



Letter from M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic, to Mr Jose Manuel BARROSO, President of the European Commission, on the humanitarian situation in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories

Paris, 20 July 2006

President Barroso, [handwritten: Dear JosØ-Manuel]

The humanitarian situation in Lebanon, already very worrying, is constantly deteriorating with the ever-increasing number of casualties, displaced persons and continuing destruction of the infrastructure essential for the country's proper functioning. The conditions in which the Lebanese are living are daily becoming more tragic.

Lebanon has issued an appeal to the international community. France has fully committed herself to responding to it and already taken the measures necessary to meet the Lebanese authorities' first requests. The European Union must also provide humanitarian aid and help alleviate the great suffering of the Lebanese people. This is urgent in order to prevent a humanitarian disaster.

France is grateful to the Commission for already scheduling a first tranche of humanitarian aid of 10 million, for the most pressing needs. Larger-scale measures will certainly be necessary to cope with the vital needs which are constantly growing. Preparations must be made for long-term aid.

France is ready to make available to the Commission her transport assets for delivering this aid on the ground, in order to speed up its distribution.

I have proposed the establishment of humanitarian corridors both inside Lebanon, particularly in order to allow the evacuation of civilians from the combat zone and movement of displaced persons, and between Lebanon and the outside world (especially Cyprus) so as to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Lebanon. France is ready, in the framework of this European effort, to work on deciding on the routes of these corridors and ensuring safety on them.

I would be grateful if you would give positive consideration to these proposals.

(complimentary close with handwritten addition)/.