

COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT

ASSOCIATED COMMITTEE:
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND
FOOD SAFETY

HEARING OF JANEZ LENARČIČ

COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE

(Crisis Management)

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2019

BRUSSELS

1-002-0000

IN THE CHAIR: TOMAS TOBÉ
Chair of the Committee on Development

(The hearing opened at 18.32)

1-003-0000

Chair. – I would like to welcome everyone to this hearing with the Commissioner-designate for crisis management, Janez Lenarčič, from Slovenia. We have three hours and 25 questions in front of us, some of which will be asked by our colleagues from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), which is associated with this hearing. Before we start, I would like to go over the formalities and the setting for this hearing.

Let me remind you that, in line with the Guidelines of approval of the Commission, Parliament evaluates the Commissioner-designate on the basis of their general competence, European commitment and personal independence. It also assesses their knowledge of their portfolio and their communication skills.

Before the hearing, the Commissioner-designate has replied in writing to a preparatory questionnaire. The written answers have been distributed to Members in all languages. We do note that the Committee on Legal Affairs has raised no objection to holding this hearing, and as I said previously, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety is associated with this hearing.

Next, as for the structure of this debate, the Commissioner-designate is invited to make an opening oral statement of no longer than 15 minutes. He will then also have five minutes at the end of the hearing for a closing statement. After the introduction, there will be time for 25 questions from Members of the European Parliament. The debate will be held in accordance with slots of five minutes each, with one minute for a question and two minutes for answers from the candidate Commissioner. In the case of a follow-up question, the question should not be longer than one minute, and also the reply.

The first round will be of seven questions, and they will be asked by the representatives of the political groups. The second round of 18 questions is based on the overall distribution of questions among the political groups, including also representative from the non-attached Members.

Colleagues, I would like to remind you that it is very important that you strictly keep within your allocated speaking time. Today we also have interpretation in 23 languages, and you are therefore welcome to speak in your own language. However, please try to remember to speak slowly, because then everything will be perfectly translated so that we understand each other. And, just like the hearing we had before, please also try to remove your headphones when you ask questions, and then we will not have technical problems.

I would also like to inform you that this debate will be streamed live at Parliament's Internet site, and it will also be possible to access a video recording of the hearing on the same site.

Mr Lenarčič, again, a warm welcome to our committee. Before I give you the floor and you can do your opening remarks, I would like to emphasise the importance of your portfolio for this committee, and say that we do hope to see great collaboration from you and the Commission if you should be accepted as nominee. Humanitarian aid is central to the work of this committee. Over 100 million people worldwide are in need of humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian crises

are becoming more frequent, longer and more complex, driven by conflicts, natural disasters and climate change. Only humanitarian funds will never be enough, but this committee looks forward to cooperating with the Commission to ensure that sufficient humanitarian funding is made available and disbursed in the most transparent and efficient manner.

The European Union has made important international commitments regarding humanitarian aid in recent years, and they will now be put into place by the next Commissioner. We very much look forward to hearing from the Commissioner-designate today and the plans for how you will work with the commitments that have been made at the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain and how it will be implemented, and exactly what role Parliament can play in monitoring this.

Mr Lenarčič, again, a warm welcome to this committee. The floor is yours for 15 minutes.

1-004-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Honourable Chair, honourable Members, I have been handed a double honour: firstly, to be nominated as Slovenia's candidate to join the next College of Commissioners; and secondly, subject to your agreement, to take on the responsibility for humanitarian aid and civil protection under the banner of 'crisis management'.

As a Slovenian, I can most strongly relate to the fact that what is today the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations was created in 1992 also as a response to the wars on the territory of former Yugoslavia. That same year, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees set up a field office in Slovenia. Just before graduating from law school, I joined them to help take care of refugees fleeing to or through Slovenia. This gave me an opportunity for my first, modest, contribution to humanitarian work.

More than a quarter of a century on, I am before you as a Commissioner-designate. If entrusted with this task, I can assure you I will dedicate all my energies and almost three decades of experience in international and European fora to help alleviate suffering and provide relief to people affected by crises, thereby confirming European solidarity – a value I strongly believe in.

The EU is widely recognised as a responsible global leader in humanitarian aid, and we should take pride in that. However, in order to strengthen its global role, the EU must upgrade its capacities to be able to help more people in need, swiftly and efficiently. Currently, the EU reaches out to over 100 million people – people in need – each year, both inside and outside the Union. This directly affects the lives of men, women and children, without discrimination on the basis of their nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.

It is reassuring to note that some 90% of Europeans support EU action in both humanitarian aid and civil protection. I also know these endeavours have traditionally enjoyed strong support in this Parliament. I can assure you that I have every intention to work with you in partnership, to keep you informed, and to listen to your views and concerns.

As much as my nomination means an extraordinary opportunity to serve the European Union, I am also acutely aware of the plethora of challenges the portfolio of crisis management entails. Today, ever more people around the world need humanitarian assistance. Almost 71 million people are forcibly displaced – and not only because of conflict. Each year, some 70 000 people die, and a further 70 million are injured, left homeless or in need of emergency assistance as a result of natural disasters. Along with the casualties, the costs are high and they continue to grow: since 2010, natural disasters have caused over EUR 13 billion in damage each year in Europe alone.

What is worse, the trends we face are worrying. Humanitarian crises last longer and are more complex than ever before. Natural and man-made disasters occur with increasing frequency. More and more people are affected, including in Europe. By 2050, there may be over 140 million internally displaced people in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America. How many of them will pick up what has been left to them and migrate to other places, including to Europe, in search of a better life? The resources globally available for crisis management do not match today's needs – let alone future projections. The funding gap is widening.

Then, there is climate change, rapidly transforming the risk landscape – adding more strain to an already strained system. In report after report, we learn more about climate change and its impacts: rising sea levels; increasingly frequent and intense storms; longer periods of drought; more devastating floods; life-supporting ecosystems under duress.

But do we need another report to convince us of the gravity of climate change? The young generation obviously does not. They know for a fact that 'our house is on fire'. To make matters worse, parts of the world hit hardest by the effects of climate change are also among the most fragile and least resilient. Countries of the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, to cite just a couple. This is the stark reality that I will face as Commissioner for Crisis Management.

I realise that the picture I have painted looks bleak, but I am not resigned. If anything, I look at the challenges I have just outlined also as opportunities – opportunities to do things better and differently, to build on what works, and to fix what does not. I also realise that in many ways I can be grateful for the determination and achievements of my predecessors, of highly motivated staff of DG ECHO, international partners and, most importantly, individual relief workers. Due to their tireless contributions, things, by and large, work.

In addition, the EU is highly respected for its strict adherence to basic humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. I intend to firmly defend these principles also in the future.

Turning now to my priorities I have set, if confirmed. Firstly, as Commissioner for Crisis Management, as well as the European Emergency Response Coordinator, my first goal will be to support people in need, as rapidly and efficiently as possible, in full respect for humanitarian principles. In this regard, I will maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of our crisis response so as to reach as many people in need as possible. This can only happen if we are able to work together better. In line with the mandate given, I intend to strengthen the EU's Emergency Response Coordination Centre, so that it can respond swiftly and effectively to a broad range of crises.

Also highly important, if confirmed, I will strongly focus on advocating globally in support of international humanitarian law.

In my contacts with state and non-state actors, I will firmly urge the preservation of humanitarian space. It is unacceptable that humanitarian actors are increasingly being targeted, and their access to people in need regularly blocked.

Secondly, in line with the proposed mandate, I intend to intensify the EU's efforts to prevent disasters from occurring in the first place, while also strengthening our capacity to adapt to a changing environment. In light of climate change projections, protracted conflicts and increasing instability around the world, we – the European Union and its Member States – must work in an integrated manner. Our failure to do so risks jeopardising the attainment of the Sustainable

Development Goals, which is a collective responsibility. In this respect, I welcome the working approach envisaged by the President-elect whereby each Commissioner will need to ensure the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals within their respective policy area.

On the side of prevention, I intend to work closely with the High Representative / Vice President and other Members of the college responsible for areas such as climate change, the environment and development. The aim is to ensure that disaster risk reduction becomes an integral part of our efforts to enhance the resilience of our societies and ecosystems – starting with the European Green Deal.

Honourable Members, humanitarian aid and disaster response must be seen as instruments of last resort – they should step in when all else has failed. Avoiding such failure must remain our first objective. When we have to mobilise humanitarian aid, our goal should be to depend on it for as short a time as possible. In other words, we need to move people out of the ‘emergency ward’ as fast as possible into recovery, so that they can benefit from more long-term, sustainable solutions.

Here, security and development policies play a particularly crucial role. In fragile countries, especially those with protracted crises, we need to work towards a humanitarian-development-peace nexus. We must take local specificities into account, deliver the best possible assistance to those in need, while paying particular attention to the most vulnerable groups, like women and children.

This will require new partnerships, as well as innovative tools. Here in particular, I want to do more to empower local actors in delivering aid on the ground. They know the context best, they can work more efficiently, and they know what works. At the same time, we all know that despite efforts, not everything can be prevented. Recent events, including the deadly forest fires in Portugal, have shown that we must get better at preventing disasters, and we must be better prepared to respond when prevention fails.

This is why I intend to vigorously pursue a strengthened implementation of rescEU – the enhanced Union Civil Protection Mechanism – in close collaboration with the Member States. We need reinforced capacities to deal with forest fires, acute medical emergencies, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear disasters. Here I also count on the support of the European Parliament to help make this a reality.

My third priority will be to enhance the visibility of EU crisis management. I want to build on the strong support the European Union’s humanitarian aid already enjoys among European citizens, and I want to reassure them that every single euro spent in this area is a euro well spent.

Our most important audience should be EU citizens and beneficiaries. I will, therefore, place high priority on communication with them.

Honourable Members, I will not hide the fact that these priorities and objectives come at a cost; but, rather than speaking of costs, I would prefer to speak of investment: in this case, investment in our common future. For this, I call on your support in securing the proposed 30% increase in the humanitarian aid budget as part of the next Multiannual Financial Framework. This is essential for delivering our ambitious agenda over the next five years and beyond.

I would also value your continued support to ensure efficient and effective budgetary spending. For my part, I will guarantee that funding is disbursed to those in need, transparently and on the

grounds of sound financial management. In carrying out my responsibilities, I will stand ready to work closely with both committees present here.

If I succeed in winning your trust, I would want us to look back in five years' time and see that we have made a difference: that we have helped to alleviate the suffering of many; that we have contributed to more resilient communities and individuals, a healthier and more resilient natural environment, and to greater trust of Europeans in their future.

(Applause)

1-005-0000

György Hölvényi (PPE). – Tisztelt biztosjelölt Úr! Az Egyesült Nemzetek Menekültügyi Főbiztosának 2009. júliusi adatai szerint 186 604 szíriai menekült tért vissza Egyiptomból, Jordániából, Libanonból, Törökországból az elmúlt években. Szíriában nincs béke, diktatúra van, a fenti számok azt jelzik mégis, hogy az ország bizonyos területein megkezdődött az újjáépítés. A harcok során Szíriát elhagyó 5 millió menekült közül várhatóan sokan fognak még a visszatérés mellett dönteni a következő hónapokban. Megoldásra vár annak a megközelítőleg hatmillió belső menekültnek, IDP-nek a kérdése is, akik Szíria határain belül várják, hogy elhallgassanak a fegyverek.

