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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 5.5.2022

on the financing of the action plan for EU foreign policy needs on information manipulation, economic diversification, support to multilateralism and environmental and cultural diplomacy for 2022

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

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 541/2014/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 Article 23(2) and (5) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure the implementation of ‘EU foreign policy needs on information manipulation, economic diversification, support to multilateralism and environmental and cultural diplomacy’, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing decision, which constitutes the annual work programme, for 2022. 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 contribute to climate and biodiversity mainstreaming in line with the European Green Deal and the inter-institutional agreement.
- (4) The objective pursued by the action plan to be financed under the Regulation (EU) 2021/947 is to enable the EU to address short and medium-term foreign policy needs and opportunities by supporting innovative policies/initiatives and by deepening EU relations and dialogues, forging alliances and partnerships, in the fields of trade and

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.

investment, environmental and cultural diplomacy, support to multilateralism and information manipulation.

- (5) The action plan aims to implement a rapid response action, pursuant to Article 23(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947, and is justified by the imperative foreign policy interest for the EU to respond quickly to emerging foreign policy needs in the priority areas of information manipulation, economic diversification, support to multilateralism and environmental and cultural diplomacy.
- (6) The action entitled 'EU foreign policy needs on information manipulation, economic diversification, support to multilateralism and environmental and cultural diplomacy' aims to a) enhance EU-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) trade and investment relations and deepen the engagement with GCC counterparts on further economic diversification, b) support environmental diplomacy and strengthen partnerships with key high income countries as well as promote the projection of EU policies, approaches and technologies abroad; c) strengthen EU's ability to foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding with third countries; d) support the operationalisation of the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and contribute to anchor the EU's values and vision of digital cooperation in the work of the UN Envoy on Technology and his/her Office; e) fight digital authoritarianism through a strong collaboration between the EU and Taiwan.
- (7) It is appropriate to authorise the award of grants without a call for proposals and to provide for the conditions for awarding those grants.
- (8) The Commission should authorise the launch of a call for tender by means of a suspensive clause before the adoption of this Decision.
- (9) Pursuant to NDICI-Global Europe, Article 26(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947, indirect management is to be used for the implementation of the part of the action.
- (10) 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 Regulation and, if necessary, to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) thereof before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- (11) 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.
- (12) 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.
- (13) The action plan provided for in this Decision does not fall within the categories of action plans for which the prior opinion of the Committee is required. The European Parliament and Committee established under Article 45 of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 should be informed of this Decision within one month following its adoption.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
The action plan

The annual financing decision, constituting the annual action plan for the implementation of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the action plan for EU foreign policy needs on information manipulation, economic diversification, support to multilateralism and environmental and cultural diplomacy for 2022, as set out in the Annex, is adopted.

The action plan shall include the following action: ‘EU foreign policy needs on information manipulation, economic diversification, support to multilateralism and environmental and cultural diplomacy’.

Article 2
Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the action plan for 2022 is set at EUR 9 500 000, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following line of the general budget of the Union: 14 02 03 30 – Foreign Policy Needs of the general budget of the Union.

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

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 Annex, may be entrusted to the entities or persons referred to or selected in accordance with the criteria laid down in point 4.1.3 of the Annex.

Article 4
Flexibility clause

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20% of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes⁴ 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.

⁴ These changes can come from assigned revenue made available after the adoption of the financing decision.

Article 5
Grants - Procurement

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals in accordance with the conditions set out in the Annex. Grants may be awarded to the bodies selected in accordance with point 4.1.1 of the Annex.

Launching a call for tender under a suspensive clause before the adoption of this Decision shall be authorised as of the date set out in point 4.1.2 of the Annex.

Done at Brussels, 5.5.2022

For the Commission
Josep BORRELL FONTELLES
Vice-President