



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 3.4.2003
COM(2003) 168 final

2002/0052 (COD)

Amended proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

**On aid for policies and actions on reproductive and sexual health and rights in
developing countries**

(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 250 (2) of the EC Treaty)

Amended proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

On aid for policies and actions on reproductive and sexual health and rights in developing countries

1. BACKGROUND

Transmission of the Proposal to the Council and the European Parliament (COM (2002) 120 final 2002/0052 (COD)) in accordance with Article 179 (1) of the EC Treaty 7 March 2002

Opinion by European Parliament – first reading 13 February 2003

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE COMMISSION PROPOSAL

This Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council aims to replace Council Regulation (EC) No 1484/97 on aid for population programmes and policies in developing countries, which expired on 31 December 2002. This proposal reinforces the Cairo Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) whilst at the same time aims to increase and accelerate efforts in light of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Proposal supports the Cairo Programme of Action by giving all couples and individuals the basic right and opportunity to fully protect their reproductive and sexual health, in particular against unsafe abortion, HIV/AIDS and existing harmful practices, such as Female genital Mutilation (FGM). It aims to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity rates, which are disproportionately high in developing countries, in particular amongst the poorest girls and women. It aims to give people the right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so.

Compared to the previous regulation, the financial framework for the implementation of this Regulation reflects the considerable increase needed to scale up resources for reproductive and sexual health and rights in developing countries. Community Policy on enhanced co-operation within the EC, and between EC and other donors and international institutions, including the United Nations will be taken into account. Use will be made of the possibility to create new innovative partnerships, and to contribute, where appropriate and duly justified, to regional or global initiatives.

3. COMMISSION OPINION ON THE AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE PARLIAMENT

3.1. Amendments accepted by the Commission

The Commission accepted all the amendments adopted by the Parliament at first reading apart from the financial framework in view of the fact that in most cases they strengthen and clarify the text of the regulation without altering the main objectives. In other cases, the amendments update references made in the Commission proposal and these are welcome.

Concerning the financial framework of the Regulation, the European Parliament adopted an increased financial envelope of €73.95 million for the period 2003-2006, compared to €60 million proposed by the Commission. The Commission's recent Annual Policy Strategy (APS) decision (COM (2003) 83 final) defined its 2004 priorities and contributed to prepare the programming of the Financial Perspectives for 2005-2006. The financial framework adopted by the European Parliament for this regulation can be accommodated within Heading 4 of the Financial perspectives and, in particular, within the increased envelope foreseen for ABB Policy Area Development.

The Commission can therefore accept in its entirety Parliament's position at first reading.

3.2. Amended proposal

Having regard to Article 250 (2), of the EC Treaty, the Commission modifies its proposal as indicated above.