ECU 3.7 million.

## Somalia

Progress towards peace and reconciliation was very uneven, with some parts of the country experiencing a deterioration in security and inter-clan conflicts. In October 1997, severe floods in the south left over 1,900 dead and 230,000 without shelter. ECHO provided life-saving assistance to flood victims, as well as continuing health and nutrition programmes elsewhere.

Funding made available: ECU 7 million.

## Sri Lanka

The country's civil war entered its fourteenth year with little prospect of resolving the conflict. Hundreds of thousands of people displaced because of the fighting needed humanitarian aid. ECHO provided shelter, sanitation and kitchen utensils, as well as assistance for a boat to transport patients and humanitarian aid.

Funding made available: ECU 3 million.

## Sudan

A 15-year-old war civil war dragged on, despite attempts at peace negotiations. Many people fled their homes to escape the fighting and became dependent on humanitarian aid. ECHO continued with food and medical aid, as well as with water, in both government and non-government areas. ECHO also continued to support the ECHO Flight programme in the south.

Funding made available: ECU 31.454 million.

## Tajikistan

The country's civil war ended, but left the economy shattered, throwing people into dependence on humanitarian aid, especially food, and exposing many to a typhoid epidemic.

Funding made available: ECU 14.9 million.

## Thailand

Karen and the Mon ethnic minorities from Burma sought shelter in Thailand because of persecution at home. Most stayed in camps near the Thai border, though some 10,500 Mon people returned to Burma. ECHO provided medical and food aid to Karen refugees in Thailand, and medical aid for the Mon refugees returning to Burma.

Funding made available: ECU 3.26 million.

## Ukraine/Belarus/Russia: Victims of Chernobyl

ECHO supported a programme in the worst-affected areas of Belarus, Ukraine and the Russian Federation to screen children for thyroid cancers and other radiation-related diseases. Screening will continue to check both food and water in highly polluted areas. ECHO also helped distribute medical supplies to hospital facilities.

Funding made available: ECU 1.35 million.







## ECHO in action

### A lifeline for the Horn of Africa

*'Last year, when our field staff in Jalaqssi, Somalia, urgently requested an immediate security evacuation, we informed your office, who not only handled the matter discreetly and efficiently, but kept our Nairobi office informed on an hourly basis. As you are aware, the security situation in Somalia is very precarious, and can become volatile without warning. The need for a professional response to a request for evacuation is essential for NGOs working in the field. ECHO Flight has always responded immediately when called, and has undoubtedly contributed to saving lives among our field staff. This side of the humanitarian air service is vital for humanitarian activities in Somalia. It goes without saying that our operation (or others, for that matter) could not exist without the ECHO Flight service, not just for evacuation, but for the transport of essential supplies.'*

**Alberto Fait, Country Co-ordinator,  
European Committee for Agricultural Training**

This is just one example of the kind of incident ECHO Flight crews have to deal with at their 200 landing strips in Somalia, South Sudan and Kenya. The 65 ground staff face challenges such as air strips being ploughed up into farmland, and armed groups attempting extortion. Poly Stevens, ECHO's air transport advisor, shows a weekly log to prove his point. The quiet veteran of 30-odd years of flying experience points out the medical evacuation of an NGO worker, a burst tyre during a landing in Mogadishu, the security evacuation of an Médecins du Monde team attacked by bandits in El Wak, and a plane coming under fire by militiamen in Kismayu. Against the odds of civil war, banditry and dust storms, ECHO Flights have had no casualties or flight-related accidents since they started in May 1994.

The ECHO Flights serving the Horn of Africa are a unique operation. The service runs six planes from bases in Mogadishu, Nairobi, Djibouti, Manderu and Lokichoggio, making available air transportation for partners. ECHO Flights clock up approximately 10 000 hours of flying time a year. A team of 65 ground staff and 12 air crew serve 135 organisations spread over 200 locations in three countries.

The beauty of it all is that not only are efficiency, flexibility, and security improved, costs are also cut through centralising the essential transportation component of ECHO's humanitarian operation. Better does not always equal more expensive. ECHO Flight ensures a high quality network, helping to prevent duplication, and relieving NGO of the ordeal of having to set up the logistics for flights themselves each time one is needed. NGOs are guaranteed flights that get their staff and cargo in. And most important, they can rest assured that, whenever the need arises, a plane is available at moment's notice to get them out. That can be important if you are based in Mogadishu.

# ECHO in action

**'A plane is available at a moment's notice to get NGO personnel out. That can be important if you are based in Mogadishu'**





'Sound professional training is as important as a heart in the right place'

*An ethnic minority in Afghanistan slowly starving to death because their supply routes are closed, widows suffering the post-traumatic disorders of war in the Balkans, thousands of children lost on the road back to Rwanda. The scale and frequency of such crises in recent years is a challenge to the humanitarian aid workers supposed to relieve the consequences.*



ECHO - P. Zetter

How do you manage a quarter of a million people on the move? How do you set up a food supply for nearly half the population of a capital devastated by war? Would it be acceptable for such aid to break a blockade and become not just a political factor, but also a military one? A decade ago, humanitarian aid workers tended to be well-meaning volunteers. Today, they have to be professionals. Knowledge of International Law, Geopolitics, Epidemiology, Management and Logistics has become as crucial to the aid worker as a heart in the right place.

