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EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AID TO CAMBODIA

Ireland, as President in Office of the European Community, has announced details of the contribution the EC and its member states are making to the international relief efforts to alleviate starvation in Cambodia following the pledging conference for emergency humanitarian aid to that country.

Intensely preoccupied by the ravages of famine and disease affecting the people of Cambodia, the Council of Ministers of the European Community agreed, at its meeting on October 30, to make a further amount of \$35 million available for a continuing increased humanitarian emergency aid in favor of the people of Cambodia, including those coming into Thailand.

Taking into account the \$7 million from Community resources already made available, and further taking into account bilateral contributions of the nine Member States of the European Community amounting to \$13.5 million, the overall contribution of the European Community and its Member States, announced by the Irish Presidency, thus amounts to \$55.5 million, as of today.

In addition, the European Community agreed to supply, if need be, skimmed milk powder in the amount of \$1.4 million.

The Council of Ministers of the European Community expressed its appreciation of the efforts of the Thailand Government, and stated its determination to give assistance to the Government of Thailand to cooperate in solving this problem.

The aid will go to two and a half million people in all, of which 2.2 million will be helped through Pnom Penh and 300,000 via the Thai border, under Khmer Rouge control.

The emergency program is designed to meet these people's essential requirements for three months.

The Council's go-ahead will mean that food, medicine and seeds can now be bought and transported to Cambodia.

All the aid will go through the international organizations that have said they are able to reach the population. They are increasing their staff in order to deal with these operations.

The Commission has also decided, with the agreement of the Nine Member States, urgently to send 5,000 tons of rice (equal to \$1.5 million) to Cambodia. Three thousand tons will be delivered to the International Red Cross and UNICEF via Thailand and 2,000 tons will be distributed from Pnom Penh by the Catholic Committee against hunger. This food aid is in addition to the financial aid mentioned above.

This latest effort by the EC represents a quadrupling of what it had already pledged. While there is concern in Community circles that not all the aid will necessarily reach the starving, ministers of the nine EC member states regard the present situation as so critical that an urgent and generous response is required.

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