COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 24.11.2016

on the Annual Action Programme 2016 Part IV and 2017 Part I 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 action, and in particular Article 2(1) thereof,


Whereas:

(1) The Commission has adopted the Regional Strategy Paper for Asia and the Multianual Regional Indicative Programme for Asia for the period 2014-2020, which provides 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; promote a green economy by the adoption of Asian manufacturers and service providers of sustainable consumption and production techniques, and to leverage green investment funding from European Financial Institutions to contribute to limit the emission of CO2 and equivalents and increase resilience to climate change and environmental protection in vulnerable countries.

(2) The Commission has adopted the Annual Action Programmes 2016 part I and 2016 part II in favour of the Asia region, to be funded from the general budget of the European Union. Annual Action Programme 2016 part III in favour of the Asia region was presented to the DCI Committee on 28 June.

(3) The objectives pursued by the Annual Action Programme part IV and 2017 part I to be financed under the Development Cooperation Instrument are to enhance regional integration in South East, South and North East Asia, support the reintegation of

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1 OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 95
3 Decision C(2014)9382
4 Decision C(2014)6112
unprooted people, and contribute to economic prosperity and the development of a green economy.

(4) Action 1, entitled “EU-Philippines Trade Related Technical Assistance Programme 4” is to contribute to the integration of the Philippine economy into the global production chain through targeted support to both the public and private sectors. It is the national Philippine component of the ARISE+ Programme supporting regional economic integration and trade in ASEAN.

(5) Action 2, entitled “Support to Afghanistan-centred Regional Cooperation” is to support the Government of Afghanistan implementing its strategy to foster cooperation and political and policy dialogue with the countries in the region. The specific objective is to capacitate key sectors of Afghanistan's public administration to pursue and implement reforms in key sectors towards improved regional connectivity and aiming at inclusive socio-economic development, with a focus on the Heart of Asia Process.

(6) Action 3, entitled “Support to the South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center” is to provide to six countries in South Asia, all Members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) with technical assistance and training to develop capacity of the administration in order to implement their national PFM strategies.

(7) Action 4, entitled “Switch Asia II” seeks to promote sustainable growth, to contribute to the economic prosperity and poverty reduction in Asia and to mitigate climate change.

(8) Action 5, entitled “Asia Investment Facility” seeks to promote a green economy in Asia via the leverage of additional investments.

(9) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision the detailed rules on which are set out in Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

(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 2, 3 and 4.

(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. These entities comply 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 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), UNODC and UNEP 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 entity’s positive assessment under Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 and on the long-

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standing and problem-free cooperation with it, budget-implementation tasks can be entrusted to these entities.

(12) The authorising officer responsible should be able to award grants without a call for proposals provided that the conditions for an exception to a call for proposals in accordance with Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 are fulfilled.

(13) 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.

(14) 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.

(15) 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 2016 Part IV and 2017 Part I in favour of the Asia region to be financed from the general budget of the European Union, as set out in the Annexes, is approved.

The programme shall include the following actions:

– Annex 1: EU-Philippines Trade Related Technical Assistance Programme 4;
– Annex 2: Support to Afghanistan-centred Regional Cooperation;
– Annex 3: Support to the South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center;
– Annex 4: Switch Asia II;
– Annex 5: Asia Investment Facility

**Article 2**

**Financial contribution**

The maximum contribution of the European Union for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 100 100 000 and shall be financed for an amount of EUR 80 100 000 from budget line 21.020200 of the general budget of the European Union for financial year 2016 and EUR 20 000 000 from budget line 21.020200 of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2017.

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 2017 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 the attached Annex 2, 4 and 5 subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements.

The section “Implementation Issues” of the Annexes to this Decision sets out the elements required by Article 94(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals by the authorising officer responsible in accordance with Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

**Article 4**

**Non-substantial changes**

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20 % of the contribution set by 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, 24.11.2016

*For the Commission*
*Neven MIMICA*
*Member of the Commission*