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ANNEX

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the action plan in favour of EU foreign policy needs on Enhancing security cooperation in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific (ESIWA+) for 2024

Action Document for EU foreign policy needs on Enhancing Security cooperation In and With Asia and the Indo-Pacific (ESIWA+)

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and actual plan within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Enhancing security cooperation in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific (ESIWA+) OPSYS number: ACT-62664; JAD.1418261 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Asian and Indo-Pacific countries
4. Programming document	NA
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	NA
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Security
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 17 – Partnerships to achieve the goal
8 a) DAC code(s)	99810
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	13000 Third Country Government

9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	/
	Connectivity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity energy transport health education and research	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	/
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line: 14 02 03 30 Total estimated cost: EUR 6 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Indirect management with an entity to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.1.1.			

1.2 Summary of the Action

Since its adoption and launch following the Council Conclusions on Enhanced EU security cooperation in and with Asia (28 May 2018)¹, the FPI funded project “Enhancing security cooperation in and with Asia” (ESIWA) has proven its added value as an important and timely project for the EU and its Member States, as well as increasingly for Indo-Pacific partners, at a time when the security and defence dimension of the EU is gaining momentum. Through the growing ownership of ESIWA by the partner countries, the EU and the EU Delegations have been increasing locally their access to governments, including the security and defence apparatus, thus further facilitating exchanges and promoting cooperation on the basis of shared or converging interests. EU’s visibility in the region and perception as a reliable smart enabler for security has been further enhanced.

Building and capitalising on the regional buy-in and the successful achievements and lessons learned ESIWA, the new rapid response action Enhancing security cooperation in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific (ESIWA+) will address EU’s foreign policy needs and priorities in relation to urgent and imperative EU foreign policy interests across security and defence issues in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific, and reinforce European cooperation through Team Europe dynamics. The action responds to the criteria set in Annex IV, paragraph 3, points (a) and (d) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947².

In line with the principles of the 2021 Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific³, this rapid response action aims to step up support to further strengthen the EU’s security engagement in the Indo-Pacific. Moreover, it is in line with the EU Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS), which calls for maintaining stability and security along key shipping routes in the Indo-Pacific. The EUMSS also calls for conducting joint maritime security exercises with partners to boost interoperability, in addition to carrying out more frequent EU port calls and patrols, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, in line with the Strategic Compass..

This action will enable the EU to address short and medium-term foreign policy needs and opportunities by supporting innovative policies and initiatives and by deepening EU relations and dialogues, forging alliances and partnerships with key Asian and Indo-Pacific partners of strategic interest for the EU.

ESIWA+ will in particular support the operationalisation of the security and defence dialogues and cooperation with partner countries; promote synergies and cooperation between the EU and partner countries in the field of security and defence; and contribute to raising the EU profile as a security smart enabler for security and defence. More concretely, ESIWA+ will support cooperation with partners in Asia and the Indo-Pacific in the areas such as: maritime security, counter terrorism, crisis management (peacekeeping/CSDP), cybersecurity, hybrid threats, foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), including disinformation, and space.

Partners countries in the Indo-Pacific region may cooperate with the EU in one, several or all these areas, at variable geometry, depending on shared and/or converging interests. Activities in other policies domains could be supported by the project based on identified needs and opportunities for enhanced cooperation with partners in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. These activities could create a common sense of purpose with partner countries and further support the development of tailored partnerships to promote EU interests in the region.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/35456/st09265-re01-en18.pdf>

² (a) support for the Union’s bilateral, regional and inter-regional cooperation strategies, promoting policy dialogue and developing collective approaches and responses to challenges of global concern, such as migration and forced displacement, climate change and security issues, including mediation, and exploiting windows of opportunity in this regard; (d) promotion of widespread understanding and visibility of the Union and of its role on the world scene, by means of strategic communication, public diplomacy, people-to-people contacts, cultural diplomacy, cooperation in educational and academic matters, and outreach activities to promote the Union’s values and interests.

³ https://www.eas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/jointcommunication_2021_24_1_en.pdf

Aligned with the EU interests, policies and strategic priorities, ESIWA+ will function in a flexible and a demand driven modality focused on the development of specific activities in the framework of the implementation of the EU Indo-Pacific strategy and the EU Strategic Compass, as well as of the relevant bilateral security and defence dialogues.

The action will coordinate with other ongoing EU initiatives on the same domains, among others the EU Digital Economy Package in the Philippines focusing on cybersecurity capacity building and the Philippines Copernicus programme on earth observation.