Ezek az emberek őseik földjén akarják megteremteni a létezéshez szükséges alapvető feltételeket. Köztük a keresztény kisebbségek tagjai is az üldöztetés legkülönbözőbb borzalmaiból éltek át. Az újrakezdéshez minden segítséget meg kell adnunk. Több mint 8 éves háborút követően olyan nélkülözhetetlen, hangsúlyozom, humanitárius szükségleteket kell biztosítani számukra, mint a legalapvetőbb infrastruktúra, az ivóvíz, az egészségügyi ellátás és az oktatás. Ezért, hogy a szíriaiak élhessenek a szülőföldjükön való megmaradás jogával, biztosítani kell számukra ezeket az alapvető körülményeket. Ezen igényekre való tekintettel kérdezem tisztelt biztosjelölt urat, hogy kívánja segíteni a Szíriába hazatérő menekülteket alapvető humanitárius szükségleteik kielégítésében?

1-006-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I will pursue the principled position when it comes to returns. That means we will support returns and promote returns that are safe, that are dignified and that are sustainable, and – perhaps even more importantly – that are voluntary. For the time being, my assessment is that the conditions are still not there in Syria for such returns to take place. I agree with you completely that the reconstruction of Syria will require enormous investment, but we're not there yet, for obvious reasons. The conditions for other EU instruments and tools are also not there – development assistance in particular.

We are not forgetting about internally displaced persons within Syria. Actually, the Commission is providing the bulk of the assistance to these people through neighbouring countries, but also through Damascus. In doing so, in providing in-terrain aid for IDPs and refugees of Syria, we do not make any distinctions on the basis of religious belief, in line with the principles that I mentioned already in my opening speech – the principles that govern humanitarian assistance. Among them is the principle of impartiality, which I intend to vigorously defend. This principle means that we go with humanitarian aid where it is most needed, without regard to any personal characteristics, including religious beliefs. Having said that, I can confirm to you that the Commission has also been supporting and assisting members of Christian communities who have been victims of persecution, or who have been among refugees, and this assistance is taking place both in Syria as well as in Northern Iraq.

1-007-0000

György Hölvényi (PPE). – Köszönöm a választ! Az Afrikában kialakuló vallási és etnikai konfliktusok magukban hordozzák az újabb humanitárius válsághelyi gócok kialakulását.

Egyetért-e Ön azzal, hogy az Unió humanitárius politikáját a helyi igényekhez mérten, a helyben történő segítség elve mentén kell megfogalmazni? Készen áll-e arra, hogy a tagállami humanitárius ügynökségek jó gyakorlatait felhasználja?

1-008-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I'm not sure, honourable Member, If I got this question right – so I apologise if I misunderstood it – but also in Africa I will insist that humanitarian assistance goes where it is needed most, on the basis of the principle of impartiality. We go where there are needs.

In doing so, we rely on our partners, partners that come from the United Nations system, like UNICEF, like UNHCR, like the World Food Programme, and also to a comparable degree to non-governmental organisations.

In line with our commitments, taken in the framework of the grand bargain, I will also insist on involving, through these partners, local civil society, local actors, because as I said in my opening speech, they are the ones who know the local environment best and they're the ones that that can provide humanitarian assistance in the most effective manner.

1-009-0000

Norbert Neuser (S&D). – Welcome and thank you Commissioner-designate. The question is coming from behind, so it's not a dangerous question. Nevertheless, I will continue in German.

Sie haben in Ihrem Statement gesagt, dass wir mehr lang anhaltende Konflikte und Naturkatastrophen haben und wirksame Hilfe brauchen. Wir brauchen schnelle Nothilfe, und wir brauchen eine flexible Verzahnung mit der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit und den zivilen Krisenpräventionen. Fragile Staaten sind nicht in der Lage, Grunddienstleistungen aufrechtzuerhalten. Es gilt, die Bevölkerung beim Wiederaufbau einzubeziehen und die Resilienz der Menschen zu stärken. Wir haben hier den Nexus, die Verknüpfung, von humanitärer Hilfe und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Wie planen Sie als neues Kommissionsmitglied, den Nexus als Konzept wirksamer umzusetzen, und wie beurteilen Sie den Ansatz bei Pilotprojekten in Ländern wie Tschad, Nigeria, Sudan und Uganda?

1-011-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Fortunately, this is a rotating chair, so it's no problem if there is a question from behind. First of all, I would like to underline that our humanitarian aid activities are fully complementary with civil protection activities. There is no contradiction in that. There is room for both tools, both mechanisms when we deal with emergency responses, but also when we deal with measures like prevention and preparedness.

Nexus is something that I value very much, and it has already proven its worth when it comes to Nexus between humanitarian and development activities. I intend to pursue that. Why? First of all, because we don't want humanitarian aid to be necessary forever. I don't think that that is in our interests. I also don't think that would be in the interests of the beneficiaries. I think that in their interests, as well as in ours, is that they are lifted out of their situation of dependency on humanitarian aid. Here is where I see a role for development, the so-called humanitarian development Nexus. I will advocate the involvement of both my colleague for international partnerships, Commissioner-designate Urpilainen, and her Commission services, to get involved as soon as possible from the outset, because if you tackle long-term needs and the root causes of the assistance situation, this can also facilitate the transition from humanitarian aid to development cooperation. Recently this Nexus has been expanded by including the peace component. This also makes sense because there are situations, for instance in Somalia, where you cannot pursue development cooperation because of the security situation there. So we need to

work on peace in Somalia if we want to work on development, and we need to work on development if we want to lift people from a situation of dependency.

1-012-0000

Norbert Neuser (S&D). – Mein Kollege Hölvényi hat das Beispiel Syrien genannt, und ich denke, das ist eine besondere Herausforderung. Wie stellen Sie sich die Zusammenarbeit mit dem Kommissionsmitglied für Entwicklung und mit dem Hohen Vertreter für Außenpolitik und Vizepräsidenten Borrell vor? Und wie glauben Sie, dass Sie bei beiden Partnern das zum Anliegen machen können, was wir im Ausschuss unter humanitärer Hilfe und der Stärkung der Resilienz im Sinne der Agenda 2030 sehen?

1-013-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you, honourable Member, for this follow-up. As you know, according to the plan presented by President-elect Ms von der Leyen, I am to be part of this external action cluster that is to be chaired by the High Representative/Vice-President for Common Foreign and Security Policy. I think this is a good solution, because humanitarian aid is undoubtedly part of the European Union's external action. However, it is a very special part. It's a part which is governed with a clear set of principles that are different from whatever guides our other external action activities. So my intention is to work closely with colleagues in this external cooperation cluster, and at the same time to defend the humanitarian space and humanitarian principles.

1-014-0000

Charles Goerens (Renew). – Monsieur le commissaire désigné, parmi les principes qui fondent l'action humanitaire de l'Union européenne et des autres acteurs d'ailleurs, celui de l'impartialité me semble être l'un des plus importants.

Les acteurs des Nations-Unies, la Croix-Rouge internationale et la Croix-Rouge au niveau national, les grandes organisations nationales ou internationales actives dans ce domaine sont impartiales. En effet, lorsque quelqu'un a besoin d'aide, nul besoin de savoir s'il est dans le camp qui est le mien ou s'il est dans le camp adverse. ces acteurs n'ont pas à se poser cette question: le seul critère qui doit justifier son action, c'est celui de la situation de détresse dans laquelle se trouvent les peuples ou les populations qui ont besoin de leur aide. Faillir à ce principe serait un grand danger.

Je le dis parce que l'Union européenne a un large éventail de possibilités d'intervention, elle dispose de différents outils, comprenant notamment l'aide humanitaire. Si je puis me permettre de vous faire une recommandation, en tant que parlementaire fort de quatre législatures d'action humanitaire dans cette commission, c'est de défendre bec et ongles ce principe s'il était attaqué. En effet, s'il venait à être attaqué et si le commissaire en charge cédait à la tentation de répondre à d'autres demandes, il entamerait non seulement la réputation de l'action humanitaire, mais il mettrait aussi en danger les acteurs de l'Union européenne sur le terrain.

1-015-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you for the recommendation, I value it very much, especially coming from a person like yourself with such extensive experience in this particular field. I would like to say the following. I don't see this adherence to these principles as just, you know, some dogmatic thing.

The adherence to these principles, including the principle of independence, of neutrality, this is an operational necessity. We cannot afford to be perceived by let's say any side, anybody involved in an armed conflict, as being on the other side, because if we are perceived as such, we would endanger the access to humanitarian assistance by the affected population. We would endanger the affected population itself and, above all, we would endanger the safety of humanitarian

workers. So respect for this principle, I'm aware, I'm fully aware and thank you again for pointing this out. I'm aware this is the sine qua non for the European Union's humanitarian aid.

1-016-0000

Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE). – Bienvenue, Monsieur le commissaire désigné. J'ai une question qui n'est pas très éloignée de celle de mon collègue.

Vous êtes donc commissaire à la gestion des crises. Il n'y a plus le terme «humanitaire» dans votre libellé, c'est un peu dommage. Je voulais vous poser cette question: sur quels critères vous basez-vous pour intervenir dans une crise humanitaire? En effet, lorsqu'il y a des catastrophes naturelles – je pense aux Bahamas avec le cyclone, à Haïti avec le tremblement de terre –, là c'est clair, tout est détruit, l'Europe intervient. Mais qu'advient-il lorsque la situation est moins tranchée?

Prenons l'exemple de ce qui s'est passé en Grèce, d'ailleurs dans le sillage des mesures d'austérité imposées par l'Europe à la Grèce, entre autres. Quand les gens n'avaient plus accès aux médicaments, quand certaines femmes ne pouvaient plus recevoir leur traitement anti-cancéreux ou qu'il n'était plus possible de faire vacciner les enfants. Ces problèmes relèvent-ils, selon vous, de l'aide humanitaire?

Alors, à quel niveau mettez-vous le curseur? Quels sont vos critères d'intervention dans ces cas particuliers?

1-017-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I would first like to say a word about the title of this Commissioner: I think the intention was to make it clear that there is one member of this Commission who is responsible for the emergency response in crisis situations. Obviously, humanitarian aid is part of the European Union's emergency response, but it is a distinct part, and I have already gone through that distinct part governed by distinct principles and I will insist on that.

Now, your question is really a question for all of us. My answer would be that, first, we go on the basis of the needs assessment. When we assess that there is a need, we should go. And, in accordance with the principle of impartiality, if this need is within the European Union, we should go within the European Union. I don't think that we could deny humanitarian assistance to an affected population within the European Union for conceptual or other reasons. That would be at odds with the principles that I have already mentioned several times.

So, in principle, my answer would be that yes, if necessary, we should also go and do humanitarian work within the Union. Actually, it has already happened once: it happened during the migration crisis, when humanitarian aid was delivered within the European Union, to Greece, to help Greece face the challenge.

1-018-0000

Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE). – Voici ma seconde question, en lien avec le tremblement de terre à Haïti.

Comment allez-vous faire le lien, Monsieur le futur commissaire, entre situation d'urgence et développement? Parce que, quand lorsque vous avez envoyé des aliments à Haïti, ceux-ci ne correspondaient pas à l'alimentation de la population haïtienne. Alors quelle cohérence? Les aliments envoyés doivent correspondre à ce que les gens mangent.

En ce qui concerne les semences, des semences étrangères, souvent des OGM d'ailleurs, ont souvent perturbé l'organisation agricole par la suite. Quelle stratégie allez-vous mettre en œuvre

pour préserver la cohérence entre l'aide humanitaire et l'aide au développement? Car vos interventions en urgence ont des conséquences par la suite.

