



PRESS RELEASE

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'Europe House' established in Banda Aceh

The European Commission (EC) opens 'Europe House' today (03/10) in Banda Aceh, the provincial capital of Aceh. Officiating the opening was visiting EC Director General for External Relations, Mr Eneko Landaburu in the presence of Mr Azwar Abubakar, Acting Governor of Aceh, other dignitaries and invited guests.

Europe House has been established as a means of enhancing co-ordination and ensuring the efficient implementation of EC-funded rehabilitation and reconstruction projects in the tsunami-stricken areas of Indonesia. Europe House is also aimed at facilitating co-ordination amongst donors on rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, and enhancing the dialogue with local communities and competent authorities on the ground. Europe House will be run by a technical team led by an EC Head of Office. Its work will be overseen by the EC Delegation in Jakarta.

The EC has approved € 30 million (in July 2005) and a further € 38 million (in September 2005) out of the € 207 million package to support long-term reconstruction of tsunami-stricken areas in Indonesia. The € 207 million package comprises € 7 million under the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM), already released, to kick-start long-term reconstruction work, and a total of € 200 million to be provided through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Aceh and North Sumatra (MDTFANS). The EC is the largest contributor to the MDTFANS and is one of its co-chairs. The European Union – Member States plus the EC – provides 85% of all MDTFANS commitments or USD 430 million out of a total of USD 515 million.

ECHO - the humanitarian arm of the EC - has provided emergency assistance and relief to the tsunami-stricken areas immediately after the disaster. By early September 2005, ECHO has provided almost € 40 million of humanitarian aid assistance for the tsunami victims in Indonesia. ECHO will also be operating from Europe House.

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