To improve the professional skills of aid workers, ECHO launched the Network on Humanitarian Assistance (NOHA) in 1993, in co-operation with the European Commission directorate for education. Universities in the network teach a one-year master's course. An intensive two-week introductory session is followed by a five-month general course in a NOHA university. After the core courses, students may opt for specialisation in the second semester. The year concludes with a secondment to an international organisation.

## NOHA expertise in action

*A senior expert in epidemiology unexpectedly met a NOHA course graduate when she went on a mission to Rwanda in November 1997. She was with a team of specialists sent out to assess humanitarian needs, as well as the potential for a transition to development.*

*"We were having tremendous problems with arrangements, when I got a message from one of my assistants in Brussels, saying there was a very efficient human rights officer who could help with planning and back-up support. It turned out to be a former NOHA student, Serge, who graduated about three years ago. He had worked in Yugoslavia, and from there had moved to become a United Nations Human Rights Representative in Rwanda. He helped us with contacts, formal and informal, and with logistics. It was really very gratifying to see someone you had seen as a raw student, now in control of his environment, still with a youthful dynamism, but with the kind of confidence that comes from maturity and experience. You get a feeling of having put a person on their feet."*

*Professor Debarati Guha-Sapir, Université Catholique de Louvain*

### The NOHA network includes the following universities:

- Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium), fax: +322 764 34 41.
- Aix-Marseille III (France), fax: +33 4 42 20 46 51 03.
- Bochum (Germany), fax: +49 234 709 42 08.
- Dublin (Ireland) fax: +353 1 283 73 28.
- Roma (Italy), fax: +39 6 49 91 27 04.
- Deusto-Bilbao (Spain), fax: +34 4 413 90 69.
- Uppsala (Sweden), fax: +46 18 471 19 81.



## Natural disasters: boosting local capacity to cope

*The freak weather patterns associated with El Niño drench the Andean countries of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador with torrential rains, while causing drought elsewhere. They are even associated with the smog that hung over Indonesia in the summer of 1997. Typhoons regularly hit Jamaica, while in Bangladesh, floods force tens of thousands of people to flee their homes.*

The television news headlines about such disasters often seem familiar — haven't we seen this before? Can't anything be done about such seemingly recurrent disasters? ECHO's Disaster Preparedness and Prevention programmes try to do just that. The aim is to prepare people at risk for the possibility of disasters, and, if possible, to introduce measures to reduce the scale of a disaster should it strike. Loss of life and damage to property can thus be reduced, and the response to disaster should be faster, cheaper and more effective.

*Here are some examples of the kind of measures that have been introduced in pilot projects of this type:*

- **Bangladesh:** radio-based early warning systems help people to evacuate before flood waters rise to dangerous levels.
- **Jamaica:** low-cost housing built with materials that do not cause lethal injuries if they fly off in the high-speed winds associated with hurricanes. Sheets of corrugated iron, commonly used for roofing, can turn into giant razor blades when they take off.
- **Vietnam:** mangrove swamps have been replanted to offer protection from storms and typhoons.

ECHO has introduced a new disaster prevention and preparedness programme, known as DIPECHO, with a regional approach to disaster preparedness. The effects of disasters cross natural borders. DIPECHO streamlines all disaster preparedness policies in four regions that are particularly prone to recurrent disasters: the Caribbean, central America, south east Asia and Bangladesh. Regional studies identify the vulnerability and response capacity of the community at risk. A regional framework for action and appropriate programmes are put in place. Pilot projects in other parts of the world continue alongside the regional approach.



### Peruvian Red Cross on alert

El Niño has brought torrential rains to Peru. In the Grau region, a dusty plain on the north coast, some 40,000 villagers could be displaced from shabby homes that are barely adequate even without such rains. The Peruvian Red Cross needs to improve its capacity to cope with such a crisis. Aid workers are trained. Stocks of food and blankets in family parcels are pre-positioned in Red Cross warehouses nearby. When disaster strikes, the Peruvian Red Cross will at least be prepared.

*A leaflet outlining the DIPECHO programme is available from ECHO Information*



## Fine-tuning ECHO's responses

*You're dealing with over a million refugees stranded in a hellhole, in the stifling heat of Zaire or the freezing mountains on the Iraqi-Turkish border. They have no water, no sanitation, no food, not much shelter. This is not the moment to sit back and ponder. When emergency strikes, aid workers have to jump into action. Once the programme gets underway, someone has to ask questions such as: Are the needs of the target group covered? Have we made the best use of resources? Can the programme be improved?*

Evaluation helps ECHO's partners to improve their performance. Often, an outsider can contribute a clearer view than those on the spot: aid workers can get too involved in the action. By sending in independent, external consultants, ECHO aims to get fresh, objective views on its programmes. Evaluations can be carried out while programmes continue, lessons can be learnt, programmes fine-tuned. Evaluations are not intended as school exams, passing or failing programmes. They are a form of vital assistance to both partner and donor, with the aim of improving what we do and the way we do it.