1-019-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Yes indeed this is a challenge. It is a challenge for various reasons, among other reasons also because the procedures that we follow for humanitarian assistance are more flexible, of course because we need to react quickly in order to save lives, alleviate suffering, and the procedures that are in place for allocating development aid. But I think these kinds of challenge can be overcome. They can be overcome by good cooperation and I will cooperate – I intend to cooperate very well with my colleague Ms Urpilainen. I already met with her, we discussed this challenge and she agrees that we need to work on this because the sooner these two arms of European Union external action work together, the better.

1-020-0000

Bernhard Zimniok (ID). – Herr Lenarčič! Ich glaube, wir sind uns alle einig, dass wir Hilfe leisten müssen – egal wo auf der Welt unsere Hilfe benötigt wird. Aber ich glaube, wir müssen gar nicht weit gehen, denn wir haben vor unserer Haustür, an unseren Außengrenzen eine veritable Krise – eine Krise, die durch einen anhaltenden Migrationsstrom ausgelöst wurde. Wir müssen sicherstellen, dass wir alle illegalen Aktivitäten, die eine direkte oder indirekte Bedrohung für unsere Bürger in Europa darstellen oder die finanziellen Interessen der Mitgliedstaaten bedrohen, verhindern, begrenzen und stoppen. Es ist deshalb unerlässlich, dass die EU alles in ihrer Macht Stehende unternimmt, um das illegale Einschleusen von Wirtschaftsmigranten zu beenden, und zwar nachhaltig, wie der moderne Begriff so sagt.

Sie muss weiterhin sicherstellen, dass das kriminelle Geschäftsmodell der Menschenhändler – unabhängig davon, ob es sich hierbei um Staatsangehörige eines Drittstaats, eines Mitgliedstaats oder um Angehörige von irgendwelchen NRO handelt – nachhaltig unterbunden wird.

Welche konkreten Maßnahmen planen Sie angesichts dieser Herausforderungen, und wie wollen Sie die Wirtschaftsmigration wirkungsvoll an unseren Türen unterbinden?

1-021-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – First I would like to underline the fact that humanitarian aid is not a migration management instrument. The European Union has other instruments for that area, and humanitarian aid is not one of them.

Second, when we assess whether there is a need for humanitarian assistance, we usually focus on people that are forcibly displaced, mainly refugees. That doesn't mean that we would deny humanitarian assistance to migrants, let's say economic migrants, not at all. As I said earlier, we have other instruments in place, but if there is also a need for humanitarian assistance, we would also provide that. Actually we are doing that, for instance, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is unable to cope with the migratory pressure. We go there, even though some of the migrants are clearly people who are most likely economic migrants and not refugees. These are so-called mixed migration flows, but we provide humanitarian assistance on the basis of the need and not of the status, that's why we would also go in such areas.

1-022-0000

Bernhard Zimniok (ID). – Ich habe Ihre Worte sehr wohl vernommen, aber ich sehe das immer noch – da Sie ja auch im Krisenmanagement tätig sind – als eine Krise, und diese Krise kann jetzt nicht nur auf irgendeinen Vulkanausbruch und die Hilfe daran reduziert werden. Sondern mir geht es darum, die Bürger Europas zu schützen. Denn der EU ist es ja nicht mal gelungen, ihre Grenzen zu schützen. Terroristen sind eingesickert, und wir haben Waffen nach Europa gebracht.

An all diese Probleme anknüpfend möchte ich trotzdem noch mal die Aufmerksamkeit auf eine ähnlich schwere Bedrohung lenken, die bekämpft und eingedämmt werden muss, und das ist auch eine Krise. Um unsere eigenen Bürger zu schützen – im Zuge Ihres Mandats wird da sicher noch einiges von Bedeutung auf Sie zukommen. Wie bereits gesagt, scheitert die EU bereits an der Sicherung unserer Grenzen, und deshalb sind mehr als offensichtliche Gefahrenquellen bisher nicht verhindert worden. Welche konkreten Maßnahmen planen Sie denn, um die Bürger – jetzt spreche ich wieder von einer kommenden, leicht möglichen Krise – vor hier nicht mehr verbreiteten Krankheiten zu schützen? Denn diese Menschen bringen ja Krankheiten rein, die in Europa nicht mehr bekannt sind, die insbesondere von den illegalen Migranten und Flüchtlingen eingeschleppt werden. Wie wollen Sie die damit verbundenen Gesundheitsrisiken für unsere Bürger so gering wie möglich halten? Denken Sie nur an Ebola.

(Zwischenrufe)

Was eine Schande ist, sind Sie, liebe Leute hier. Wir denken an die Bürger Europas. Dafür sitzt Ihr hier, dafür werdet Ihr bezahlt, und nicht, um irgendetwas in der Welt gutzumachen, ihr Bessermenschen!

1-023-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I would like to say that we don't have a migration crisis. There was a migration crisis in 2015-2016, but now, compared to that period, things are more or less under control. Yes, there are migrant movements. Some of them are people who are in need of international protection. Some others are those who just want a better life, which is a legitimate desire, but I would say that in my view, this situation is now more or less under control. It is dealt with by the Commissioner for Home Affairs, which is where it belongs, and as a future crisis coordinator, I don't think that this would now be treated as an emergency situation, where an emergency response would be in order.

1-024-0000

Joanna Kopcińska (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowny Panie! W ostatnich latach społeczność humanitarna zwiększyła swoje zaangażowanie w sektorze prywatnym, tworząc partnerstwa między agencjami pomocowymi i korporacjami czy też wprowadzając nowe technologie o różnym potencjale współpracy. Wczoraj kandydatka na komisarza do spraw współpracy międzynarodowej podkreśliła znaczenie roli sektora prywatnego we współpracy na rzecz rozwoju. W związku z tym moje pytanie jest następujące: co Pan jako kandydat na komisarza myśli o roli sektora prywatnego w pomocy humanitarnej? Czy nowa Komisja będzie starała się zwiększyć rolę sektora prywatnego, wychodząc poza tradycyjne ramy, w jakich postrzegana jest pomoc humanitarna?

1-025-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I think this is a very interesting question when we look ahead, and when we have to deal with the fact that there is an increasing funding gap. The latest situation is that 44% of humanitarian needs are unaddressed because of the lack of funding. So we should look elsewhere. We should look at the possibility of involving the private sector. When we do so, one thing should be made clear: this should not be done at the expense of our adherence to the principles that govern humanitarian assistance. That's clear.

Second, I would also say that nobody should be in a position to make business, so to say, out of humanitarian assistance, that should also not be possible. It should not be an option. Humanitarian aid is a noble mission. It is not a commercial activity and should never become one.

Having said that, I still see the possibility for the greater involvement of the private sector. Actually we have witnessed recently, under the current Commissioner, and we have seen an interesting

expansion in the use of innovative approaches to humanitarian aid delivery, like cash transfers in the form of debit cards.

I can easily imagine that in the private sector, a banking institution, would be kind enough not to charge all its usual fees and things like that in order to make its own little contribution to humanitarian assistance, for instance. That's one example. Or when we still have refugee camps in some places that private companies would assist in equipping them, for instance with solar panels, and that would also be something that could be considered.

But I repeat: there should be no space for the commercialisation of humanitarian assistance. There should be no space for that.

1-026-0000

Joanna Kopcińska (ECR). – Zgadzam się z Pańskimi uwagami. W związku z tym, że przedstawił Pan kilka propozycji, nie mam dodatkowych pytań.

1-027-0000

Miguel Urbán Crespo (GUE/NGL). – Nosotros lo primero que queríamos comentar es que las soflamas xenófobas deberían estar fuera de este tipo de audiencias. En segundo lugar, queríamos decir que nos ha sorprendido mucho que se haya retirado —como ya ha dicho, además, otra diputada— la cuestión de la ayuda humanitaria del título de la cartera.

No solo nos ha sorprendido a nosotros, sino que le ha sorprendido también a la sociedad civil. Y no solo nos sorprende, sino que nos preocupa, justamente porque usted ha dicho que la ayuda humanitaria no es un instrumento de gestión de la crisis y así se decidió en el consenso europeo en 2007. Entonces, ¿eso es que la ayuda humanitaria está fuera de esta cartera, o no? Lo digo porque ha salido justamente del título.

Pero nos ha alegrado mucho que en su intervención haya hablado de que una de sus prioridades es la defensa del Derecho humanitario. Un Derecho humanitario que está en riesgo en muchas partes del mundo.

Si esa es su prioridad, mi pregunta es, ¿qué va a hacer a lo largo de su mandato para defender justamente ese Derecho humanitario? ¿Hablará, por ejemplo, de suspender acuerdos comerciales? ¿O propondrá alguna medida de sanción a los países que incumplan ese Derecho humanitario?

1-028-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I think I did mention in my opening speech the importance of international humanitarian law and my commitment to defend it, because, as I said, there are ever more violations of humanitarian law. We see how humanitarian infrastructure – not just civilian infrastructure – is deliberately targeted. We see how humanitarian aid is blocked and its access to the affected population prevented. What will I do about this? First of all, I will speak up about it. I will raise my voice. I will condemn all violations of international humanitarian law. That's what I will do.

Second, I intend to work with those organisations that have privileged access to armed actors, be it state armies or non-state armed actors, to draw their attention to the importance of respecting international humanitarian law. One organisation – just for illustration – that has such privileged access in most cases is the International Committee of the Red Cross, and I count on cooperation with them to instil, in all conflict situations, better respect for international humanitarian law.

The third thing that I intend to do – and you know that the European Union has some training missions in the security sector, the military sector – is to insist that such trainings include topics like international humanitarian law, gender issues, and things like that.

1-029-0000

Miguel Urbán Crespo (GUE/NGL). – Hay un problema. En esta Cámara estamos demasiado acostumbrados a levantar la voz contra las injusticias y contra las violaciones del Derecho humanitario. Cuestiones concretas. Yo creo que eso es lo importante, y le planteo tres cuestiones concretas y tres casos concretos para saber qué haría usted.

El primero. Usted ha hablado de disparar o de atentar contra objetivos humanitarios. Eso lo hemos visto en Israel con Palestina. ¿Qué haría en el caso de una violación flagrante del Derecho humanitario como la que estamos viendo en el caso de Israel y Palestina?

¿Qué haría en el caso de Turquía con el pueblo kurdo? ¿O qué haría, por ejemplo, con Marruecos y el pueblo saharauí?

Son tres casos de flagrante violación del Derecho internacional humanitario sobre los que esta Cámara suele alzar la voz pero no suele adoptar ninguna medida concreta. Arabia Saudí y Yemen, por ejemplo. ¿Ha habido embargo, al final, de armas? No.

¿Qué hará? Es la pregunta.

1-030-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – When I speak up in cases of violations, I will do so publicly, but I will also use all the available channels – diplomatic, discreet, informal or through organisations, like I mentioned – to persuade all the relevant actors, armed actors in a given situation, to respect international humanitarian law.

I don't have the power to investigate, and without the power to investigate I cannot, for instance, say up front whether a violation of international humanitarian law was intentional – as we suspect it was, for instance, in Syria, where we suspect that certain humanitarian infrastructures were deliberately targeted, – or if it was an accident of some sort that might have happened in some other situations. So, without clear answers on that, I will limit myself to speaking out publicly against violations, wherever they happen, and using all channels – formal and informal – to work with those responsible for respecting international humanitarian law to do so.

