



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 18.1.2019
C(2019) 80 final*

*Mr Jaroslav KUBERA
President of the Senát
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE 1*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) {COM (2018) 460 final} and the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) {COM (2018) 465 final}.

Following its proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027¹, the Commission presented on 14 June 2018 the legislative proposals referred to in the Senát's Opinion. The proposals aim to streamline the external action architecture and render the financing instruments more flexible, more coherent and more effective.

The Commission appreciates the support of the Senát for the proposed modernisation and streamlining of the European Union external actions instruments as well as its support for the increase of the envelope for the European Neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood is identified as a priority for the European Union's external action. This is reflected in the substantial increase of the funding proposed for this region with a ring-fenced envelope of EUR 22 billion, representing a 24% increase from the current funding (in current prices). This increase will allow the Union to continue to support adequately both the Southern and Eastern partners of the European Neighbourhood.

The Commission also welcomes the support of the Senát to the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) and especially the positive assessment expressed towards its increased funding, representing a 13% increase from the current funding (in current prices) and the alignment with the Union's priorities, in particular with regard to the Western Balkans.

¹ COM(2018) 321 final.

The Commission proposal regarding the thresholds for which an opinion of the Committees is required is based on the conclusions of the external evaluation of the Common Implementing Regulation of the external financing instruments, which stated that these thresholds were too restrictive and therefore did not enhance European Union action responsiveness.

The proposals presented by the Commission are currently in the legislative process involving both the European Parliament and the Council. The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Sénat and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Johannes Hahn
Member of the Commission*