Proposal for a Council Decision on the grant of funds to Greece in order to relieve the interest burden on EIB loans for the reconstruction of the region which was devastated by the earthquake of September 1999

(2001/C 62 E/05)

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(Submitted by the Commission on 11 October 2000)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 308 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Whereas:

(1) Those living in certain areas of Greece have been seriously affected by the earthquakes of September 1999, with an ensuing need to help offset the effects of this disaster on their economic and social well-being.

(2) The areas stricken by these earthquakes extend over the entire Attica region and in particular the poorest suburbs to the west and north-west of Athens.

(3) Steps should be taken to deal quickly and efficiently with this quite exceptional situation.

(4) The European Investment Bank is able to grant loans out of its own resources to help achieve this objective.

(5) A grant to relieve the interest burden on these loans should be allowed to the Greek State.

(6) This grant should be chargeable to the general budget of the European Communities.

(7) The Treaty has not provided, for the adoption of the measures in question, powers other than those provided for in Article 308,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Objective

The Community shall make available to the Greek State funds of EUR 2 million in order to relieve the interest burden on loans received from the European Investment Bank (hereinafter referred to as 'the EIB') for the reconstruction of the Attica region after the earthquake of September 1999.

Article 2

Conditions

1. The Commission is hereby empowered to pay these funds in one instalment due in 2000, on terms which it shall lay down. The Commission is entitled to use further increases of the corresponding budget line for a continuation of these measures designated to relieve the interest burden on EIB loans granted for the purpose defined in paragraph 2.

2. All funds received by the Greek State under this Decision shall be exclusively used for relieving the interest burden on EIB loans for the replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of buildings, infrastructural and industrial installations (including small and medium enterprises) in the Attica region affected by the earthquake of September 1999.