1-031-0000

Hildegard Bentele (PPE). – Sehr geehrter Herr designierter Kommissar Lenarčič! Ich möchte gern aus den *Political Guidelines* von Ursula von der Leyen zitieren, ganz kurz auf Englisch:

'Europe has a responsibility to help the countries hosting refugees to offer them decent and humanitarian conditions. To this end I support the establishment of humanitarian corridors.'

Meine Frage lautet: Wie stehen Sie zu der Idee von humanitären Korridoren? Wie und wo würden Sie solche einrichten?

1-034-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I don't think I'm in a position to interpret what the President-elect might have in mind, but I can offer you an illustration of humanitarian – I wouldn't call them corridors, but humanitarian movements. You know that there is a situation right now on one of the Greek islands – all Greek islands that are close to the Turkish shore are overburdened with migrants. So what we need there – and what the Greek authorities are already doing – is to ensure that this situation is remedied. If you cannot build larger capacities on the island, then you have to move these people to the continental part of Greece. That's how it is. You cannot keep people in such conditions, because we saw what happened. There was also a tragic loss of life of a mother and daughter, and we should not allow such things to happen in Europe. I

can't see us reconciling ourselves with such things happening in the European Union. This should not happen.

There are other situations where you must have humanitarian corridors and that is where, for instance, in situations of military conflict, you need to evacuate civilians in order to prevent casualties or an aggravated humanitarian crisis. And in those situations, there should be humanitarian corridors established for civilian non-combatants to be transferred to a safer location.

I hope I was able to answer your question.

1-035-0000

Ich bin natürlich auch weit davon entfernt, mich in Interpretationen dessen zu verlieren, was Frau von der Leyen meinte. Aber sie hat es ja als Thema angesprochen. Deshalb, glaube ich, ist es auch ein wichtiges Thema für uns hier. Ich glaube auch, dass es eher in die Richtung geht, humanitäre Korridore dort einzurichten, wo auch die Krisen sind.

Vielleicht nochmal zu meiner Frage: Wo vor Ort, also bei Konflikten, können Sie sich momentan vorstellen, dass die Einrichtung von Korridoren vielleicht in den nächsten Monaten notwendig sein könnte?

1-036-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I can actually imagine many places where such a measure would be necessary and needed. One situation is Yemen. Yemen is probably the worst humanitarian crisis that we have at the moment, with the largest number of people in need of humanitarian assistance, around 20 million people in Yemen alone. We have war. We have a very ugly war going on. So yes, there should be a way to protect non-combatants, to protect civilians – especially the vulnerable groups – and move them to a safer place outside the conflict zone.

1-037-0000

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor Lenarčič, el cambio climático ya no hay quien lo pueda negar. Usted hizo referencia al mismo en su primera intervención justamente, y todos los expertos ratifican que aproximadamente quinientos millones de personas —imaginemos toda la población de la Unión Europea— deberán desplazarse en los próximos cincuenta años. Los estudios indican que hay regiones de Asia como Bangladés, o México en América Latina, o Etiopía en África, que serán las más afectadas.

El cambio climático pondrá en riesgo el agua y la comida del planeta. ¿Estamos preparados en la Unión Europea para afrontar esta posible futura crisis migratoria que ocasiona el cambio climático?

Los migrantes por motivos climáticos son el rostro humano del cambio climático. Las crisis se vuelven cada vez más graves, más complejas y día tras día miles y miles de personas huyen del hambre y huyen de la destrucción de sus propias poblaciones. Sin embargo, la respuesta nacional, internacional y de la propia Unión Europea a estos desafíos ha sido limitada.

Por lo tanto, la pregunta es, ¿cómo va a abordar la Comisión la falta de estatuto legal de tales refugiados climáticos?

1-038-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – That is a very topical issue. I think that that we need to do much more and much faster in the area of facing the challenges posed by the impact of climate change that we already feel. You have mentioned some places in Africa. Yes, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa are the regions which already very much feel the impact of climate change, and

there are already movements of millions of people that are induced by this impact of the climate change that has already happened so far.

I would be hesitant, nevertheless, to call these people climate refugees. I think that we should leave the term 'refugee' to the category that is very precisely defined in the United Nations Convention related to the status of refugees. I'd rather say that these are people who have been displaced due to climate change. Because they can be displaced, and most are displaced within the countries. And, as you know, the United Nations definition of a refugee is somebody who has left his or her own country. Most of the climate-induced displacements take place within countries, and we should also help these people.

How do we help them? One thing is prevention. I intend to work very closely with the Executive Vice-President responsible for the European Green Deal, because we first have to do our homework here at home in Europe: reduce emissions and reduce our climate footprint. We should then work with others around the world to do the same. But what we can no longer prevent, we should work on adaptation.

1-039-0000

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor Lenarčič, efectivamente, ahí está el problema —las previsiones son alarmantes—, la protección de esas personas a las que usted no llama refugiados climáticos. Pero justamente ahí está el problema. Si les llamamos refugiados climáticos les podemos ofrecer todo un paquete de protección.

Esas personas no están cubiertas. Como bien ha dicho, la Convención de Ginebra, del año 51, no las incluye, y por eso creo que es importante avanzar en la regulación europea. Mientras el mundo se ponga de acuerdo, creo que desde Europa podemos avanzar en darles la figura de refugiados climáticos.

Por lo tanto, me gustaría arrancarle un compromiso. ¿Tiene previsto desde la Comisión avanzar en esta figura del refugiado climático y no llamarles solamente desplazados climáticos? Y le pediría el favor de que no haga caso de las proclamas xenófobas que hemos escuchado esta tarde en esta audiencia.

1-040-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I of course listened to all the comments, but that certainly does not mean that I agree with all of them. On the contrary, there were some with which I clearly disagree.

Now I do commit to work, especially with the United Nations because the United Nations is the custodian of the UN Convention on the status of refugees. I will work with our partners on the definition of the phenomenon that you describe because one thing is clear: these people need protection. We need to work also on prevention, and we need also to work on climate adaptation. If we do nothing there will be millions, millions of people on the move and we need to prevent that, we need to help them adapt.

Yes I commit to work, especially with our partners in the United Nations system, to achieve a good workable definition for these people who clearly are in need of assistance.

1-041-0000

Chrysoula Zacharopoulou (Renew). – Monsieur le Commissaire désignée, dans les zones de conflits et de crises, les femmes et les filles sont les plus vulnérables et subissent viols, mariage forcé et esclavage sexuel. Au vu et au su de la communauté internationale, ces crimes sont commis de manière répétée et le plus souvent en toute impunité. En tant qu'acteur de premier plan en

matière d'aide humanitaire, l'Union a le devoir d'apporter une réponse urgente pour protéger ces femmes et ces filles.

Dans vos réponses écrites, vous vous engagez à promouvoir la prévention des violences sexuelles. Comment allez-vous mettre en œuvre concrètement cet engagement et comment comptez-vous contribuer à la mise en œuvre de l'approche stratégique de l'Union pour les femmes, la paix et la sécurité, au travers de votre portefeuille?

1-042-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I cannot imagine humanitarian aid without addressing, taking special care to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups, especially women and girls. In our humanitarian work obviously women and girls are often exposed to the danger of sexual and gender-based violence, or even worse are victims of it. So our humanitarian aid should bear in mind this specific situation of women and girls, and should include measures in all the stages of our humanitarian work – prevention, protection. Through measures, they can be very simple measures I understand, in a refugee compound you can do a lot for the safety and protection of women and girls by installing separate toilets with lights and locks and that reduces the danger of sexual and gender-based violence in a humanitarian setting. This is just one illustration. But in general we should bear in mind these special needs, and in my view these special needs also include sexual and reproductive health services whenever we are dealing with victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

1-043-0000

Chrysoula Zacharopoulou (Renew). – Dans les situations d'urgence, un autre secteur affecté est celui de l'éducation. Et là encore, ce sont les filles qui sont les plus vulnérables et qui ont le plus de risques d'être déscolarisées, ce qui les expose davantage encore aux violences et à l'exploitation sexuelle. Pourtant, le secteur de l'éducation ne semble pas être prioritaire dans les ressources allouées à l'aide humanitaire à l'échelle mondiale.

J'aimerais dès lors, Monsieur le Commissaire, vous poser la question suivante: comment comptez-vous renforcer le rôle de l'Union pour garantir l'accès à l'éducation, en accordant une attention particulière aux vulnérabilités des filles? Allez-vous engager les ressources financières adéquates?

1-044-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Education will be one of my priorities when I go about the humanitarian aid. Traditionally, humanitarian aid was focused on food, shelter, water and sanitation, and basic healthcare. But we know that when September comes, kids have to go to school, they cannot wait for the humanitarian situation to be solved and for development to take place and so on. They have to go to school right away, and this applies to both girls and boys. There is no distinction when it comes to education, absolutely no distinction on the basis of gender. Not at all. This is one of the key European values and I will insist that we provide education in emergency situations, that we deploy sufficient funding for that, because we cannot afford to lose generations of children who don't go to school because they are in emergency situations. We should work on expanding this concept of education in emergencies.

1-045-0000

Rasa Juknevičienė (PPE). – Branduoliniai incidentai yra mažai tikėtini, tačiau jų poveikis visuomenei milžiniškas. Misijos laiške Jums yra pavesta užtikrinti, kad Europos Sąjunga turėtų gerai veikiančią civilių gelbėjimo instrumentą „rescEU“ ir kad Europos Sąjunga bei šalys narės disponuotų pakankamu kiekiu tinkamų priemonių prieš chemines branduolines grėsmes. Koks šiuo metu yra Europos Sąjungos pasirengimo išorinėms branduolinėms ir radiologinėms grėsmėms *status quo*? Kaip Jūs remsite ir apsaugosite Europos Sąjungos piliečius, gyvenančius šalia išorinių sienų? Kaip užtikrinsite, kad Europos Sąjunga galėtų efektyviai padidinti senų ir naujų

branduolinių objektų saugumą prie sienų tiek pietuose, tiek ir rytuose? Ar tokių objektų saugumo didinimą matote kaip svarbų Jums suteikiamo mandato elementą?

1-046-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Indeed, this is one of the specific points that the President-elect included in my mission letter and of course I intend to take this very seriously. It is my mission to welcome that.

I think that Europe today is not prepared for such events, as you call them: low probability, high impact, precisely because there is a low probability. I remember the times when there was a high probability of a nuclear crisis, during the height of the Cold War. I remember in my country no large apartment block, not even a church was allowed to be built without an atomic shelter. Now we think that this cannot happen again. But you are right: it can happen, and we should be prepared.

It is difficult to motivate Member States to prepare for something that is of low probability. There I see the role of the European Union because measures to prepare oneself for such events – a nuclear crisis for instance – is something that the EU could do better, in my view, than Member States alone, for various reasons.

First, the funding that is required is probably too much for most Member States. Second, the impact of such a crisis, radiological or nuclear, is cross-border, and that is another reason why we work on this at the EU level.

We do have to take into account the fact that civil protection is primarily the competence of Member States, and the EU only plays a supporting role. But I intend to take this role seriously and work intensely. I intend to work with the Member States to persuade them that this is something that we need, the whole European Union and its Member States because when things happen, and we are not prepared, it will be too late.

1-047-0000

Rasa Juknevičienė (PPE). – I will continue, in Lithuanian, with a concrete example of an unsafe nuclear power plant in Belarus.

