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ANNEX 1

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the Multi-Annual Action Programme 2018-2020 for the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) to be financed from the general budget of the Union

Action Document for Support to Human Rights Defenders in situations where they are most at risk

INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL GRANT APPLICANTS

WORK PROGRAMME FOR GRANTS

This document constitutes the work programme for grants in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation in the following sections concerning calls for proposals: 5.4.1.1.; and in the following sections concerning grants awarded directly without a call for proposals: 5.4.1.2.

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	Support to Human Rights Defenders in situations where they are most at risk CRIS numbers: EIDHR/2018/041-028 and EIDHR/2019/041-335 financed under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights	
2. Zone benefiting from the action/location	Global The locations of the action are open without limitation, in accordance with Regulations (EU) No 235/2014 and (EU) No 236/2014.	
3. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Programme (2018-2020) for the Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights Worldwide - Commission Implementing Decision C(2018)	
4. Sector of concentration/ thematic area	Human Rights and Democracy	DEV. Aid: YES
5. Amounts concerned	Total estimated cost: EUR 19,789,474 Total amount of the EU budget contribution: EUR 19,000,000 The contribution is for an amount of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EUR 4,000,000 from the general budget of the European Union	

	<p>for 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUR 15,000,000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2019, subject to the availability of appropriations following the adoption of the relevant budget. <p>Co-financing of approximately EUR 789,474 expected in the framework of the call for proposals, Component 1 (see 5.4.1.1)</p>			
6. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	<p>Project Modality</p> <p>Direct management - grants – call for proposals for the EU Human Rights Defenders Mechanism, including shelters</p> <p>Indirect management with an international organisation</p>			
7 a) DAC code(s)	15160 - Human Rights and Democracy			
b) Main Delivery Channel	Channel 1 – 20000 – Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society			
8. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
	Aid to environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
	Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagships	N/A			
10. SDGs	<p>Main SDG Goal(s):</p> <p>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p> <p>Secondary SDG Goal(s): Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>			

SUMMARY

Full enjoyment of human rights cannot be achieved unless the defence of those rights is ensured. In the past decade, the European Union (EU) has progressively developed a comprehensive support to human rights defenders (HRDs), making the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) the world's largest programme supporting HRDs¹. The Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2018-2020 stresses further the need of an increased focus on shrinking space for civil society and on the most difficult situations.

This action responds to this requirement and to the Specific Objective 1 of the EIDHR – Support to human rights and human rights defenders in situations where they are most at risk through the operations of a **Human Rights Defenders Protection Mechanism** and the **Emergency Fund for Human Rights Defenders at Risk**. They will provide short-term (e.g. physical and digital protection, medical support and psychological assistance, legal counselling, urgent relocation, assistance to families), medium-term (e.g. training courses and temporary relocation) and long-term (e.g. legal support during lengthy judicial proceedings, regular monitoring, capacity-building and advocacy) support to HRDs.

The concept 'most at risk' refers to countries and situations characterised by a serious lack of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; where human rights and fundamental freedoms are systematically violated; where the security of citizens is not guaranteed and civil society and HRDs operate under difficulty, and where there is little or no room for inclusion, participation, accountability and political pluralism².

The focus of this action will be on the most difficult situations and the most vulnerable human rights defenders of all ages, as well as human rights organisations facing a very restrictive and challenging working environment.

1 CONTEXT

1.1 Sector/Country/Regional context/Thematic area

1.1.1 Public Policy Assessment and EU Policy Framework

Effective support for human rights and their defenders in situations where they are most at risk has been an EU priority since 2004 and a priority of the EIDHR since 2007. Support for human rights and their defenders at risk is underpinned in the Regulation (EU) No 235/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for democracy and human rights worldwide for 2014-2020, whose article 2.1 (b)(iii) foresees a HRD protection and support Mechanism. It is also included in article 6 of

¹ The definition of a HRD is consistent with the principles contained in the "Declaration on the Right and responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" (Adopted by the UN General Assembly resolution 53/144 of 9 December 1998) and the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (Adopted in 2004 and updated in 2008).

² Annex 1 of the Commission Implementing Decision on the adoption of a special measure for the financing of a Work Programme 2014 for the EIDHR, p. 1.

the Common Implementing Regulation³ that allows for the Commission to allocate small grants on an ad hoc basis to human rights defenders responding to urgent protection needs.

