

Statement by Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos Stylianides on the deadly forest fires in Portugal

All our thoughts are with the families and friends of those affected by the deadly forest fires that have struck several parts of Portugal.

We express our condolences to those that have lost loved ones.

The EU is fully ready to help. All will be done to assist the authorities and people of Portugal at this time of need.

In an immediate response to a request for assistance by the Portuguese authorities, the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism has been activated to provide firefighting aircraft.

Immediately, France has offered three planes through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and they will be quickly sent to assist the local emergency efforts. In addition, Spain has also sent aircraft on a bilateral basis.

We commend the bravery of the firefighters and emergency services on the scene risking their own lives to save others.

The European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), which monitors natural disasters 24/7, is in constant contact with the national civil protection authorities.

The EU's emergency centre has sent a liaison officer to Portugal and will coordinate the delivery of support and any further requests.