Astravo atominė elektrinė Baltarusijoje kelia tiesioginę grėsmę Europos piliečiams. Ji statoma vos už dvidešimties kilometrų nuo Europos Sąjungos išorinės sienos, pažeidžiant branduolinio saugumo standartus. Statybų metu vis įvyksta nelaimingi atsitikimai. Kokią konkrečią paramą užtikrinsite poveikį patiriančioms šalims narėms? Ar pritariate Parlamento pozicijai, kad partneriui teikiama vystomoji pagalba gali būti suspenduota, jei jis sistemingai pažeidžia branduolinės saugos standartus? Ar esate pasirengęs užtikrinti pakankamus „rescEU“ resursus rizikoms sumažinti? Ar pritariate, kad būtų sukurti adekvatūs Europos Sąjungos pajėgumai labiausiai pažeidžiamuose regionuose ir būtų užtikrintas šalia Baltarusijos gyvenančių Europos Sąjungos piliečių saugumas?

1-049-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I wouldn't want to speculate on the level of safety of any individual energy infrastructure. Things can happen; incidents may happen anywhere. It happened in Fukushima not so long ago, even though that technology and that nuclear facility were considered not only safe, but in accordance with all the EIA standards and so on. Even so, things happen. So my answer is yes: I intend to work on building the capability of the European Union to respond to such a low-probability high-impact crisis as a radiological or nuclear one. It has happened already in Europe: Chernobyl happened. So my answer is yes, I will work on that, but – and here I will ask for your understanding – I will have to get the support of the Member

States, because civil protection is primarily their responsibility. But I will fight for their support: that, you can count on.

1-050-0000

Evin Incir (S&D). – Kommissionärskandidat Lenarčič, först skulle jag bara vilja säga att det är mycket glädjande att höra att du är så principfast och håller fast vid de humanitära principerna och att du inte tummar på dem.

Då till min fråga. Under 2016 års humanitära världstoppmöte lanserades *The grand bargain* – en överenskommelse mellan givare och genomförandeorganisationen om ett mer effektivt humanitärt bistånd. Det var ett mycket viktigt initiativ som fått stöd av mer än 50 organisationer och givare, inklusive många partners till Europeiska kommissionens generaldirektorat för europeiskt civilskydd och humanitära biståndsåtgärder, av EU och EU:s medlemsstater.

Kommissionen bedriver det humanitära biståndet genom en mångfald av partners från de tre olika pelarna – FN, Röda korset och icke-statliga organisationer. Icke-statliga organisationer är viktiga och genomför mycket av det humanitära arbetet på plats.

Min fråga är: Hur ser du på de icke-statliga organisationernas roll i det humanitära biståndet, och hur kan kommissionen säkerställa att det är tillräcklig mångfald av partners i genomförandet av biståndet, särskilt givet finansiella begränsningar?

1-051-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I remember the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul very well, and especially the Grand Bargain. I can assure you that I will insist on faithful implementation of all the commitments that the EU entered into, and in particular of the Grand Bargain. I just learned from my colleagues from the Directorate-General that the EU will continue to co-preside the Working Group on the implementation of the Grand Bargain.

An important part of the Grand Bargain relates to our partner organisations, and yes, a number of them – about half – are non-governmental organisations. They are our trusted partners, and I hope that both sides will stick to the commitments that we entered into within this Grand Bargain, commitments such as simplified reporting. I will go in that direction. But when we go in that direction, at the same time we have to be careful not to jeopardise the necessary controls and assurances that need to be in place in order to ensure sound financial management. I don't want another scandal some time from now that humanitarian aid assistance was diverted or mismanaged or that there was some sort of fraud involved. Yes, we need to move towards the needs of the NGOs, but at the same time demand the right measures of control and assurances with regard to the financial management of the funds that are actually EU taxpayers' funds.

One more word on local NGOs – this is also very important, I mentioned it already in my opening speech – I will encourage our partners, of whom there are more than 200, to involve local non-governmental organisations for the reasons that I explained earlier.

1-052-0000

Evin Incir (S&D). – Tack för ett så bra svar. Du svarade faktiskt även på min följdfråga som handlar just om lokala aktörer. I detta sammanhang måste jag också säga att det är jätteviktigt att ha dem med på tåget, även med tanke på det du tidigare poängterade, nämligen att de kan kontexten bäst. Därmed vill jag tacka så mycket och har inget ytterligare att tillägga.

1-053-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Many of our partners with whom we work already involve local actors – local and national NGOs – or they actually represent them, like the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies – they have their local

outposts everywhere. So this is one of those commitments that I will take very seriously. I will consistently promote the inclusion and engagement of local partners, both in humanitarian activities as well as in building their capacities in this field and including them in national coordinating mechanisms, for instance, so that they participate in a very active manner in the entire cycle of humanitarian assistance.

1-054-0000

Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE). – Herr Lenarčič! Fangen wir etwas anders an. Ich wollte eigentlich sagen, dass ich glaube, dass wir alle gemeinsam hier sehr glücklich sein können, im sicheren Europa aufzuwachsen oder gegebenenfalls wenigstens hier leben zu dürfen, dass wir glücklich sein können, Zugang zu Gesundheitsversorgung zu haben, und dass wir vielleicht fast sogar glücklich sein können, dass einige von uns so fern von den Problemen der Welt sind, dass sie Zeit haben sich einzubilden, dass wir es sind, die am meisten betroffen sind von den Problemen der Welt. Ich fand es deswegen sehr wichtig, dass Sie die Rolle der NRO eben schon herausgearbeitet haben – ein bisschen schade, weil ich dieselbe Frage stellen wollte. Aber ich glaube, dass Sie vielleicht noch mal darauf eingehen können. Sehen Sie oder können Sie skizzieren, wie man Nichtregierungsorganisationen noch besser unterstützen kann? Und wie werden Sie sicherstellen, dass Sie auch ansprechbar sind für die Leute, die vor Ort die Realität erfahren und ja auch viel zu berichten haben über die Arbeit vor Ort? Wie werden Sie für die ansprechbar sein?

1-055-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Indeed, non-governmental organisations are among our most trusted and valuable partners. I have difficulty imagining how we would be able to do our humanitarian assistance without them. That's why I think the Grand Bargain gives us an opportunity, if we all honour our part of the deal, to work even better together. But that also means that on their side, they will also have to make an effort. You know, we don't like to see for instance a high percentage of humanitarian aid going to administrative and support costs, so-called overheads, and in the Grand Bargain there was a commitment that everybody would work on reducing that. This is one thing, that we should work together with non-governmental organisations.

Second, a special point as regards local and national NGOs is that most often they lack the capacity to manage funds and things like that, the capacity to participate actively in planning, preparedness and coordination, so my idea is that we should find a way to increase this capacity, because the more capable they are, the more they can do for the affected population that are close by, because these are local organisations and I think that they should be promoted in every possible respect. Rather than assistance coming from far away with people who come from far away, I think it can be much more effective if it is locally provided.

1-056-0000

Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE). – Vielen Dank für die Antwort. Sie haben auch erwähnt, dass es nicht akzeptabel ist, dass manche humanitären Nichtregierungsorganisationen an ihrer Arbeit gehindert werden und daran, dass sie ihre Stimme erheben. Nun haben wir eine Situation, in der wir manchmal gar nicht Tausende von Kilometern weit weg gucken müssen, um das zu beobachten, sondern in der eigentlich auch an den eigenen Außengrenzen humanitäre Akteure an ihrer Arbeit gehindert werden. Das sechste Jahr in Folge sind über tausend Menschen pro Jahr im Mittelmeer gestorben. Was würden Sie dazu sagen? Würden Sie dort auch Ihre Stimme erheben? Was können Sie vielleicht dazu beitragen, dass die Nichtregierungsorganisationen, die im Mittelmeer Menschen retten, unterstützt werden?

1-057-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – This follow-up allows me to state very clearly that I'm convinced that humanitarian activity should never be subject to criminal sanctions. That's one thing that I think should be clear, but apparently it isn't. I will state it clearly whenever necessary.

People cannot be prosecuted for their efforts in the humanitarian field. That should be clear. At the same time, you mentioned the Mediterranean. There are rules concerning maritime rescue. These rules give specific responsibility to Member States, which should observe international maritime law, international humanitarian law and human rights standards. These all apply.

1-058-0000

Gianna Gancia (ID). – Prima di porre la mia domanda al Commissario designato Lenarčič desidero fare una premessa. In sede di definizione degli obiettivi e dei risultati che ci aspettiamo è sempre bene dotarsi di una dose di realismo. Ed è per questo che sarebbe importante darci una definizione di priorità da perseguire, tenendo ben presente quali sono le crisi più pressanti e quali sono i contesti dove un nostro intervento può riscontrare un maggiore valore aggiunto.

In quest'ottica, Lei, sig. Lenarčič, è chiamato nella Sua lettera di missione a lavorare con gli altri futuri Commissari per produrre delle politiche che si traducano in soluzioni di lungo termine in ambito umanitario, sviluppo e sicurezza. Vorrei a tal fine capire quali strumenti vorrebbe privilegiare per contrastare le cause che stanno alla radice delle migrazioni di massa che interessano direttamente i paesi membri dell'Unione.

1-059-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I mentioned what I see as my priorities and I'm ready to elaborate a bit more. You mentioned long-term solutions. Humanitarian aid is for immediate relief. Humanitarian aid is something that is aimed at addressing an urgent need. But we should also be aware all along of long-term needs and the root causes because, as I said earlier, we have to work in the direction of an affected population getting on their feet, resuming their productive lives, and we can do so by strengthening this humanitarian-development nexus. I will repeat myself, I know, but I intend to work very closely with my colleague Commissioner-designate Urpilainen so that from the outset we also have this long-term dimension covered whenever possible in order to address the root causes and to work in the direction of addressing the long-term needs of the affected population.

There is another important aspect that I intend to cover, and that is in the form of prevention and building resilience, so that people are more resilient to the next crisis when that may come. I can tell you with satisfaction that a large majority of our humanitarian activities already include the disaster-risk reduction component.

1-060-0000

Joanna Kopcińska (ECR). – W ostatnich latach wiele klęsk żywiołowych dotknęło prawie wszystkie części Unii Europejskiej, powodując setki ofiar w istnieniach ludzkich i miliardy euro szkód w infrastrukturze. Nagłe powodzie, burze, pożary lasów, trzęsienia ziemi, katastrofy wywołane działalnością człowieka testowały do granic możliwości systemy reagowania przeciwkryzysowego wielu krajów członkowskich. Ponadto obawy dotyczące bezpieczeństwa stały się bardziej złożone, jako że spodziewamy się, że zmiany klimatu doprowadzą do jeszcze częstszych i bardziej tragicznych katastrof w przyszłości. RescEU wszedł w życie w 2019 roku, aby lepiej chronić obywateli europejskich w ich potrzebie. Jest on zintegrowany z unijnym mechanizmem ochrony ludności w celu wzmocnienia europejskiej gotowości na wypadek katastrofy. Zważywszy że rescEU wszedł w życie dopiero niedawno, chciałabym usłyszeć od Pana, jakie są dotychczasowe wnioski wyciągnięte na podstawie jego funkcjonowania.

1-061-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – RescEU is just beginning to work. The first deployment of rescEU assets took place in Greece last summer and my focus will be on implementing this enhanced civil protection mechanism, also referred to as rescEU.