The objective of this action is also underlined in the EIDHR Regulation's annex which describes the strategic orientations in delivering on the purpose of the EIDHR, under its "*Objective 1 –Support to human rights and human rights defenders in situations where they are most at risk*" which states that "*actions will...provide effective support to human rights defenders (HRDs) that are most at risk and to situations where fundamental freedoms are most endangered. The EIDHR will inter alia contribute to meeting HRDs' urgent needs; it will also provide medium and long-term support that will enable HRDs and civil society to carry out their work. The actions will take into account the current worrying trend of the shrinking space for civil society*".

This Action Document is designed in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁴. By integrating a Rights-Based Approach (RBA)⁵ to development cooperation, encompassing all human rights, it contributes to achieve the objectives of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (2014, revised 2008), the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2012), the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy "Keeping Human Rights at the heart of the EU agenda" (2015-2019) and with the 2017 mid-term review and the Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 (GAP II). This action also aligns with the new European Consensus on Development 'Our world, Our Dignity, Our Future' adopted on 19 May 2017 by the Foreign Affairs Council, which is part of the EU overall response to the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 and reflecting a human rights-based vision.

Human rights defenders and organisations as well as other independent civil society actors as essential vectors of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are therefore major partners in promoting the implementation of above-mentioned policy and this action document.

1.1.2 Stakeholder analysis

The stakeholders are mainly human rights defenders and organisations as well as other independent civil society actors promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Other stakeholders are relevant national, regional and international organisations involved, EU Member States and Institutions.

Consistent with the principles contained in the "Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms"⁶, the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders⁷, state that "human rights defenders are those individuals, groups and organs of society that promote and protect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights defenders seek the promotion and protection of civil and political

³ OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, 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.

⁴ OJ C 303/7, 14.12.2007, P. 1.Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union, COM (2010) 573 final, 19.10.2010.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/rights-based-approach-development-cooperation_en

⁶ Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 53/144 of 9 December 1998.

⁷ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/GuidelinesDefenders.pdf>

rights as well as the promotion, protection and realisation of economic, social and cultural rights. Human rights defenders also promote and protect the rights of members of groups such as indigenous communities. The definition does not include those individuals or groups who commit or propagate violence”.

The action will focus on the most difficult situations and prioritise human rights defenders of all ages who are most at risk and vulnerable, as well as human rights organisations facing very restrictive working conditions. These include land rights and environmental rights defenders, HRDs who defend the rights of indigenous peoples and persons belonging to ethnic, religious, sexual or other minorities, HRDs combatting impunity for serious human rights violations and working on transitional justice, trade unionists promoting labour rights, lawyers, journalists, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and others promoting fundamental freedoms, HRDs challenging violations of economic, social and cultural rights, and/or working in remote areas.

This list is not exhaustive and does not exclude the possibility to focus on new categories of HRDs that may emerge in response to new forms of human rights violations. Moreover, whistleblowers, victims and witnesses of human rights violations may also be considered as HRDs in exceptional circumstances.

Recognising and promoting the role of women human rights defenders in protecting and promoting human rights and democracy worldwide, the EIDHR will continue to tailor its support and protection by addressing the specific challenges, risks and threats that women human rights defenders face, in addition to those faced by human rights defenders in general.

1.1.3 Priority areas for support/problem analysis

Since 2014, the situation of human rights and their defenders has globally deteriorated. A higher number of human rights organisations and defenders find themselves in very difficult and helpless situations. Independent civil society actors and organisations face significant restrictions on their working environment and operating capacity, *inter alia*: legislation severely limiting access to funding, as well as freedoms of association, assembly and expression; administrative obstacles to register; criminalisation of dissent; blocking access to websites and social media. Independent civil society actors are often the target of smear campaigns, abusive administrative and financial procedures, unjustified closures or just expelled.

Members of independent civil society and human rights defenders, such as journalists, media workers, lawyers and other individuals promoting and defending human rights and fundamental freedoms face more intense repression by State and Non-State actors, including increased surveillance, travel bans and asset freeze, confiscation and destruction of working materials, physical and psychological threats, harassment, and attacks, arbitrary arrest, detention and imprisonment, torture and ill treatment, enforced disappearances, and even extrajudicial execution.

