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C(2022) 9252 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 6.12.2022

**on the financing of the multiannual action plan in favour of the Asia-Pacific region for
2022-2023**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/201/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012¹, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009², and in particular Articles 23 and 24 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of the multiannual action plan in favour of the Asia-Pacific region for 2022-2023, it is necessary to adopt a multiannual financing decision, which constitutes the multiannual work programme for 2022-2023. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 ('the Financial Regulation') establishes detailed rules on financing decisions.
- (2) The envisaged assistance is to comply with the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.
- (3) The actions provided for in this Decision (namely those described in Annexes I and III) contribute to climate mainstreaming in line with the European Green Deal and the inter-institutional agreement.
- (4) The Commission has adopted the multiannual indicative programme for the Asia Pacific region for the period 2021-2027⁴ (RMIP), which sets out the following priority areas: regional integration and cooperation, pursuing EU interests with key partners, and migration, forced displacement and mobility.
- (5) The objectives pursued by the multiannual action plan to be financed under the Regulation (EU) 2021/947 geographic programme 'Asia and the Pacific' are to help

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p.1.

³ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy, the OJ prevails.

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision adopting a multiannual indicative programme for the Asia Pacific region for the period 2021-2027, C(2021)9251 final of 15.12.2021. .

position the EU as a partner of reference in the Asia-Pacific region and support partner countries in addressing key local and global challenges, including: sustainable modernisation (infrastructure, urbanisation, digitalisation, energy transition, water management, mobility, circular economy); the promotion of rules-based and effective multilateralism; migration and mobility (migrant protection; reintegration of returnees; financial inclusion of migrants, remittance families and returnees; and addressing root causes of irregular migration, evidence-based policy and programming in the area).

- (6) The EU has decided to step up its strategic engagement with the Indo-Pacific region by adopting in September 2021 an EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific⁵. The Strategy highlights seven priority areas: sustainable and inclusive prosperity; green transition; ocean governance; digital governance and partnerships; connectivity; security and defence; and human security. The EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy highlights the strategic relevance of the Indo-Pacific region for the European Union. In accordance with its Indo-Pacific Strategy, the EU intends to increase its engagement with the region to build partnerships that reinforce the rules-based international order and address global challenges. On 21-22 October 2021, the European Council expressed support for the EU Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- (7) In a Joint Communication of December 2021, the European Commission and the EU High Representative set out the Global Gateway, a new European strategy to boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education and research systems across the world, including the Asia-Pacific region. While remaining values-driven, Global Gateway stands for sustainable and trusted connections that work for people and the planet, to tackle the most pressing global challenges, from climate change and protecting the environment, to improving health security and boosting competitiveness and global supply chains. Global Gateway builds on the achievements of the 2018 EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy, the recently concluded Connectivity Partnerships with India and Japan and is fully aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement.
- (8) The action entitled 'Global Gateway: India' aims to support India's sustainable modernisation ambitions contained within the EU-India Strategic Partnership, and forms part of the implementation of the EU-India Roadmap 2025 and EU-India Connectivity Partnership, as well as the implementation of a number of sectoral partnerships. The foreseen action is also in support of the external dimension of the European Green Deal, with improved environmental and climate policies, supporting India's commitments and engagement under the Paris Agreement, the Convention on Biodiversity and other multilateral environmental agreements. With regards to good governance and addressing inequalities, a more inclusive and participatory decision-making process of civil society, particularly of underprivileged groups is anticipated, which will support aims of poverty reduction and improving social inclusion.
- (9) The action entitled 'Support Measures – Cooperation Facility for India – Strategic Communication' aims at undertaking political communication and large-scale public campaigns designed to raise awareness and understanding of the European Union's partnership with the country, our mutual policy interests, as well as the Global Gateway flagships and Team Europe interventions.
- (10) The action entitled 'Support for the EU's Environmental and Energy Policies and Effective Multilateralism in China' aims to promote EU's values and interests and to support working with China to tackle global challenges, including delivering on

⁵ JOIN (2021) 24 final, 16.9.2021.

international commitments such as the Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement. The action seeks to underpin progress in the external dimension of the European Green Deal through sectoral initiatives focused on promoting the transition to a circular economy, improving water management and supporting the clean energy transition as part of the implementation of the EU-China Roadmap on Energy Cooperation (2020-2025). With regards to China's growing role as a global development actor, the action aims to uphold and promote rules-based multilateralism in international development, based on the fundamental principles of the UN Charter, and in support of the Joint Communication "Strengthening the EU's contribution to rules-based multilateralism" (2021).