We will need to make sure that the European Union has the right assets at its disposal, and this is also something that the President-elect has included in my mission letter. I will work with the Member States, who are responsible, to make this happen. I will work with them in order to make sure that the procurement process starts with a view to equipping the European Union with the assets that we need. These assets are expensive; that is why there is a substantial budget foreseen. It is about firefighting planes and firefighting helicopters, but also medical evacuation facilities and facilities relating to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear preparedness measures. I intend to work on all this so as to make this whole rescEU package a reality. But again my challenge will be primarily to persuade the Member States that this is something good, that this is in their interest, and I intend to do so from day 1.

1-062-0000

Joanna Kopcińska (ECR). – Była już o tym mowa, Pan przed chwilą również wspominał, ale pragnę dopytać, czy ma Pan konkretne plany i propozycje dotyczące dalszego wzmocnienia zdolności reagowania Unii Europejskiej oraz zwiększenia zapobiegania ryzyku klęski i zwiększenia gotowości, w tym reagowania na inne zagrożenia, takie jak nagłe przypadki wymagające zaangażowania medycznego, wspomniane przez moich przedmówców i przez Pana, incydenty chemiczne, biologiczne, radiologiczne czy jądrowe? Przede wszystkim chciałabym zapytać, czy są konkretne plany współpracy Centrum Koordynacji Reagowania Kryzysowego z ECDC. Jeśli tak, to jakie?

1-063-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I'm afraid I didn't catch the last part. Am I planning to cooperate with whom?

1-064-0000

Joanna Kopcińska (ECR). – Współpraca Centrum Koordynacji Reagowania Kryzysowego z ECDC.

1-065-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I'll have to find out about that institution. I have to admit that I am not familiar with it. But as for the assets, yes indeed, I intend to work first on making sure that we have the required number of firefighting planes. We're not there yet. There are some and they were deployed successfully last summer in Greece. We will need to complement that also with some firefighting helicopters.

There are two other areas where rescEU is supposed to be equipped with reserve assets and that is medical evacuation, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear preparedness assets. Those are not available in most European Union Member States and that's one more reason why I think we should build this capacity at EU level. Ultimately, this will depend on the Member , because they're the ones who decide about procuring these assets. My role is to persuade them that this makes sense.

1-066-0000

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Thank you, Mr Lenarčič. First of all, I congratulate you on being nominated as a new Commissioner – all of us should never forget that it's a privilege to serve the European people in public office – and thank you for your presentation so far. What I liked most about your presentation was that you mentioned the external action cluster. You will be part of the European Commission, since I think that the more Commissioners that take care of the strength of Europe to the outside, the better. I assume we should not regulate too much to the inside, but strengthen Europe to the outside, and that's part of your crisis management capacity.

So I ask you: what's your specific role in the external action cluster you mentioned? More specifically, since it's also about prevention: if we do crisis management outside Europe right, even after natural disasters – not only after armed conflict –we take care of peace and stability in these

countries and avoid even more terrible conflicts. What specifically do you intend to do in order to take care of prevention?

1-067-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I think it's very important that the Commissioner for crisis management has a seat at the external action table. It is obvious that humanitarian aid in particular is part of European Union External Action. But I feel the need to repeat here that this is a specific self-standing part governed by specific principles, including, maybe I should mention another principle here, the principle of independence. Decisions on allocating humanitarian assistance should be taken independently from the European Union's other objectives – political, military, economic, strategic, whatever. This independence is something I will defend also at the table of the external action cluster.

But we should work in a coordinated manner and I'm looking forward to working with High Representative/Vice-President Borrell, with whom I already met and we already had a first exchange. And I agree with you, prevention is an area where we should specifically look because it's easier to combine a large range, a wide range of European external action instruments and tools at the prevention stage. And it's not only easier, it's also more economical because, as you know, every euro invested in crisis and disaster prevention saves anywhere up to seven euros that are necessary for tackling the consequences of disasters.

1-068-0000

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Two days ago in this very meeting room, Jutta Urpilainen, a nominee for the Commissioner for Development, mentioned that she wanted to cooperate with the Crisis Management Commissioner – so with you – in the field of education for, especially, children, for boys and girls, as we clarified it at that time, in refugee camps. That is a very important issue which I want to insist on and I ask you to cooperate. I hope this would not harm your independence in the field you want to decide independently, as you have mentioned that.

If I may add only one sentence on civil protection: we had this issue in the last mandate. The situation in the Member States is very different, so please take care of the fact that some things are taken care of better in some States and less well in other States, and this independence is important on the Member-State level.

1-069-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I can assure you that I will work closely with my colleague Ms Urpilainen, especially in the area of education. This is an area where our mandates do not overlap but do come together.

I see my role as making sure that even in emergency situations like refugee camps – in humanitarian settings – we don't neglect education. That's why I like this concept – education in emergency – and I will promote it, I will work on it and I will expand it because, as I said earlier, when September comes, children – boys and girls – have to go to school.

1-070-0000

Catherine Chabaud (Renew). – Monsieur le commissaire désigné, je voudrais revenir sur le lien entre aide humanitaire et développement, mais en proposant peut-être d'aller plus loin dans l'ambition, notamment concernant les territoires insulaires qui sont très exposés, en raison de l'augmentation de la fréquence et de l'intensité des phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes.

Je citerai, par exemple, les passages d'Irma ou de Dorian, qui ont dévasté des territoires entiers. L'expérience vécue par Saint-Martin avec Irma m'a beaucoup interpellée. Je me suis rendue sur l'île, un an et demi après le passage du cyclone. L'île avait reçu des aides de l'Europe pour sa

reconstruction. Pourtant, un an et demi après, les déchets étaient encore dans la nature et on avait souvent reconstruit à l'identique.

Au contact des acteurs locaux, je me suis rendu compte que ce drame pouvait être une opportunité pour engager un changement, un véritable changement de modèle, un modèle qui lie l'aide humanitaire avec les impératifs du développement durable. Passée l'urgence, les territoires pourraient s'engager vers la transition écologique, la transition énergétique, vers l'autonomie énergétique, vers l'autonomie en eau, en alimentation, et bien sûr vers l'adaptation.

Ma question est donc la suivante: ne pensez-vous pas justement que la gestion des crises pourrait contribuer au futur *Green Deal*, en proposant notamment une véritable stratégie pour renforcer le développement durable des territoires insulaires et leur résilience face aux catastrophes naturelles?

1-071-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Thank you very much for drawing my attention to the situation of small islands, small island developing states. They indeed are among the most vulnerable in view of the climate change that is happening. We know that the Arctic and Antarctic ice is melting. We know that sea levels are already rising and we know that we have a host of islands out there in the Caribbean and especially also in the South Pacific that are going to face very dire challenges and since these are countries with modest resources we should work with them and we should help them prepare.

I'm afraid there are situations and events that we can no longer prevent, and I have in mind in particular extreme weather-related events or rising sea levels. We know this is happening. We know this will happen. We know the situation will get worse. What is important is that we do not sit on our hands and we work with these small island developing states and improve their resilience, improve their preparedness. That's where I see my role, but I also see the role of my colleague Urpilainen, because the development budget should also be oriented towards enhancing preparedness and resilience, or if you wish climate adaptations, especially in a situation where we can no longer prevent bad things from happening or in a situation where we know that certain events are quite predictable.

1-072-0000

Catherine Chabaud (Renew). – Vous avez évoqué la nécessité de s'appuyer sur les acteurs locaux pour acheminer les secours. Grâce à ses outre-mer, l'Union européenne est présente aux quatre coins du monde.

Dès lors, ne pensez-vous pas qu'elle gagnerait à utiliser davantage cet atout géostratégique unique et que pré-positionner, pré-identifier des moyens humains et logistiques dans ces régions, y compris les ONG, pourrait améliorer notre capacité de réaction et de projection face à ce type d'évènements extrêmes?

Cela nous permettrait d'intervenir plus rapidement auprès des populations en situation d'urgence aux quatre coins du monde. Là encore, ne croyez-vous pas qu'il faut construire une véritable stratégie d'intervention?

1-073-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I agree that that this is the way we should try to favour and build local resilience, not focus only on our ability to respond or to help respond. This has to be there also because once disaster takes place, help is necessary and we should be able to provide it. So we should not neglect any of these elements.

But, yes, I intend to work more on resilience, I intend to work in this domain closely with other colleagues, other Commissioners who are responsible for the climate, environment and the oceans, development, we already mentioned several times.

We should all work together; we should factor this into this Green Deal of Europe, but also not just Europe; I think that is what we need is a Green Deal for the planet. We should factor in the climate-adaptation measures, resilience-building measures, preparedness measures, in order to either avoid or be better prepared for disasters.

1-074-0000

Νίκος Ανδρουλάκης (S&D). – Κύριε Επίτροπε, θέλω να σας ρωτήσω το εξής: εμείς, μετά τις καταστροφικές δασικές πυρκαγιές στην Πορτογαλία, την Ελλάδα και τη Σουηδία, τα καλοκαίρια του 2017 και του 2018, ολοκληρώσαμε τον περασμένο Μάρτιο την αναθεώρηση του Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Πολιτικής Προστασίας. Δημιουργήσαμε έτσι το rescEU. Ακόμα, όμως, είμαστε σε μια μεταβατική φάση. Τα μέσα που βρίσκονται στη δεξαμενή ανήκουν αποκλειστικά στα κράτη μέλη. Τώρα θα πρέπει να αποκτήσουμε τα ευρωπαϊκά μέσα. Αναφερθήκατε και εσείς στο γεγονός ότι η πρόκληση είναι η αντίδραση από τα κράτη μέλη. Πώς θα διασφαλίσετε εσείς, λοιπόν, ότι το rescEU θα διαθέτει όλα τα αναγκαία μέσα για την καταπολέμηση των πυρκαγιών και άλλων καταστροφών και πώς σχεδιάζετε να ξεπεράσετε τα πιθανά εμπόδια ή την απροθυμία των κρατών μελών να αποκτήσουν αυτά τα αναγκαία μέσα; Επίσης, ποια από αυτά θεωρείτε ότι είναι προτεραιότητα για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, ώστε ο μηχανισμός να είναι πλήρως λειτουργικός;

1-075-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Thank you for your question, which allows me to elaborate a bit further on this. Yes, the President-elect wrote in my mission letter that that she expects me to ensure – that is the verb that she used – that we have within rescEU the right kind and the right amount of assets. At the same time, however, we know that it is the Member States that have to decide to procure these assets. So all I have at my disposal is power of persuasion, and hopefully also the support of the European Parliament.

I think that you can help me a lot in this task by urging the Member States to procure these kinds of assets. I think it should not be so difficult. Personally, I'm a bit surprised at the slow pace of this procurement. Why? Because to me it looks a very good deal. Once Member State X decides to procure let's say a firefighting plane, the EU, according to the rescEU rules, can co-finance it up to 90%. So basically, as a Member State, you get the asset for 10% of the price, you can use it. The only thing that you sign up to is the obligation that when there is a need somewhere else you have to make the asset available to be used, where there is a need. as let's call it a 'reserve asset' of the EU. But when this is not the case, you can use it as your own, and you get the asset for 10% of the price.