Evaluations are also a way of ensuring ECHO is accountable to the institution's audit authorities and, indirectly, to the European taxpayers who provide ECHO's funds. Evaluations may be done on specific operations, or on ECHO-sponsored programmes in a particular country or region. In 1997, ECHO carried out 37 evaluations.

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina: needs of the elderly highlighted**

A team of ECHO evaluators went to assess food needs in Bosnia and Herzegovina in late 1997. They found that those who fell into a category defined as very vulnerable were less numerous than previously thought. Typically, those identified were elderly people living alone, with no family nearby. But they had other needs that had not been met: access to healthcare, firewood, help with minor repairs, and administration, such as the formalities in getting registered for help. Many were too weak to go out alone, or belonged to minorities afraid to go out in public and ask for help.

As a result of the evaluation, ECHO will go on supporting the World Food Programme, which has reduced the number of beneficiaries it serves to 300,000, from 1.9 million at the start of 1997. Beneficiaries will receive regular WFP foodbaskets, and the reduction in numbers means that WFP will be better able to provide all essentials in its basket. Also as a result of the findings, ECHO will help those identified as being in need via outreach programmes implemented by CARE. Teams of local workers will visit beneficiaries individually, so they have regular human contact, and get the help they need. ECHO plans to work closely with local social service authorities in the follow-up.

*'There will be fewer beneficiaries, so the World Food Programme will be better able to provide all essentials in its family basket'*





## Fast track to financial backing at ECHO HQ

*Khorazan, Iran — An earthquake of 7.3 on the Richter scale strikes on 10 May 1997. The infrastructure of this remote rural province of eastern Iran is shattered, 10,000 houses around Khain and Dirchand are flattened, and 50,000 people are forced out of their houses into the chilly nights of the mountainous countryside.*

The Iranian Red Crescent asks for assistance. Moments later, emergency team from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins du Monde, and Secours Populaire Français are on their way. They assess the needs: food, medicines, tents, mobile rubber bladders to make available drinking water, latrines. Making such purchases at a moment's notice can be quite costly. NGOs keep a contingency reserve in the bank to cover such urgent needs, but they need to keep it topped up to be ready for the next emergency. To meet their needs, ECHO can give exceptionally quick answers to requests for funding when the need arises.

ECHO has fine-tuned financial procedures that clear all administrative hurdles as fast as possible, without neglecting vital accountability.

In the case of Khorazan, there was a special procedure, Jean-Pierre Vanderstraeten, financial administrator says. Three days after the earthquake, the financial unit submitted a proposal to free up funds for the signature of the Commissioner. After 24 hours and consultations with four separate parts of the Commission with an interest, the decision was kicked through. Three days later, the money was earmarked for partners needing financial backing from ECHO. The first advance payments were approved 13 days after requests dated 6 June.

When there is less time-pressure, as in the case of more technical, long-term complex emergencies such as those in Afghanistan or the Great Lakes, the procedure is rather slower. Vanderstraeten hastens to add — 'But we're working to speed those up too.' Member States are involved in clearing such global plans.

However, ECHO has developed fast-track methods of pushing to the limit the Commission's capacity to clear financial decisions. That is what enables humanitarian organisations to rush into action, with the security of financial backing, and without the worry of having to weather bankruptcy later.



*Earthquake victims in Khorazan:  
over 50,000 were forced  
out of their homes*



## ECHO in action

### Artists for humanitarian aid



"L'oiseau vers la fleur": Dutch painter Corneille

During the Dutch Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 1997, the rich cultural heritage of the host country in the world of art provided an opportunity to enlist artists for a humanitarian cause. In a joint venture between ECHO and the Netherlands Red Cross, European artists were invited to donate paintings with a humanitarian theme for an exhibition.

Over 60 well-known artists from all European Union Member States contributed 100 works of art to this innovative project. Among the artists who contributed paintings were Italian Alessandro Mendini, Raul Rodriguez Sanz from Spain, Corneille from The Netherlands, John Kirby from the UK and Rolling Stone guitarist Ronnie Wood. The paintings were subsequently auctioned at the Tropical Institute, Amsterdam in October by Christie's. The event was attended by Princess Margriet, President of the Netherlands Red Cross and Emma Bonino, European Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, before an audience of over 300 potential buyers.

Bringing the children back home: The proceeds from the sale went towards Red Cross tracing and repatriation projects in the Great Lakes area of Africa. The idea is to reunite families; some 80,000 children got stranded during the civil war and subsequent mass movements of refugees. The auction raised over 150,000 hfl (ECU 80,000 approx).

### ECHO TV and RADIO awards



The annual ECHO TV and Radio Awards scheme marked its second year in December. Commissioner Emma Bonino summed up the reason for the scheme like this: "These awards are an opportunity for us to acknowledge the role that radio and television play in making the public aware of humanitarian crises in all their complexity. The stories told bring to life the facts and figures of a situation as nothing else can, and enable us to make the case for helping out wherever and whenever there's a need."

Over 200 entries from all 15 EU Member States reflected the growing importance of the scheme, which aims to encourage responsible, dignified reporting of humanitarian problems. The awards were made at a ceremony in the Théâtre des Capucins, Luxembourg on December 9, 1997 in the presence of Josephine-Charlotte, Grand Duchess of Luxembourg. Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, presented the winners with their trophies.