1.3 Zone benefitting from the Action

The Action shall be carried out in Asian and Indo-Pacific countries.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Despite the distance between Europe and the Indo-Pacific countries, the region's importance for the EU has been growing over the last three years, particularly against the backdrop of on-going geopolitical shifts further exacerbated by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Europe and the Indo-Pacific are highly interconnected, and not only in economic terms. The EU and Indo-Pacific partners are confronted with an increasing number of complex and multidimensional security challenges: hotspots with increasing geo-political competition, territorial and maritime disputes; hybrid operations, such as malicious cyber activities; economic coercion; foreign information manipulation and interference/disinformation.

Fast-growing polarisation of international politics, including in the context of growing strategic competition which has as its main theaters the Indo-Pacific, Russia's war against Ukraine, and the crisis in the Middle East, certainly contributes to this evolution. This provides a clear need for the EU to further enhance its engagement in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific region on security issues, including by promoting more operational and results-oriented cooperation through ESIWA+.

The EU Council Conclusions on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific of 16 April 2021⁴ and the adoption of the joint Communication on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific on 16 September 2021⁵ further increased the value of ESIWA as an implementation tool of the EU's geopolitical priorities in a much broader area. Security and defence is one of the seven priority areas highlighted in the Indo-Pacific strategy which mentions expressly the ESIWA project⁶. The 2022 EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defence also identifies the Indo Pacific as an area for further engagement, stressing the importance of establishing tailor-made and mutually beneficial partnerships in security and defence with partners sharing the EU's values and/or interests.

ESIWA+ will be part of the broader strategic approach by the EU and Member States as set out in the 2021 Joint Communication on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Strategic Compass. It will support the implementation of the Council Conclusions calling on the EU to scale up its security engagement in and with Asia (May 2018) and of other key policy documents, notably the EU Council Conclusions on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and the Strategic Compass. It will complement the EU's economic reach, by scaling up security engagements in and with Asia with tailor-made cooperation activities with partner countries that reflect shared or converging interests and priorities.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

The Indo-Pacific region is of key strategic importance for the EU and globally, both in economic and geopolitical terms. The European Union and the Indo-Pacific are highly interconnected and interdependent. As underlined by HRVP Borrell, the Indo-Pacific region "is becoming the world's centre of gravity, both in geo-economic and geopolitical terms."

⁴ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7914-2021-INIT/en/pdf>

⁵ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-communication-indo-pacific_en

⁶ "The EU will also step up activities with partners under the project Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia (ESIWA), which covers counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, maritime security and crisis management. The pilot partners are India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Vietnam, with EU military experts already operating in Indonesia and in Vietnam".

The European Union and Indo-Pacific partners have also a shared stake in each other's security as they both face complex and interconnected security challenges. Growing geopolitical competition in the Indo-Pacific, as well as significant challenges to international peace and stability and the rules-based international order, highlight the need for increased cooperation between the EU and its Indo-Pacific partners. Threats are becoming increasingly complex and multi-layered, with some countries seeking to re-define the core tenets of the multilateral order, including through violations of national sovereignty and borders. Growing tensions in the South and East China Seas and in the Taiwan Strait affect global security and have a direct impact on the prosperity of both the European Union and the Indo-Pacific.

As underlined by the EU Council in its conclusions on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, the EU should reinforce its strategic focus, presence and actions in the Indo-Pacific with the aim of contributing to the stability, security, prosperity and sustainable development of the region. Mounting geopolitical tensions and accelerated technological shifts, present increasing risks on trade and the resilience of supply chains as well as in technological, political and security areas. In today's challenging geopolitical landscape in the Indo-Pacific, working closely with partners remains a key priority.

The launch in 2021 of the EU's strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific was an important milestone and has reframed our approach towards the region. Through its strategy, the EU aims to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific, to reinforce respect of international law and address global challenges. Security and defence are among the key priority areas of the EU Indo-Pacific strategy. The EU also seeks to enhance security in the region by developing synergies with partners in the areas of maritime security, cybersecurity, space, counter-terrorism, hybrid threats, conflict prevention, disinformation and crisis management. As set out in the EU Strategic Compass of 2022, the EU wishes to establish "tailored partnerships" in the Indo-Pacific designed to better address our common challenges.

In this context, the 2021 EU Council Conclusions on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific stress that the EU will develop partnerships and strengthen synergies with partners to respond to challenges to international security, including maritime security, malicious cyber activities, security of space assets, disinformation, as well as from emerging and disruptive technologies, countering and improving resilience to terrorism, violent extremism and hybrid threats, countering organised crime and illicit trafficking, in full compliance with international law. In this framework, the 2021 Council Conclusions refer expressly to the EU funded ESIWA project.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

Partner countries' and associate countries' governments and national authorities (such as ministries of foreign affairs, ministries of defence, ministries of interior/home affairs, national police authorities, coast guards, national cyber authorities, national peacekeeping training centres, etc); EU institutions and agencies; EU Member States governments and national authorities (such as ministries of foreign affairs, ministries of defence, ministries for interior/home affairs, national police authorities, coast guards, national cyber authorities, national peacekeeping training centres, etc); research community, think tanks and universities in European Member States and partner countries; private sector operating in the areas of defence, security and cyber industries, both European and local.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective of this action is to support EU's foreign policy and security priorities in relation to urgent and imperative engagement and interests, in particular to enhance the EU's security and defence cooperation in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific, and prepare the ground and facilitate operational cooperation between European and Asia and the Indo-Pacific partners, in line with the EU Indo-Pacific strategy.

