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Federica Mogherini

High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-
President of the European Commission

Brussels, 17 April 2019

Dear High Representative,

We, Members of the European Parliament, welcome the decision of the European Commission to grant an initial amount of € 1.2 million in response to the devastating floods that have recently affected northern and south-western parts of Iran. However, due to US sanctions, it is only possible to deliver non-monetary aid to the disaster-impacted areas, while the sole way to donate money is, so far, through German Red Cross.

The imposition of these sanctions by the US violates the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran and unduly restricts legitimate trade relations with the country, despite Iran's full compliance with the JCPOA, as certified by multiple reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Sanctions also negatively impact Iran's access to equipment necessary for rescue operations: for example, due to the lack of spare parts for helicopters, evacuation works are severely undermined. During humanitarian disasters, this leads to increasing numbers of victims which otherwise could have been entirely avoidable.

Considering the scope and scale of the relief needs, does the European Commission plan to use the recently established Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) to deliver financial assistance to Iran to help the flood victims? If not, does it envisage establishing a specific banking channel for that purpose? Did any Member State follow the lead of Germany in establishing payment channels for donations? Does the High Representative and the European Commission intend to take action to mobilise the Member States to provide a common European response to this natural disaster in Iran?

We call on you, High Representative, to keep exercising leadership on this matter and ensuring that the EU lives up to its commitments on JCPOA, continues providing the necessary and timely assistance to Iran in coping with this natural disaster and contributes to better preparedness of the country in facing such situations in the future.

Best regards,

Ana Gomes (S&D)

Javier Nart (ALDE)

Patricia Lalonde (ALDE)

Janusz Lewandowski (EPP)

Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/EFA)

José Inácio Faria (EPP)