#### Categories and winners:

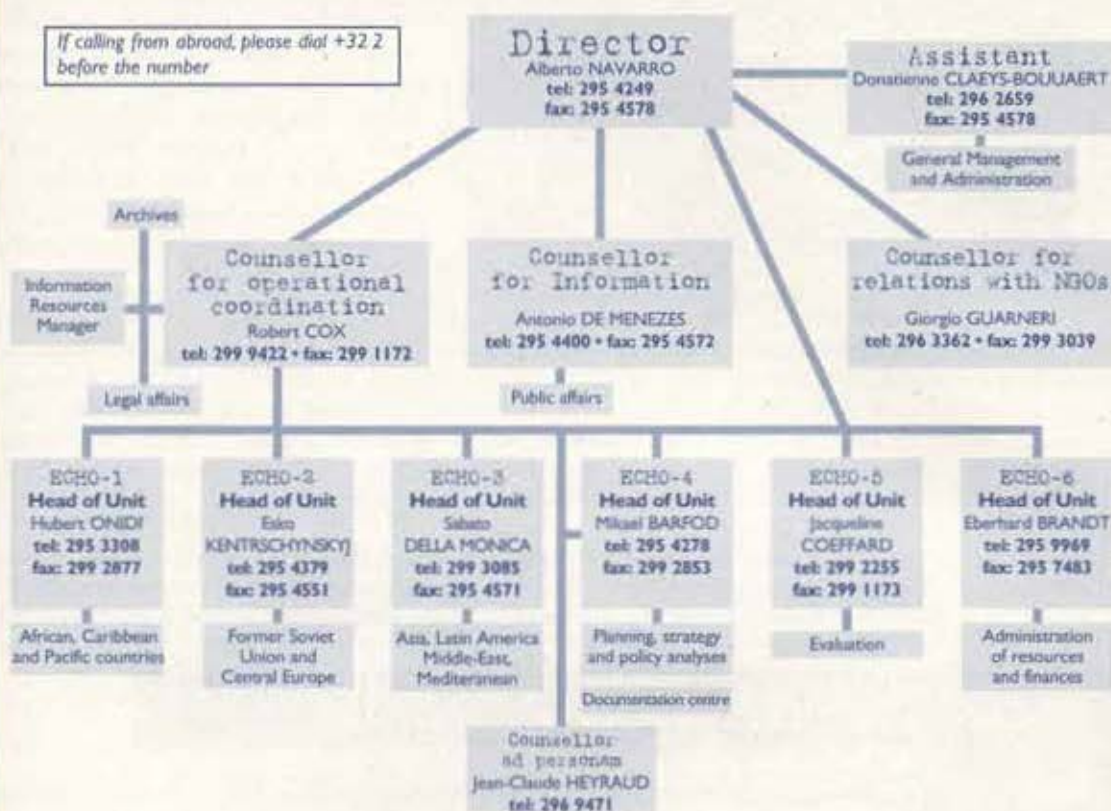
<b>People on the move:</b>	Highlighting the humanitarian consequences of sudden or forced population movements. <i>Rwanda vivint el retorn (Rwanda / The return of the refugees)</i> , TV3 Televisio de Catalunya S.A, Spain
<b>In the minds of people:</b>	Causes and consequences of psychological trauma suffered by individuals and groups as a result of crises. <i>The terror and the truth</i> , Fulcrum Productions Ltd., UK
<b>Forgotten conflicts:</b>	Coverage of protracted conflict situations which are otherwise largely ignored in the news and mainstream media. <i>West Sahara / Die Wüste bebt &amp; der Vergessene Krieg</i> / Phoenix Film, Germany.
<b>Vulnerable Groups:</b>	The plight of the most vulnerable - women, children and the elderly. <i>Non e finita la pace, cicé la guerra (Peace isn't over, the War I mean)</i> , RAI Television, Italy.
<b>Radio Award:</b>	The use of short-wave radio in a conflict situation to promote reconciliation. <i>Russian jails</i> , BBC-Eurofile, UK.
<b>Broadcast Commitment:</b>	Commitment of a radio or TV production to a particular humanitarian campaign. <i>Divided World</i> , Radio Telefís Éireann, Ireland.

The ceremony was organised jointly by ECHO, The Luxembourg Red Cross and the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU and was broadcast live by RTL. The international team of judges included: Juan Luis Cebrian, publisher of *El País*; Irene Bignardi, film critic of *La Repubblica*; Norma Johnson, Director of Communications, Amnesty International, UK; Idrissa uedraogo, African film-maker; Michel Rocard, European Parliament and Gaston Thors, Chairman of CLT-UFA.