1-076-0000

Νίκος Ανδρουλάκης (S&D). – Το θέμα είναι βρούμε αυτό το 90% των χρημάτων για να αγοράσουν τα κράτη μέλη τα εναέρια μέσα. Θέλω επίσης να σας ρωτήσω για το θέμα της πρόληψης. Είχαμε συμπεριλάβει στον μηχανισμό την αναγκαία απαίτηση τα κράτη μέλη να καταθέτουν και να μοιράζονται με την Επιτροπή τα σχέδια πολιτικής προστασίας, ώστε να τα αξιολογούμε και να βελτιώνονται. Εσείς θεωρείτε ότι τα στοιχεία που δίνουν μέχρι σήμερα για τους κινδύνους, για την προετοιμασία και για τον τρόπο αντιμετώπισης είναι αυτά που χρειαζόμαστε ή πρέπει να μας δίνουν περισσότερα στοιχεία και συχνότερα; Επίσης, τι θα κάνουμε για να αναβαθμίσουμε αυτά τα σχέδια εθνικής πολιτικής προστασίας ώστε να μειώσουμε τις φυσικές καταστροφές;

1-077-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Member States should all have, in my view, workable risk-reduction strategies, and risk-management strategies in general, in place, and also early warning systems. The EU should help them. I am ready to help because prevention in the area of

civil protection is the responsibility – I prefer the word ‘responsibility’ to the word ‘competence’ because when you talk about competences we try to fight with others. But when we talk about the responsibilities, people are not fighting for greater responsibility. That is why I like the word responsibility.

It is the responsibility of Member States – civil protection is the responsibility of Member States, and they should put this kind of thing in place. I will be there to help because we have expertise, we have good practices from elsewhere, we have mechanisms and experts that we can provide, and I am there to help the Member States assume and implement this responsibility.

1-078-0000

Ljudmila Novak (PPE). – Spoštovani gospod Janez Lenarčič, kandidat za komisarja, lepo vas pozdravljam v Evropskem parlamentu. Upam, da bom tudi odgovor dobila v slovenščini, vašem maternem jeziku.

Govorimo o tem, da Evropska unija pomaga ljudem in državam v stiski. Za to namenja veliko humanitarne pomoči in sredstva za to naj bi se še povečala.

Zanima pa me, ali menite, da je takšno razdeljevanje sredstev preko nevladnih organizacij res dovolj učinkovito, transparentno in ima dolgotrajne pozitivne učinke.

Žal prevečkrat slišimo, da različne nevladne organizacije s kroženjem denarja oziroma s preusmerjanjem na druge akterje, podpirajo take organizacije, ki pa ne delajo v prid vrednotam Evropske unije.

Ali boste ta sistem nadgradili?

1-079-0000

Janez Lenarčič, kandidat za komisarja. – Spoštovana gospa poslanka, veseli me, da ste mi dali priložnost, da odgovorim v svojem maternem jeziku. Vem, da imam to priložnost že tudi sicer zahvaljujoč prevajalcem.

Evropska unija posreduje, upravlja humanitarno dejavnost s pomočjo partnerjev, partnerskih organizacij. To so na eni strani specializirane agencije Združenih narodov, po drugi strani pa nevladne organizacije.

Verjemite mi, da mi zelo temeljito preverimo zmožnost teh nevladnih organizacij, da delujejo tako, kot je treba, kar se tiče spoštovanja načel za humanitarno pomoč teh štirih glavnih načel, humanosti, nepristranskosti, neodvisnosti in težko prevedem iz angleščine, vidite, zakaj govorim v angleško, ker so ti termini v angleščini bolj domači. No, kakor koli. Mi posebej pogledamo, ali so te nevladne organizacije tudi zmožne opravljati ustrezen nadzor nad sredstvi, ki jih dobijo. Ta sredstva so sredstva evropskih davkoplačevalcev.

Še bolj pomembno pa je, komu so namenjena. Namenjena so reševanju človeških življenj, pomoči ljudem v stiski, zato mi tako dosledno preverjamo naše partnerje, da so sposobni s temi sredstvi primerno ravnati. Da z njimi ne razmetavajo, da preprečujejo, da se ta sredstva prelivajo tja, kamor niso namenjena in imamo tudi ustrezne mehanizme, da to nadziramo, da sledimo tem sredstvom in da preverjamo njihovo uporabo tako vnaprej kot za nazaj.

1-080-0000

Ljudmila Novak (PPE). – Gotovo poznate primer misijonarja Petra Opeke, ki ima slovenske korenine in deluje na Madagaskarju.

On rešuje revščino na takšen način, da je naučil ljudi loviti ribe. Njegovo naselje je nastalo tako rekoč na smetišču. Najprej je ljudem pomagal s sredstvi prostovoljnih prispevkov ljudi, potem pa se je iz tega razvil ves sistem in tako sedaj ljudje imajo delo in pomagajo drug drugemu.

Menim, da je to najboljši način reševanja dolgotrajnih kriz oziroma humanitarnih potreb. Prej ste govorili tudi o kadrih, lokalnih kadrih, in to je tudi možnost, da se lokalni kadri učijo in usposobijo, da take stvari naprej rešujejo.

Ali podpirate takšne preventivne programe, ki bi ljudi usposabljali prav za take primere?

1-081-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *kandidat za komisarja*. – Zelo dobro poznam delo patra Opeke in ga občudujem. To je, kot ste sami rekli, lep primer, kako se lokalno lahko veliko naredi za odpravljanje revščine. Mi to podpiramo, Komisija to podpira.

Osebnost, če bom komisar za krizno upravljanje, verjetno ne bom imel z njim neposrednega opravka, mogoče pa v okviru preventivnega delovanja, v okviru izboljševanja odpornosti, skupnosti, kakršna je ta njegova skupnost, ki jo je on ustanovil, in zlasti v smislu doseganja ciljev trajnostnega razvoja, ker zelo veliko ciljev trajnostnega razvoja lahko dosežemo samo, če uspešno odpravimo humanitarne krize ali če jih uspešno preprečimo in mislim, da delo patra Opeke je odličen primer učinkovitega, dobrega dela pri preprečevanju humanitarne krize in pri krepitevi odpornosti lokalne skupnosti in zato sem mu seveda dolžan vse občudovanje.

1-082-0000

Manon Aubry (GUE/NGL). – J'aimerais rebondir sur un sujet qui a été abordé plusieurs fois: pas plus tard que cette semaine, à savoir aujourd'hui, le président de l'ONG française «Action Sécurité Ethique Républicaines» a été convoqué par les services de sécurité intérieure, en France, pour avoir dénoncé l'exportation d'armes françaises utilisées dans la guerre au Yémen.

Pourtant, ce n'est pas un secret d'État que révèle cette ONG, mais bien une hypocrisie au service d'intérêts économiques. Alors que l'Union européenne envoie son aide humanitaire aux populations victimes des pires massacres, ses États membres, comme la France, exportent des armes qui servent aux bourreaux. Les armes que nous exportons ont ainsi servi à commettre des violations massives des droits de l'homme dans plusieurs régions, dont le Yémen, au sujet duquel vous avez mentionné qu'il s'agissait d'une des crises les plus urgentes.

Des règles communes régissant les contrôles des exportations de technologie et d'équipements militaires, adoptées par les États membres de l'Union à partir de 2008, exigent de prendre en compte la situation des droits de l'homme. Et donc ma question: comment comptez-vous coordonner l'aide humanitaire européenne par l'application stricte de cette position?

1-083-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – You mentioned the arms trade, and yes, in principle I agree. A humanitarian crisis is – often if not always, partly, at least, if not fully – the consequence of armed conflict. And armed conflicts are fought with weapons. And yes, many countries export those.

But this is the reality that we have to deal with. I will of course advocate care in exporting arms to conflict regions. Actually, there are standards that the European Union should, in my view, advocate, namely that in arms exports we do not act in a way that would aggravate the humanitarian situation. I feel this is my duty. It will be my duty if I'm Commissioner for humanitarian aid and crisis management to point out the fact that yes, we should behave consistently, we should not export arms in such a way that would aggravate a humanitarian crisis.

1-084-0000

Manon Aubry (GUE/NGL). – J’entends votre engagement et j’y suis sensible. Je pense qu’il y a une reconnaissance partagée, en tout cas au sein de l’Union européenne, du rôle et de la responsabilité des États membres dans l’exportation d’armes vers ces pays et de l’impact de ces exportations sur la la crise humanitaire. Au-delà de l’engagement oral, seriez-vous prêt à lancer un signal fort au nom de l’Union européenne et à mettre en œuvre un embargo sur les armes vendues aux parties en conflit (ce que demandent de nombreuses ONG internationales, dont Amnesty International), en particulier dans les cas de violations flagrantes du droit international humanitaire, comme l’illustre tristement la situation au Yémen?

1-085-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – I intend to work with my fellow Commissioners in order to look into this matter more consistently. I personally believe that we should have a principled approach in this area too. We should have a principled approach in the sense that when there is a conflict going on, that we are careful about what we do, including in the area of arms exports. It would be self-defeating for the European Union, which is rightly proud to be the biggest humanitarian donor, together with its Member States, if at the same time, on the other hand, we would do things that aggravate the humanitarian crisis in a particular place. But one should be aware of the fact that there are competences and responsibilities and some of them are purely in the domain of the Member States. What I can do is I can advocate for this principled approach and I will say what I have already said here: I think that our action should be consistent. We should avoid aggravating a humanitarian crisis through our actions in the area of arms exports. But it is not the European Union that exports arms, it is the Member States.

1-086-0000

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhor Comissário indigitado, a crescente conflitualidade internacional, a crise que atravessamos, a crise climatérica que atravessamos, lançam cada vez maiores desafios ao nível da prontidão da resposta, da qualidade da resposta e também da atenção que deveremos conceder ao cumprimento dos direitos humanos na resposta humanitária que damos.

Ouvi-o aqui atentamente e registei a sua intenção de envolver cada vez mais as ONG e as ONG locais. Isto é, para mim, muito importante e vem muito em linha com o seu mandato como diretor do ODIR. Tive oportunidade de o acompanhar e percebi bem do seu envolvimento na defesa dos ativistas, na defesa daqueles que estavam no terreno e na defesa de um cada vez maior envolvimento das organizações não governamentais e todos somos poucos para dar uma resposta de facto de qualidade, efetiva e eficaz em termos de ajuda humanitária.

Ouvi-o aqui falar no aumento da transparência, no controlo dos apoios monetários, mas queria ouvi-lo falar também da coordenação, porque quando vamos ao terreno em situações de emergência, em termos de resposta humanitária nota-se, muitas vezes, a falta de coordenação e na falta de coordenação perdem-se muitos recursos.

Queria saber o que pretende fazer na melhoria da coordenação dos esforços de todos.

1-087-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – It’s a great pleasure to see you here, Ms Santos, now transported from our overseas planet in the past, we find themselves again on the same EU planet this time. It’s a great pleasure to see you, Madam.

Coordination is always a challenge whenever you have so many players, like you have in an international humanitarian universe. There is a multitude of agencies, organisations and non-governmental organisations, but I think there are some obvious solutions and some principles that should work well if we follow them.

First of all, I think we should all agree that the United Nations, and in particular the its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs should have the overall coordinating role. The European Union supports it, and I will support it. It will be one of my first steps if I'm confirmed to enter into contact with the United Nations and its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, I think they should keep this overall organisation role.

But also the European Union should instil this spirit of coordination and cooperation so that everybody knows what to do, everybody knows what his or her tasks are in a given humanitarian operation.

It would be really a waste, an unfortunate waste, if in the area where we have such a funding gap, we were to waste resources due to a lack of coordination. It happens, I know it happens. There were cases in the past – like Haiti many years ago, and so on – but I think we should strive to instil some discipline here and we should recognise the role of the United Nations as a overall coordinator, and we should also divide amongst ourselves what we will do, each of us in a coordinated and cooperative manner.

