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### ANNEX

#### **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe**

##### **Exceptional Assistance Measure regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina**

### **1. IDENTIFICATION**

Action: Bosnia and Herzegovina – Support to multi-level reconciliation initiatives

Action Reference: NDICI CR 2022/07

Cost: EUR 3 500 000 (European Union (EU) contribution)

Budget Line: 14 02 03 10

Duration: Maximum 18 months. The authorising officer responsible may decide to extend this period twice by a further period of up to six months, up to a total maximum duration of 30 months, under the conditions laid down in Article 23(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

Lead service: FPI

### **2. ACTION SUMMARY**

This 18-month action will seek to underpin the informal policy dialogue of EU together with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe by rallying relevant peacebuilding activists, civil society organisations and their networks and by providing support in linking up local reconciliation initiatives to national and international political processes. The aim is to build a critical mass on which broader reconciliation processes can be built. This will involve the creation of a peacebuilding network to bolster cooperation between relevant local activists across the country and enable their involvement in broader policy processes. Assistance will also be provided to initiatives of civil society, activists and local authorities that foster constructive relations between different ethnic communities and have a strong potential for multiplication effects. Efforts that promote positive narratives and counter divisive rhetoric at the national level will also be supported.

### **3. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

#### **3.1 BACKGROUND**

For the past year, Bosnia and Herzegovina has faced one of the most serious challenges to its state unity and sovereignty since the end of the conflict in 1995. *Republika Srpska* entity political representatives have been blocking political institutions and have started a process to withdraw the *Republika Srpska* entity from State-level institutions. Institutional paralysis has delayed the 2021 State budget from being adopted up to now (although it is now in process) and has been used to call into question the holding of general elections, scheduled for October 2022. While the situation has improved recently thanks to high level EU engagement, these developments have however further accelerated the general polarisation among the communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and renew fears of conflict amongst ordinary citizens. The current situation is the result of many years of divisive rhetoric from nationalist leaders pitting ethnic groups against each other. It is manifested in the country's education curricula for children and youth and in the lack of dialogue about the events of the past. Hate speech; the denial of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity; and the glorification of war criminals, all thrive in a context of longstanding grievances, un-addressed needs for national reconciliation, and fragmented civil society networks. Against this backdrop, the EU together with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe are working in an informal policy dialogue group to support Bosnian authorities and civil society to promote trust building and reconciliation. Earlier this year, the High Representative/Vice President warned that "the nationalist and separatist rhetoric is increasing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and jeopardising the stability and even the integrity of the country." Since then, the geopolitical polarisation resulting from Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and *Republika Srpska's* close ties with Russia, has further enhanced Bosnia and Herzegovina's fragility.

#### **3.2 RATIONALE FOR CRISIS RESPONSE ACTIONS UNDER THE RAPID RESPONSE PILLAR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT**

The political unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina has deteriorated, and this is further exacerbated by the regional repercussions of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, constituting an exceptional and unforeseen situation in the sense of Article 4(4) of the NDICI Regulation. An adequate response cannot be provided under any other European Union Instrument due to the urgency with which the funds are required and due to available resources already being firmly committed.

Annex IV, paragraph 1, second paragraph, points (a), (f) and (q) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 specifically provides for the use of the NDICI rapid response pillar to (a) support, through the provision of technical and logistical assistance, for the efforts undertaken by international, regional and local organisations and by State and civil society actors in promoting confidence-building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation, transitional justice, women's and youth empowerment, in particular with regard to community tensions and protracted conflicts; (f) support for reinforcement of State capacity - in the face of significant pressures to rapidly build, maintain or restore its core functions, and basic social and political cohesion, and (q) support for measures to promote the development and organisation of civil society and its

participation in the political process, including measures to enhance the role of women in such processes and measures to promote independent, pluralist and professional media.

### 3.3 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Risk level H/M/L</b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>
An accelerated deterioration of the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina may create obstacles to the establishment of the civil society network.	<b>M</b>	The implementing partners will be required to have a proven ability to work in politically challenging contexts and to have the necessary flexibility to assess the most relevant internal organisation options for civil society.
Selected communities, organisations or activists may be targeted by activities of several donors simultaneously.	<b>M</b>	The close coordination with other donors will be ensured during identification and implementation of individual initiatives.
Opportunities and preparedness for reconciliation evolves rapidly.	<b>M</b>	The implementing partner to be selected will be required to ensure the necessary flexibility to adjust all activities to a rapidly changing situation at community-level.
Selected communities, organisations or activists may be targeted/harassed by specific groups and/or individuals.	<b>M/L</b>	The close coordination with the civil society will be crucial to mitigate this risk.