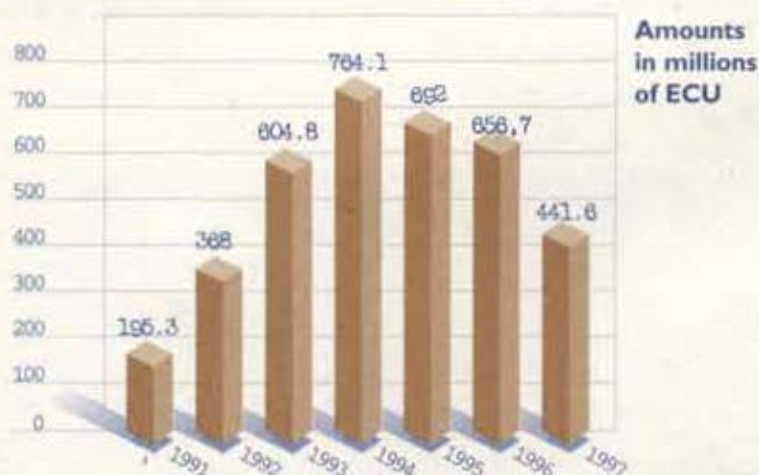
**ECHO**  
television  
& radio  
awards



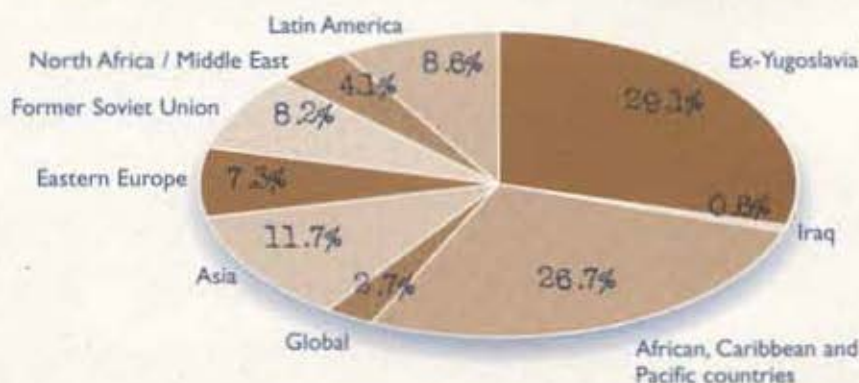
## Who's who



## Financial decisions for EC humanitarian aid 1991-1997



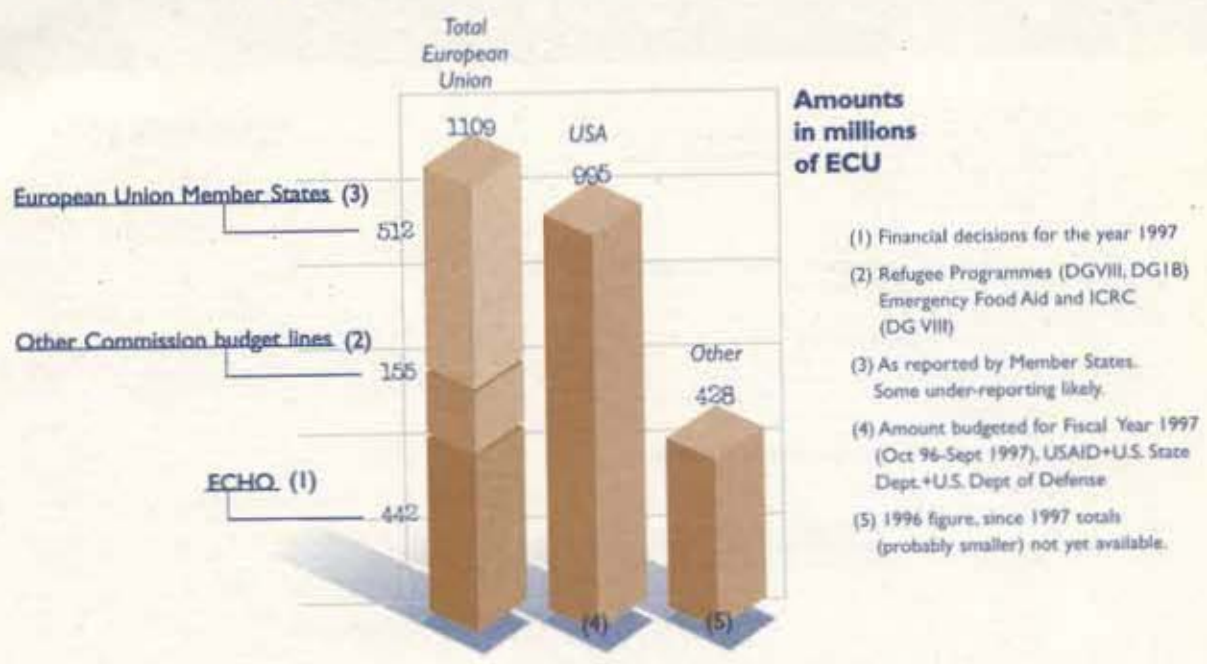
## Financial decisions for humanitarian aid by region in 1997



