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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 9.12.2015

**on the Annual Action Programme 2015 Part III and 2016 Part II in favour of the Asia
region to be financed from the general budget of the European Union**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action¹, and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002², and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Commission has adopted the Regional Strategy Paper for Asia³ and the Multiannual Regional Indicative Programme for Asia for the period 2014-2020⁴, points 3.1.1.1, 3.2.1.1, 3.3.1 and 3.4.1.1 of which provide for the following priorities: enhance the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereunder ASEAN) integration process, which contributes to trade, poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth, as well as to preserving peace and stability in South East Asia; encourage increased regional integration and co-operation in South and North-East Asia; provide support to reintegrate or integrate uprooted people, including support to local communities and resettlement areas; and contribute, through the promotion of sustainable growth, to economic prosperity and poverty reduction in Asia and to support the development of a green economy and mitigation of climate change.
- (2) The Commission has adopted the Annual Action Programmes 2015 part II and 2016 part I in favour of the Asia region, to be funded from the general budget of the European Union⁵.
- (3) The objectives pursued by the Annual Action Programme to be financed under the Development Cooperation Instrument⁶ are to enhance regional integration in South East, South and North East Asia, support the reintegration of uprooted people, and contribute to economic prosperity and the development of a green economy.
- (4) The action entitled "Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN" is to promote sustainable management of peatlands in the ASEAN regional through

¹ OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 95

² OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p. 1.

³ Decision C(2014)9382

⁴ Decision C(2014)6112

⁵ Decision C(2015)5830

⁶ Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation, for the period 2014-2020, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014.

collective actions and enhanced cooperation to support and sustain local livelihoods, reduce the risk of fire and associated haze and contribute to global environmental management.

- (5) The action entitled "Trade-Related Assistance in Sri Lanka" is to contribute to Sri Lanka's inclusive trade-led growth and regional integration, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation.
- (6) The action entitled "Trade-Related Assistance for Afghanistan" is to assist the government of Afghanistan towards improving the conditions for regional cooperation and trade as a lever for growth and poverty reduction.
- (7) The action entitled "International Labour and Environment Standards Application in Pakistan's SMEs" is to promote sustainable and inclusive growth in Pakistan by supporting the economic integration of Pakistan into the global and regional economy by improving compliance with labour and environmental standards and increased competitiveness.
- (8) The action entitled "Trade-Related Assistance in Mongolia" is to enhance Mongolia's international trade and economic diversification and to contribute to sustainable economic growth and development of the country, with the ultimate goal of reducing poverty and external vulnerabilities.
- (9) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision. the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012⁷.
- (10) It is necessary to adopt a work programme for grants the detailed rules on which are set out in Article 128(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and in Article 188(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012. The work programme is constituted by the Annex 1 (section 5.3.1).
- (11) The Commission should entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the entities specified in this Decision, subject to the conclusion of a delegation agreement. In accordance with Article 60(1) and (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that these entities guarantee a level of protection of the financial interests of the Union equivalent to that required when the Commission manages Union funds. In particular, Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) complies with the conditions of points (a) to (d) of the first subparagraph of Article 60(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and the supervisory and support measures are in place as necessary. The International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Trade Center (ITC) are currently undergoing the assessment under Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. In anticipation of the results of this review, the authorising officer responsible deems that, based on the entities' positive assessment under Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002⁸ and on the long-standing and problem-free cooperation with them, budget-implementation tasks can be entrusted to these entities.

⁷ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1).

⁸ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1).

- (12) It is necessary to allow the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.
- (13) Pursuant to Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, the Commission should define changes to this Decision which are not substantial in order to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer responsible.
- (14) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Development Cooperation Instrument Committee set up by Article 19 of the financing instrument referred to in Recital 3,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the measure

The Annual Action Programmes 2015 part III and 2016 Part II in favour of the Asia region to be financed from the general budget of the European Union, as set out in the Annexes, are approved.

The programmes shall include the following actions:

- Annex 1: Sustainable Use/Management of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN;
- Annex 2: Trade-Related Assistance in Sri Lanka;
- Annex 3: Trade-Related Assistance for Afghanistan;
- Annex 4: International Labour and Environment Standards Application in Pakistan's SMEs;
- Annex 5: Trade-Related Assistance for Mongolia

Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum contribution of the European Union for the implementation of the programmes referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 49 700 000 and shall be financed for an amount of EUR 47 363 104 from budget line 21.020200 of the general budget of the European Union for financial year 2015 and for an amount of EUR 2 336 896 EUR from budget line 21.020200 of the general budget of the European Union for financial year 2016.

The financial contribution 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 draft budget for 2016 after the adoption of the budget for that financial year or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

Article 3

Implementation modalities

Budget-implementation tasks under indirect management may be entrusted to the entities identified in Annex 1, Annex 2, Annex 3 and Annex 4, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20 % of the contribution referred to in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes 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 within the meaning of Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions. The use of contingencies shall be taken into account in the ceiling set by this Article.

The authorising officer responsible may adopt the non-substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 9.12.2015

For the Commission
Neven MIMICA
Member of the Commission