- (11) The action entitled 'Sustainable Social and Economic Re-integration, and improved migration governance in Iraq' aims at assisting the Government of Iraq in the reintegration of displaced populations (refugees, Internally Displaced People) and returnees from Europe and elsewhere, while strengthening the overall national migration governance and migration management capacities, and addressing the root causes of fragility and irregular migration among vulnerable categories of the population.
- (12) The action entitled 'Remittances, Investment and Migrants' Entrepreneurship in Central Asia (REMIT)' aims to maximise the impact of remittances for sustainable development in Central Asia. It will contribute to enhancing the enabling environment of the remittance markets for cost-effective, fast and safe transfer in new remittance corridors and channels in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It will help increase access to formal digital remittances and expand financial and economic inclusion of migrants, remittance families and returnees to strengthen their resilience.
- (13) The action entitled 'Improving Migration Management and Migrant Protection in selected Silk Route countries (PROTECT)' aims at improving migration management covering all phases of (in and out) migration in the target countries, enhancing awareness on the risks of irregular migration and facilitate the protection of migrants. It will provide support to informed migration decisions at the individual, family, and community level, including pre-departure preparation, migration and residence/work abroad, and sustainable reintegration.
- (14) The action entitled 'Displacement Tracking and Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy in Asia (DATA)' aims at strengthening evidence-based formulation and implementation of humanitarian and development policy and programming on migration and displacement in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Action will focus on further enhancing the evidence base on displacement, migration and return through comprehensive and regularly updated baseline mobility data as well as analysis and information on drivers of migration and displacement, foresight and demographic trend analysis, mobile populations and host community needs and vulnerabilities, mobility solution indexes including return and integration.
- (15) The action entitled 'Support Measures – Cooperation Facility for Asia and the Pacific – Strategic Communication' aims to raise awareness, understanding and perception of the EU and its partnership with the Asia-Pacific region, through the implementation of strategic communication activities. These activities will focus on the priorities identified in the RMIP, as well as relevant global and regional strategies, highlighting Global Gateway flagships and regional Team Europe initiatives and programmes.

- (16) Pursuant to Article 26(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the action.
- (17) The Commission is to ensure a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union with regards to entities and persons entrusted with the implementation of Union funds by indirect management as provided for in Article 154(3) of the Financial Regulation.
- To this end, such entities and persons are to be subject to an assessment of their systems and procedures in accordance with Article 154(4) of the Financial Regulation⁶ and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) thereof before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- (18) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (19) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the action plan, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (20) The action plan provided for in this Decision is in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established under Article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The action plan

The multiannual financing decision, constituting the multiannual action plan for the implementation of the multiannual action plan in favour of the Asia-Pacific region for 2022-2023, as set out in the Annexes, is adopted.

The action plan shall include the following actions:

- (a) 'Global Gateway: India' set out in Annex I;
- (b) 'Support Measures – Cooperation Facility for India – Strategic Communication' set out in Annex II;
- (c) 'Support for the EU's Environmental and Energy Policies and Effective Multilateralism in China' set out in Annex III;
- (d) 'Sustainable Social and Economic Re-integration, and improved migration governance in Iraq' set out in Annex IV;
- (e) 'Remittances, Investment and Migrants' Entrepreneurship in Central Asia (REMIT)' set out in Annex V;
- (f) 'Improving Migration Management and Migrant Protection in selected Silk Route countries (PROTECT)' set out in Annex VI;
- (g) 'Displacement Tracking and Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy in Asia (DATA)' set out in Annex VII;
- (h) 'Support Measures – Cooperation Facility Asia and the Pacific – Strategic Communication' set out in Annex VIII.

⁶ Except for the cases of Article 154(6) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046, where the Commission may decide, not to require an ex-ante assessment

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the multiannual action plan in favour of the Asia-Pacific region for 2022-2023 is set at EUR 84 000 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following lines of the general budget of the Union:

- (a) budget line BGUE-B2022-14.020130 (Middle East and Central Asia): EUR 44 800 000;
- (b) budget line BGUE-B2022-14.020131 (South and East Asia): EUR 15 700 000;
- (c) budget line BGUE-B2023-14.020131 (South and East Asia): EUR 23 500 000.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2023 following the adoption of that budget by the budget authority.

Article 3
Methods of implementation and entrusted entities or persons

The implementation of the actions carried out by way of indirect management, as set out in the Annexes I, III, IV, V, VI and VII, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 4.3.3 of Annex I, point 4.3.2 of Annexes III and IV, and point 4.3.1 of Annexes V, VI and VII.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 000 000 not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, considering each financial year separately, or cumulated changes⁷ to the allocations of specific actions not exceeding 20% of that contribution, as well as extensions of the implementation period shall not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation provided that these changes do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the changes referred to in the first paragraph. Those changes shall be applied in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 6.12.2022

For the Commission
Jutta URPIAINEN
Member of the Commission

⁷ These changes can come from assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing decision.