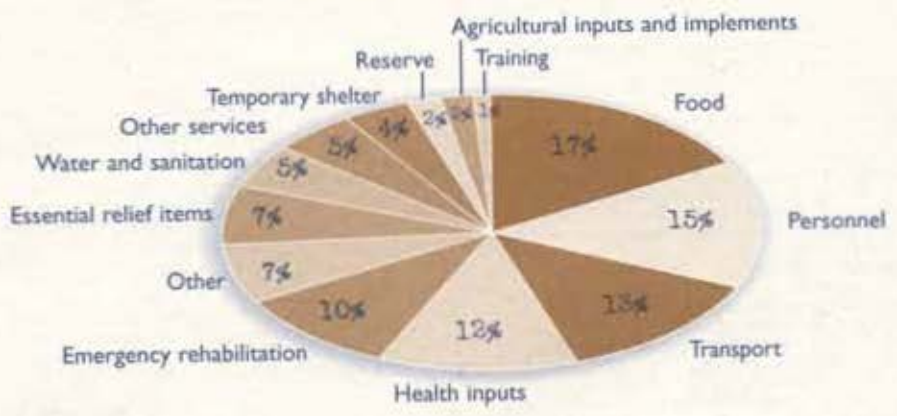


# Facts & Figures

## Rough estimate of global humanitarian aid 1997



## Breakdown of expenses



## Value of contracts





## ECHO's partners in 1997

NAME	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
A.C.S.U.R. - ASOCIACION PARA LA COOPERACION CON EL SUR LAS SEGOVIAS	SPAIN
ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE - E	SPAIN
ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM - F	FRANCE
ACTION NORD-SUD FRANCE	FRANCE
ACTIONAID	UNITED KINGDOM
ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AGENCY	GERMANY
AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT	FRANCE
AIDE MEDICALE INTERNATIONALE FRANCE	FRANCE
AMAR APPEAL	UNITED KINGDOM
ASOCIACION NAVARRA NUEVO FUTURO	SPAIN
ASISTENCIA MEDICA INTERNACIONAL	PORTUGAL
ASSOCIATION POUR L'ACTION HUMANITAIRE	FRANCE
ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE VOLONTARI LAICI	ITALY
ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA PER LA SOLIDARIETA' TRA I POPOLI - I	ITALY
ASSOCIAZIONE PER LA PARTICIPAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO	ITALY
ASSOCIAZIONE TRANSAFRICA SVILUPPO	ITALY
ASSOCIAZIONE VOLONTARI PER IL SERVIZIO INTERNAZIONALE	ITALY
ATLAS LOGISTIQUE	FRANCE
AUSTRIAN HELP PROGRAMME	AUSTRIA
AGA KHAN FOUNDATION	UNITED KINGDOM
AGENCY FOR COOPERATION AND RESEARCH IN DEVELOPMENT	UNITED KINGDOM
ASOCIACION PARA LA COOPERACION CON EL SUR LAS SEGOVIAS	SPAIN
ASSOCIACAO PARA A COOPERACAO INTERCAMBIO E CULTURA	PORTUGAL
BRITISH RED CROSS	UNITED KINGDOM
CARE DEUTSCHLAND	GERMANY
CARE FRANCE	FRANCE
CARE INTERNATIONAL - B	BELGIUM
CARE INTERNATIONAL - UK	UNITED KINGDOM
CARE OSTERREICH	AUSTRIA
CARITAS AUSTRIA	AUSTRIA
CARITAS DENMARK	DENMARK
CARITAS ESPANOLA	SPAIN
CARITAS SWITZERLAND	SWITZERLAND
CATHOLIC FUND FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT	UNITED KINGDOM
CENTRO REGIONALE D'INTERVENTO PER LA COOPERAZIONE	ITALY
CESTI COOPERAZIONE E SVILUPPO	ITALY
CHILDREN CONCERN INTERNATIONAL - NL	THE NETHERLANDS
CHILDREN IN CRISIS	UNITED KINGDOM
CHILDREN'S AID DIRECT - UK	UNITED KINGDOM
CHRISTIAN AID	UNITED KINGDOM
COMITATO ACCOGLIENZA PROFUGHI BERGAMO	ITALY
COMITATO DI COORDINAMENTO DELLE ORG. SERVIZIO VOLONTARIO MILANO	ITALY
COMITATO EUROPEO PER LA FORMAZIONE E L'AGRICOLTURA	ITALY
COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE PER LO SVILUPPO DEI POPOLI	ITALY
COMITE D'AIDE MEDICALE ET DE PARRAINAGE SANS FRONTIERES	FRANCE
CONCERN UNIVERSAL	UNITED KINGDOM
CONCERN WORLDWIDE	IRELAND
COOPERACCIO - E	SPAIN
COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE	ITALY
COOPERAZIONE ITALIANA NORD SUD	ITALY
COOPERAZIONE PER LO SVILUPPO DEI PAESI EMERGENTI	ITALY
CROIX-ROUGE BELGE	BELGIUM
CROIX-ROUGE FRANCAISE	FRANCE
CROIX-ROUGE - BUREAU DE LIASON	BELGIUM
CRUZ ROJA ESPANOLA	SPAIN
DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL - DANSK FLYGTNINGEHAELP	DENMARK
DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE / GERMAN AGRO ACTION	GERMANY
DEUTSCHER CARITASVERBAND E.X.	GERMANY
DEUTSCHES ROTES KREUZ	GERMANY
DIAKONISCHES WEIK E.V. - BROT FLUR DIE WELT	GERMANY
DISASTER RELIEF AGENCY	THE NETHERLANDS
DEUTSCHE ARZTEGEMEINSCHAFT FÜR MEDIZINISCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT	GERMANY
EMERGENCY	ITALY
ENFANTS DU MONDE/DROITS DE L'HOMME	FRANCE
EQUILIBRE FRANCE	FRANCE
ERIKSHJALPEN	SWEDEN
EUROCITIES ASBL	BELGIUM
FARMACEUTICOS SIN FRONTERAS	SPAIN
FRANCE LIBERTES (FONDATION DANIELLE MITTERRAND)	FRANCE
GOAL	IRELAND
GREEK COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY	GREECE
GRUPPO VOLONTARIATO CIVILE	ITALY
GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORG. OF AMERICAN STATES	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL - B	BELGIUM
HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL - F	FRANCE
HELP AGE INTERNATIONAL	UNITED KINGDOM
HELP-HILFE ZUR SELBSTHILFE E.V.	GERMANY
HET NEDERLANDSE RODE KRUIS	THE NETHERLANDS
HILFE FÜR DIE KINDERKLINIK MINGA	GERMANY
HILFE FÜR KINDER IN NOT E.V. (CHILDREN'S RELIEF)	GERMANY
HUMANITARIAN CARGO CARRIERS	GERMANY
INITIATIVE DEVELOPPEMENT	FRANCE
ISTITUTO COOPERAZIONE UNIVERSITARIA	ITALY
INTERMON	SPAIN
INTERNATIONAL AID SWEDEN	SWEDEN
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)	SWITZERLAND
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES (IFRC)	SWITZERLAND
INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP	CROATIA
INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
INTERSOS (ASSOCIAZIONE UMANITARIA PER L'EMERGENZA)	ITALY
KESSAP DIMITRA - GR	GREECE