1-088-0000

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Ouviu aqui falar da situação humanitária nos campos de refugiados em Lesbos. Na tentativa de retenção do movimento de refugiados e migrantes, a União Europeia estabeleceu acordos com a Líbia e todos nós sabemos qual é a situação dos refugiados e migrantes na Líbia e todos nós conhecemos bem qual é a situação dos campos de detenção de refugiados, do centro de detenção de refugiados na Líbia.

É uma situação sob o ponto de vista humanitário absolutamente atroz e violadora dos direitos humanos. Queria ouvi-lo sobre esta matéria e como pretende contornar este problema.

1-089-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Yes, you're absolutely right. The situation in the detention centres in Libya is atrocious. That's the right word. The Commission is trying to help. We are there. We do have humanitarian programmes, humanitarian assistance but this situation of course cannot go on, it cannot go on. I think that those people should be moved from those centres somewhere else. Now some of them can be resettled, some of them could be, especially those who are not entitled to international protection, would be helped to return to their countries of origin.

But yes I agree it's a very bad situation and humanitarian aid alone is not a solution.

I said already that humanitarian aid is not a crisis management tool in the sense that it would solve a crisis. It tries to address the needs, the immediate needs, of the affected population. That's what we are trying to do, also in the detention camps in Libya, but more should be done – yes, I agree. We should find a more sustainable solution to that.

1-090-0000

Alexandra Louise Rosenfield Phillips (Verts/ALE). – I know you've had similar questions to this already, but as crisis management Commissioner will you work on the cost of doing nothing? Are you aware of how many people could be in need of humanitarian support following climate-related disasters by 2030 and 2050 if the world does not urgently invest in climate adaptation measures today? If no urgent action is taken now the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance annually, due to the climate crisis, could double by 2050. Similarly, financial costs could balloon to EUR 18 billion year. But this pessimistic scenario could be avoided by investing in climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction, building up resilience in communities, countries and regions at risk and by improving early warning humanitarian action. How will you better integrate a greener approach in the field of humanitarian aid and what concrete measures will you

take to this end? What funds will you mobilise in order to deal with environmental emergencies and climate disasters?

1-091-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I would return to where I was already, when I said that I think we should mainstream disaster-risk reduction measures into our Green Deal for Europe, and also Green Deal for this planet. We should do so because – I totally agree with you – the cost of doing nothing will be many times higher than what we can do and must do in order to prevent or at least prepare and adapt. There are already things that we can no longer prevent, but we can at least adapt. I will work on that. I will speak with Executive Vice-President Timmermans and argue in favour of including the disaster-risk strategy in all the climate activity of the Union, precisely because if we don't do it, we will face a much worse situation. We will face it unprepared and then we'll have to invest much more than if we do invest now. I already said today that one euro invested in prevention saves up to seven euro that you need when you face the consequences of something that you could have prevented or at least prepared for.

1-092-0000

Alexandra Louise Rosenfield Phillips (Verts/ALE). – Thank you, I appreciate that response. As already mentioned this evening, the Commission plans to increase the participation of the private sector in its external action operations. However, there are provisions to keep the private sector to the same standards as international organisations and NGOs. How do you intend to ensure that the private sector involved in crisis management projects will meet the same 'do no harm' standards with regard to CO₂ or greenhouse gas emissions as international organisations? Would you endeavour to make polluting companies, which are largely responsible for the impacts of climate change, contribute to a fund for climate or environmental disasters?

1-093-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Yes, I think we should all work with the private sector. I think that especially the Executive Vice-President and the Commission as a college won't be able to deliver on the Green Deal for Europe and for the world if we don't involve the private sector, for the simple reason that EU funds are not nearly sufficient for the investment necessary to make the Green Deal a reality. And this also goes for the prevention and preparedness measures that I feel are also my responsibility because this is a part of the crisis management cycle. Some people think that a crisis manager is somebody who sits there and waits for the phone to ring – there is a crisis and then we run and respond.

At least as important in my view are the prevention and preparedness stages. Well, actually more importantly because they're cheaper and since we have limited funding, let's fund these cheaper stages better and hopefully we will avoid this response stage. So I intend to work in this respect with my colleagues, other Commissioners responsible for climate, the environment and oceans, for development, and all these areas because the Green Deal is something that is our common objective, our common responsibility. I intend to contribute in the way that I described.

1-094-0000

Véronique Trillet-Lenoir (Renew). – Commissioner-designate, today more than 80% of the world's population is threatened by vector-borne infectious diseases. This threat is now concerning Europe. What I heard just in front of me to suggest that it could be due to migratory movements is at least medically incorrect. Mosquitoes, ticks and other disease-causing insects are allowed to proliferate and adapt due to climate change through global warming, not to migration. These insects are now invading new territories in Europe and epidemics of dengue, malaria, chikungunya and West Nile fever are occurring in Croatia, in Greece, in Italy, and in my country, France. Tomorrow there will be new ones. These insects carry a significant risk of health crises in the future. How do you intend to protect Europeans against these new vector-borne diseases?

1-095-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – I think the threat is real. I think your point is very much warranted. The threat of vector-borne diseases moving to Europe from exotic places is a real thing. I do not think we are prepared. I think we are not prepared at all. I think we should start preparing, because diseases that were once typical only for tropical parts of the world and that we encountered only when we were travelling to exotic locations, they're coming our way. And I agree with you, they're not being brought into Europe by people, they are brought by insects.

If we want to tackle this I should work with my colleague the Commissioner-designate for health, Stella Kyriakides, and we should see how best to prepare. She will have at her disposal all the Commission's services in the field of health. I see my contribution as emergency response coordinator in the sense of preventing the response that we don't want to see take place.

I think there are many ways to prepare. First of all, I think we could think of developing vaccines. We could think of storing them for the case when an epidemic breaks out. I think that one of the options – why not? – could be through the rescEU mechanism to have such vaccines stored in place ready for the eventuality of epidemics caused by vector-borne disease.

1-096-0000

Véronique Trillet-Lenoir (Renew). – I want to thank the Commissioner-designate for his very honest answer. We are not prepared. My intention was just to sound a warning, not to ask unanswerable questions. I suggest that you should work on warning systems, work on the awareness of potential risk among health workers and citizens, and reinforce the agencies, particularly the ECDC, where these types of diseases are concerned.

1-097-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Yes, Madam, I intend to do so; I intend to do so in close cooperation with the Commissioner for health.

1-098-0000

Frances Fitzgerald (PPE). – Another question about a central issue that has been raised by many of my colleagues: it is my understanding from your mission letter that your role in crisis management includes a preventative and mitigating role as well. It is clear – as colleagues have said – that, over the past number of years through events such as the devastating hurricanes, forest fires, and so on, climate change is increasingly resulting in major disasters across the world, with all of the consequences which we have seen.

I would like to ask you again how you will seek to integrate preventative and mitigating measures as regards climate change and climate resilience into both the internal and external policies of the Union, in conjunction with your Commissioner colleagues. I believe that, increasingly, over the next number of years, it is going to be about Commissioners working together across portfolios in a united way.

1-099-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Yes, that is the point. I don't think that any Commissioner on his or her own would be able to work on these issues. I think that this will be a particular challenge for this future College of Commissioners: to find a way of effectively working together on issues like this. For my part, I see in particular the possibility of my input being in the sense of prevention, and when that is no longer an option, adaptation.

And how does it work? Let me attempt with an illustration. We mentioned already today the Sahel and the Horn of Africa as regions that already feel the impact of climate change: the rain patterns have changed; the droughts have multiplied there longer. So what do we do? What can we do in order to adapt? One way of doing it is to look at the crops that are traditionally present there and see whether they can be replaced with some other crops that are more drought resistant and heat-

resistant. That is not something that I as a future Commissioner would decide, but it's something that our development colleagues would have to decide in cooperation with agricultural specialists that know about that region.

So it means that in order to have effective prevention and adaptation, we have to work together first within the Commission, but then also with our partners outside the European Union, and that's how we will be able to put in place effective measures to prevent and mitigate the impact of climate change.

1-100-0000

Frances Fitzgerald (PPE). – I spoke about working across portfolios, but you have just actually begun to address my second question, which was about emphasising the need to work with civic society, NGOs and building very strong partnerships and continuing to do that within the EU and also in our third-country relationship and putting citizens really at the heart of all of these processes. I think we are going to need both very much, even more developed than they are at present.

1-101-0000

Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner-designate. – Yes, I agree it is correct, we also need to involve non-governmental organisations. I see all this effort as an important part in our ambition to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals. The strategy to achieve these goals is to involve all the actors, and NGOs are important actors, especially in the area of humanitarian assistance. We have the most positive experience with working with NGOs; they are our trusted, reliable, effective partners. I think that it is a good example of how this cooperation can look, and should look, when we work jointly in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

1-102-0000

Chair. – Let me thank all the Members for the questions, and of course the Commissioner-designate for your answers.

OK, we must have a question now. Are we going to allow another question or not? I give you the floor to speak on this question.

1-103-0000

Ellie Chowns (Verts/ALE). – Commissioner-designate, I didn't want you to feel hard done by because we had had only 24 questions because one Member did not turn up to this meeting. So with the permission of the Chair I would like to ask a replacement question.

1-104-0000

Chair. – To be honest, we have already divided the questions between the political groups and the question was from a non-attached Member. So I think that I will not allow the question. I'm sorry. I don't want to be the bad guy, but somebody has to kind of stick to the rules and I do know that we have had a lot of questions between the committees, between the associated committees, so that's why I'm being a bit harsh at this moment and this late at night. I'm sorry.

I would also like to announce that I will meet with the coordinators to evaluate this hearing. It will be behind closed doors. You know where and when, and let me be very clear that I will not accept your sending any political advisers to replace you during this meeting. I will only accept Members. You can have your advisers at the meeting but I will not accept that your advisers replace you at the meeting.

But now I would also like to give the floor to the Commissioner-designate for a statement. You have five minutes.

1-105-0000

Janez Lenarčič, *Commissioner-designate*. – Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you, honourable Members, for this exchange, for this opportunity. It was stimulating for me. I appreciate your questions very much. I tried to answer them to the best of my ability. I do hope I was able at least to some degree to satisfy your expectations so far.

Let me say that if I'm confirmed for this position, I can tell you I already feel the weight of the responsibility on my shoulders. I don't take this portfolio lightly, I take it with considerable excitement because it is a noble mission, it is a way to show the best face of Europe around the world and within Europe. Solidarity is something that people don't think about until the moment they need it and then they remember it forever.

I would like, if I'm confirmed, to work with you very closely to build on what I think is a traditional partnership between this particular portfolio and the European Parliament.

And allow me one last remark with regard to my mission letter. I was waiting for somebody to ask the question about the first item that the President-elect put in my mission letter, and it relates to the Emergency Response Coordination Centre – I'm supposed to strengthen it and make it work like a real hub. Since nobody asked the question, I will nevertheless use this opportunity to say the following. It is a wonderful thing. I was impressed when I visited it. Please, if you haven't visited it yet, do so, it's worth it, it's impressive and also it's impressive towards the outside world, because this centre responds to calls for assistance, not only from within the European Union, but also from any country in the world.

So I want to answer the famous question that Henry Kissinger asked a while ago – what is the phone number of Europe? Well, when it comes to emergency response, this is it!

(Laughter and applause)

1-106-0000

Chair. – Thank you, Commissioner-designate. Thank you to all the Members and to everybody who has participated in this meeting. Now we end this hearing.

(The hearing closed at 21.10)