The Specific Objectives (SO) of this action are:

1. To contribute to enhancing regional security in Asia and the Indo-Pacific and support the implementation of EU's political and security and defence dialogues with partner countries in Asia and the Indo-Pacific;
2. To increase and enhance operational cooperation between the EU and partners in Asia and the Indo-Pacific;

3. To promote understanding among partner countries of EU's policies and strategies in response to security threats and challenges in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region, and increase international awareness and recognition of the EU as a security and defence actor in the Indo-Pacific.

The Outputs (O) to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

- 1.1. Enhanced engagement and advocacy through regular dialogues with key Indo-Pacific partners on security topics of shared or converging interest;
- 2.1. Deeper operational cooperation with Asian and Indo-Pacific partners in the areas of security and defence;
- 3.1. Increased exposure to and awareness of EU's policies and strategies in response to security threats and challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond;
- 3.2. Increased visibility and awareness in the Indo-Pacific of the EU as a "smart enabler" for security and defence.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities related to Output 1:

- Organise dialogues (track 1.5 and 2.0) with the partner countries.
- Provide expertise on security and defence related policies, including on the collection and analysis of information relevant to EU security-related dialogues with partner countries and regional/international security-related fora on Indo-Pacific, and other activities upon request.
- Facilitate of EU's and EU Member States's participation in relevant policy dialogue events in the EU and throughout Asia and the Indo-Pacific.
- Develop networks of influence multipliers in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region.

Activities related to Output 2:

- Build capacity, organise and deliver training, provide advice.
- Organise experts' exchanges, study visits, workshops, thematic events and provision of technical assistance.
- Provide and/or facilitate peer-to-peer exchanges of experience and best practices, as well as cross-fertilisation for the development and implementation of legislative frameworks, policies, national action plans, guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Facilitate EU's and EU Member States's participation in relevant capacity-building events (including joint exercises) in the EU and throughout Asia and the Indo-Pacific.
- Facilitate the participation of partner countries in EU CSDP missions and operations.
- Develop networks of practitioners.
- Develop tools (i.e. handbooks, toolkits, platforms).
- Develop networks of experts and influence multipliers in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region.

Activities related to Output 3:

- Facilitate EU's and EU Member States's participation in high-profile public events in the EU and throughout Indo-Pacific.
- Provide support to official EU events through side events, public outreach, or exhibitions to engage with non-governmental stakeholders, academia, and the general public.
- Organise study tours on EU cooperation on security and defence.
- Produce and disseminate country targeted communication material illustrating the role of the EU as global security actor and promoter of peace.
- Develop networks of influence multipliers in Asia and the Indo-Pacific region.
- Conduct awareness and advocacy in partner countries.

3.3 Mainstreaming

The action will directly target crosscutting issues such as rule of law, good governance, environment, human rights and gender equality, and will adhere to the highest standards of conduct, discipline and accountability. Gender equality will be mainstreamed across all activities. All activities under this action will be value-based and driven, integrating the key principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency) of the human rights based approach.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
Changes in the priorities of partner countries and in EU bilateral relations	1	Medium	High	Monitoring of international developments and their effect on the project. Project design introduces necessary level of flexibility to respond to changing needs / priorities, by focusing on particular topics and/or by involving stakeholders from a wide spectrum.
Gender equality may be seen as a no-relevant and no-priority aspect by implementing partners. If not explicitly included in specific activities and initiatives, it may not be adequately integrated to the degree needed.	2	Medium	Low	Developing and implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy with mandatory training of project staff on gender, diversity and women, peace and security. A qualified gender advisor will carry out gender-mainstreaming screening of each planned activity.
Lack or reduced understanding and acknowledgement of EU as a security actor, and lack of buy-in and ownership from partner countries.	3	Medium	Medium	Strong, timely, well-targeted and effective communication and public diplomacy processes to match country-specific issues and needs which complement EU approaches to security. Strong participatory (co-design) approach, tailor-made proposals, effective communications and dialogue process supported by EU to ensure stakeholders from pilot countries remain engaged.
Overlap or duplication with existing EU-funded projects at national and regional level and with projects from other donors.	4	Low	Medium	Close interaction with EEAS/Commission geographical desks and EU DELs, and relevant ongoing projects including in the Philippines, as the Digital Economy Package focus on cybersecurity capacity building and the Copernicus programme on earth observation. Informal coordination with other donors, including Member States, to avoid overlaps. Project design also introduces necessary level of flexibility to avoid overlaps.
Staff turnover at implementing agency and beneficiary level	5	High	High	Set up of a knowledge hub and communication / information plan and knowledge management tools to support institutional memory. Introduction of successor to important counterparts by outgoing staff.
Lessons learnt:				