## 4. OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the action is to build a critical mass for broader reconciliation processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### 4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 4.2.1 Link-up reconciliation efforts and lessons learnt from successful example at the local, regional, national and international levels to amplify their impact;
- 4.2.2 Empower communities to implement reconciliation and confidence building initiatives.

## **5. ACTION COMPONENTS AND EXPECTED RESULTS**

**The main expected results/outcomes** include:

**Expected Result (1):** Reconciliation efforts are linked-up at the local, regional, national and international levels and their impact is amplified.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.1.1 Support coordination between donors and reconciliation actors at all levels, including with authorities;
- 5.1.2 Support assessments and mapping exercises to identify reconciliation champions and help channel support to the most promising initiatives;
- 5.1.3 Assist in the identification of and communication on best practices and success stories of reconciliation;
- 5.1.4 Support a national media campaign to showcase positive stories in communities.

**Expected Result (2):** Communities are empowered to implement reconciliation and confidence building initiatives.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.2.1 Facilitate dialogue platforms at community level;
- 5.2.2 Identify and provide targeted support to grass-roots and community-level opportunities for reconciliation and confidence building;
- 5.2.3 Identify and provide targeted support to larger scale opportunities for reconciliation, confidence building, and dialogue, where relevant bringing together communities from across the country and beyond.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **6.1 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES**

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>1</sup>.

#### **6.1.1 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity**

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: knowledge of the civil society landscape in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the national, regional and local levels, and being able to leverage convening power to work with and link up actors at all levels in a complex political context. The implementation by this entity entails the creation of a civil society network, the mapping of communities and tailored assistance and the management of related communication campaigns. The entity will thereby contribute towards the

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<sup>1</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) Please 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 between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, it is the OJ version that prevails.

achievement of objectives 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 regarding the area of activities as indicated under 5.1.1, 5.1.3, 5.1.4 and 5.2.1, and 5.2.3 as set out in section 4 and 5.

### **6.1.2 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity**

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: knowledge of the civil society landscape in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the national, regional and local levels, and being able to leverage convening power to work with and link up actors at all levels in a complex political context. The implementation by this entity entails the creation of a civil society network, the mapping of communities and tailored assistance and the management of related communication campaigns. The entity will thereby contribute towards the achievement of objectives 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 regarding the area of activities as indicated under 5.1.2 and 5.2.2 as set out in section 4 and 5.

### **6.1.3 Changes from indirect to direct management mode due to exceptional circumstances**

In the unlikely event that exceptional circumstances outside of the Commission's control should make it necessary to change the implementation modality regarding the achievement of objectives 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, results 1 and 2, from indirect to direct management, the following modality would be used:

#### **Grant: direct award (direct management)**

##### **(a) Purpose of the grant**

A grant will be awarded for the implementation of components 1 and 2 and the achievement of objectives 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 as set out in detail in section 5 above, results 1 and 2.

##### **(b) Type of applicants targeted**

The type of applicants targeted are non-profit organisations and private companies.

##### **(c) Justification of a direct grant**

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because **the action entails crisis management aid as referred to in Article 195(a) and as defined in Article 2(21) of the Financial Regulation** at the date of the Financing Decision.

## **6.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET**

The total European Union contribution under this Financing Decision **will not exceed EUR 3 500 000**. A breakdown among components is provided hereunder, and is indicative.

### Indicative budget breakdown

<b>Components</b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR)</b>	<b>Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified</b>
Component 1:		
6.1.1 – Indirect management	3 300 000	N.A.
Component 2:		
6.1.2. – Indirect management	200 000	N.A.
Total	3 500 000	N.A.

### **6.3 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The action shall be implemented under indirect management. It will be devolved and sub-delegated to the **European Union Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina**, with the support of the Commission for the conclusion of the contracts implementing the action.

### **6.4 PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS 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 report. Each 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 outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

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).

### **6.5 EVALUATION**

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

## **6.6 AUDIT**

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 audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

The financing of the audit shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

## **6.7 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Action (or any succeeding document) shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

## **7. COMPLEMENTARITY, COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

Complementarity and coordination will be sought with previous and ongoing crisis response projects. Particular emphasis will be given to ensure good coordination with other support initiatives by the EU, EU Member States and other donors.