# Facts & Figures

## NAME

## COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

NAME	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
KURDISH LIFE AID	UNITED KINGDOM
LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION	SWITZERLAND
MALTESER HILFSDIENST	GERMANY
MARIE STOPES	UNITED KINGDOM
MEDAIR SWITZERLAND	SWITZERLAND
MEDICINS DU MONDE - GR	GREECE
MEDICINS DU MONDE - F	FRANCE
MEDICINS SANS FRONTIERES - CH	SWITZERLAND
MEDICINS SANS FRONTIERES - F	FRANCE
MEDICINS SANS FRONTIERES/ARTSEN ZONDER GRENZEN - B	BELGIUM
MEDICINS SANS FRONTIERES/ARTSEN ZONDER GRENZEN - NL	THE NETHERLANDS
MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS	UNITED KINGDOM
MEDICAL EMERGENCY RELIEF INTERNATIONAL	UNITED KINGDOM
MEDICO INTERNATIONAL	GERMANY
MEDICOS DEL MUNDO - E	SPAIN
MEDICOS SIN FRONTERAS - E	SPAIN
MEMISA MEDICUS MUNDI NEDERLAND	THE NETHERLANDS
MINES ADVISORY GROUP	UNITED KINGDOM
MISSION AIDE DEVELOPPEMENT DES ECONOMIES RURALES	FRANCE
MISSION ENFANCE	FRANCE
MOVIMIENTO POR LA PAZ, EL DESARME Y LA LIBERTAD	SPAIN
MOVIMONDO MOLIS	ITALY
NORWEGIAN PEOPLE'S AID	NORWAY
NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL	NORWAY
NUOVA FRONTIERA	ITALY
OEUVRES HOSPITALIERES FRANCAISES DE L'ORDRE DE MALTE	FRANCE
OKIDS - COOPERACAO E DESENVOLVIMENTO	PORTUGAL
OSTERREICHISCHES HILFswerk INTERNATIONAL - AUSTRIAN ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT & COOPERATION	AUSTRIA
OSTERREICHISCHES ROTES KREUZ	AUSTRIA
OXFAM-SOLIDARITE	BELGIUM
OXFAM - UK	UNITED KINGDOM
PAZY TERCER MUNDO	SPAIN
PHARMACIENS SANS FRONTIERES - F	FRANCE
PREMIERE URGENCY	FRANCE
QANDIL PROJECT	SWEDEN
RED BARNET	DENMARK
RESPONSE, RELIEF, RESETTLEMENT AND REHABILITATION	UNITED KINGDOM
SANDY GALL'S AFGHANISTAN APPEAL	UNITED KINGDOM
SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND - UK	UNITED KINGDOM
SCOTTISH EUROPEAN AID	UNITED KINGDOM
SECOURS CATHOLIQUE - CARITAS FRANCE	FRANCE
SECOURS INTERNATIONAL DE CARITAS CATHOLICA	BELGIUM
SECOURS POPULAIRE FRANCAIS	FRANCE
SOLIDARIDAD INTERNACIONAL	SPAIN
SOLIDARIETA CON IL TERZO MONDO - I	ITALY
SOLIDARITES	FRANCE
SOS ENFANTS	FRANCE
SOS KINDERDORF INT.	AUSTRIA
STICHTING OECUMENISCHE HULP (DUTCH INTERCHURCH AID)	THE NETHERLANDS
SUOMEN PUNAISEN RISTI (FINNISH RED CROSS)	FINLAND
SVENSKA RÖDA KORSET (SWEDISH RED CROSS)	SWEDEN
SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION	SWITZERLAND
TERRE DES HOMMES - CH	SWITZERLAND
THE HALO TRUST	UNITED KINGDOM
THE SALVATION ARMY - UK	UNITED KINGDOM
TRIANGLE	FRANCE
TROCAIRE	IRELAND
UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND	SWITZERLAND
UNITED NATIONS - FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION	ITALY
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES	SWITZERLAND
UNITED NATIONS - WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME	ITALY
UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS	KENYA
UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST	PALESTINE
VETERINAIRES SANS FRONTIERES - B	BELGIUM
VETERINAIRES SANS FRONTIERES - CH	SWITZERLAND
VETERINAIRES SANS FRONTIERES - F	FRANCE
VOLONTARI ITALIANI SOLIDARIETA PREDI EMERGENTI	ITALY
WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WORLD VISION	GERMANY
WORLD VISION - AUSTRIA	AUSTRIA
WORLD VISION - UK	UNITED KINGDOM