ESIWA has played a distinctive role in the promotion of the security and defence agenda of the EU in the Indo-Pacific. The internal ESIWA mid-term review (June 2023) carried out by FPI and EEAS in consultation with the ministries of foreign affairs of Germany and France, and based on the outcome of the external ESIWA mid-term evaluation (June 2023), concluded that:

- there are growing interactions between the EU and the Indo-Pacific partners in the security area. ESIWA should contribute in supporting the implementation of political and security dialogues through concrete activities that would further demonstrate in practical terms the EU's role as a reliable security enabler.
- ESIWA should be a flexible operational tool open to countries in the Indo-Pacific region, based on EU strategic and geopolitical interests, including as stated in the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy, and in line with the capacities of ESIWA. A particular focus should be kept on a core of key partners in the region. ESIWA should operate as a demand driven facility, focused on the development of specific activities and initiatives in the framework of the implementation of the EU Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Strategic Compass, in full respect of the EU interests and values.

More findings and lesson learnt highlighted that cooperation should be enhanced between the different thematic areas. Without necessarily increasing the number of thematic areas, it could be envisaged to broaden the scope of existing areas to include emerging issues of interest for our partners, in line with the objectives of the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Where there is a clear lack of interest to cooperate from a partner side, ESIWA should redeploy its resources and refocus attention to other partner countries or thematic areas where there is more potential for cooperation in the EU interest, without closing the door to future opportunities of cooperation. ESIWA should further focus on activities and areas of work that contribute to its sustainability or have the potential to be sustainable. This includes in particular: capacity building; knowledge products; awareness raising in Indo-Pacific countries on EU as credible and relevant enabler in security and defence; practical cooperation and networks among ESIWA countries, as well as with EU institutions, EU Member States, academic and think tank contacts.

Whenever relevant, the action will also seek synergies with and promote any interventions supported under the EU's Global Gateway initiative⁷ as well as EU-funded projects, including but not limited to: 'Advancing EU's Role in Multilateral Fora in Asia', 'Critical Maritime Routes II' (CRIMARIO II)', 'Critical Infrastructure Protection', 'Radicalisation Awareness Network' (RAN), 'European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence initiative', 'EU Global Facility on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism', 'Cyber Resilience for Development' (Cyber4dev), 'EU Cyber Capacity Building Network' (EU CyberNet), Global Action Against Cybercrime – Extended (GLACY-e), 'National Copernicus Capacity Support Action Programme for the Philippines. The action will coordinate and ensure complementarity with all existing initiatives, including possible cooperation arrangements of EU agencies such as Europol as well as with any related EU funded capacity building actions, while seeking synergies, and avoiding duplication.

⁷ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.2, will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date from the adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision. Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.1.1 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

This action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: Member State agency with an established presence both at regional and/or country level in the Indo-Pacific; solid presence in cooperation on security matters with countries in the Indo-Pacific; vast network of contacts in the security domain with Asia and Indo-Pacific partners; substantial experience in supporting EU-ASEAN policy dialogue and ASEAN regional integration; solid experience of close cooperation with EEAS, European Commission DGs, other EU institutions and EU Member States; significant experience in managing large and complex EU funded actions. The implementation by this entity entails support to policy dialogue, exchange of expertise and best practices, training and capacity-building, organisation of seminars/conferences/events, carrying out studies and analysis, awarding grants to implement specific thematic components and/or activities.

4.1.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

The action will be implemented in indirect management with no possibility to change the mode to direct management.

4.2. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components⁸	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Indirect management with a Member State agency	6 000 000
Totals	6 000 000

4.3 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

Involvement of EU and EU Member States structures is crucial to go beyond policy dialogue and get real impact, to achieve the best possible balance of expertise in the prioritised areas of intervention and to promote an EU collective approach that ensures the visibility of the EU as a global security actor.

A **Steering Committee** chaired by the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) will be established. The EEAS will provide the requisite steering at a strategic level, ensuring complementarity with the EU official dialogues and political positions. In addition, country-specific liaison teams will be established to monitor country-level work plans.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final evaluation may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision).

The Commission shall inform the implementing partners at least 3 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partners shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 "[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)", it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies:

Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia – Indo-Pacific (ESIWA+)