# Facts & Figures

## Financial decisions for humanitarian aid in 1997

COUNTRY / REGION	DECISION IN ECU	COUNTRY / REGION	DECISION IN ECU
<b>EX-YUGOSLAVIA</b>	<b>132,990,000</b>	<b>ASIA</b>	<b>51,615,000</b>
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	105,000,000	AFGHANISTAN	8,120,000
CROATIA	14,495,000	BANGLADESH	350,000
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA	13,495,000	CAMBODIA	5,535,000
<b>ACP</b>	<b>118,056,940</b>	CHINA	300,000
ANGOLA	33,000,000	IRAN	3,000,000
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	700,000	INDIA	490,000
BURKINA FASO	470,000	INDONESIA	2,055,000
CHAD	875,000	LAOS	2,020,000
CHAD + REGION (crop protection)	2,900,000	MYANMAR	675,000
COMOROS	450,000	NORTH KOREA	20,215,000
DJIBOUTI	70,000	PHILIPPINES	980,000
EASTERN & CENTRAL AFRICA	4,000,000	SRI LANKA	3,000,000
ETHIOPIA	4,620,000	THAILAND	3,250,000
GAMBIA	395,000	VIETNAM	1,625,000
GHANA	456,940		
GREAT LAKES REGION	13,000,000	<b>NORTH AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST</b>	<b>18,150,000</b>
GUINEA BISSAU	240,000	ALGERIA	7,600,000
HAITI	2,000,000	JORDAN	600,000
HORN OF AFRICA (Air Transport)	2,000,000	LEBANON	3,500,000
KENYA	4,715,000	PALESTINE/ISRAEL	6,450,000
LIBERIA	1,070,000		
MADAGASCAR	1,650,000	<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>38,085,000</b>
MALI	7,600,000	BOLIVIA	3,600,000
MOZAMBIQUE	700,000	BRAZIL	200,000
NIGER	2,900,000	COLOMBIA	4,500,000
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	250,000	CUBA	10,350,000
SIERRA LEONE	3,700,000	ECUADOR	3,075,000
SOMALIA	6,900,000	GUATEMALA	6,050,000
SUDAN	20,954,000	HONDURAS	900,000
TOGO	310,000	MEXICO	1,200,000
UGANDA	2,131,000	NICARAGUA	2,800,000
		PARAGUAY	210,000
<b>CIS</b>	<b>36,050,000</b>	PERU	5,200,000
ARMENIA	2,100,000		
AZERBAIJAN	6,100,000	General Studies	494,500
BELARUS	117,000	Evaluation	1,400,000
GEORGIA	5,800,000	Information	2,635,000
KIRGYZSTAN	2,750,000	Disaster Preparedness	7,034,000
RUSSIAN FED	3,167,000	Miscellaneous	150,000
TAJIKISTAN	14,900,000		
CHERNOBYL Disaster	1,000,000	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>441,611,954</b>
UKRAINE	116,000		
<b>EASTERN EUROPE</b>	<b>32,201,514</b>		
ALBANIA	16,295,000		
BULGARIA	1,800,000		
CZECH REPUBLIC	4,150,000		
HUNGARY	12,500		
POLAND	9,931,514		
SLOVAKIA	12,500		
<b>IRAQ</b>	<b>2,750,000</b>		

ACP: African, Caribbean and Pacific countries

CIS: Commonwealth of Independent States



## About ECHO INFORMATION

ECHO is committed to raising awareness about the issues at stake in humanitarian aid today. It runs an Information Unit which produces both general and specialist information on our operations. We have a range of publications, including this Annual Review. ECHO News, a four-page newsletter, is published quarterly in English and French, while ECHO Files provides briefings on specific countries or topics. We also publish leaflets on specific aspects of our activities, such as the landmines issue, disaster preparedness, and the NOHA course for humanitarian workers. ECHO also works in cooperation with TV companies and partner organisations to produce audiovisual material on ECHO-funded projects.

The Information Unit also supports events such as exhibitions and seminars in cooperation with the Member States, focusing on the general public in the country holding the rotating presidency of the European Union. For more information about ECHO's publications and activities, contact:

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