Specific groups of human rights defenders are particularly vulnerable, such as those working on: environmental and land rights, indigenous peoples’ rights, rights of LGBTI persons, combating impunity for grave human rights violations and transitional justice. Women human rights defenders combatting discrimination are particularly vulnerable to gender-based

harassment, stigmatisation and violence whether from the State or from their own families and communities. A major problem is the lack of accountability and the absence of legal remedies for violations and abuses against human rights defenders. Furthermore, there is an increasing negative narrative surrounding the action of HRDs, especially those who go against mainstream views in society, which can result in obstacles and abuse. This difficult situation is compounded by the erosion of funding sources for human rights organisations and defenders, as well as obstacles that UN and regional mandates on human rights and human rights defenders face on a regular basis in their work.

It even becomes more and more difficult for international NGOs, media and inter-governmental mechanisms to operate in certain countries or areas where extremely restrictive and repressive legislations, policies and practices (such as abusive inspections, administrative and judicial harassment, freezing of accounts, etc.) are in place. There is more than ever a crucial need for strengthened assistance to human rights organisations and defenders in this situation. This assistance should first and foremost contribute to protect human rights defenders and strengthen their capacities to work on the ground.

The support should take the form of assistance: to human rights defenders who are most at risk and need emergency help; to human rights organisations which have enormous difficulties to/cannot operate anymore due to a restrictive working environment; to efforts aiming to improve the situation of and working environment for human rights defenders; to relocation and shelter capacities including with regard to facilitating their social reinsertion; to develop strategies to counter offline and online smear campaigns; to strengthen networks amongst human rights defenders and organisations at the national and international levels.

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	Risk level (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
<p>Projects and activities implemented under this action take place in extremely difficult, dangerous and volatile contexts. Concerned human rights defenders and organisations are confronted with various political and physical risks that must not be underestimated. In the past, several third parties involved in projects have been threatened, imprisoned or even killed.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>It is of high importance to deliver the emergency assistance quickly, to ensure confidentiality with a view to protect beneficiaries and to coordinate with relevant partners on the ground to provide protection in situation of danger (evacuation and relocation possibilities, etc.). It is also essential to adopt a highly flexible and pragmatic approach when implementing this action in light of the emergency situations at</p>

		stake.
Assumptions		
Given the sensitive nature of this Action and to guarantee the security of local partners/applicants, special attention will be paid to the requirements for confidentiality and security. In particular, the names of the final beneficiaries of grants and direct support will not be made public unless requested otherwise by the beneficiary, and proper confidentiality measures will be taken.		

3 LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

3.1 Lessons learnt

Under the EIDHR Regulation 2007-2013, the European Commission supported almost 200 specific projects aimed at defending human rights and their defenders where they are most at risk, worth 135 000 000 EUR. Implemented by Civil Society Organizations, these projects were selected both through global and local calls for proposals focusing on HRDs.

In addition, since 2010, the European Commission provided small grants on an ad hoc basis to Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in need of urgent support through the EIDHR Emergency Fund for HRDs at risk. Under the EIDHR Regulation 2014-2020, the Multiannual Indicative Programme (2014-2017) for the EIDHR, and the respective Annual Action Programme 2014 (Annex 1), the European Commission increased the efficiency of assistance, ensuring geographical and thematic coverage, urgent support to HRDs in the field 24/7, as well as medium and long-term support to HRDs. It also aimed to ensure synergies between short and long-term support, continuity in the provision of protection, and optimal coordination with other stakeholders and activities in the face of growing protection challenges faced by human rights defenders.

From 2010 to 2017, over 480 emergency requests were supported, which resulted in more than 900 HRDs and their families as well as human rights organisations in over 80 countries having received this type of direct assistance. Requests for emergency assistance steadily augmented and required additional resources throughout the years. The EIDHR dedicated increasing financial means to the Emergency Fund and cooperated with UNOPS since 2015 to deliver the small grants to applicants and beneficiaries in a more efficient way on the operational level. Examples of support include coverage of legal fees; medical expenses including rehabilitation of torture victims; urgent relocation of HRDs at risk; security measures; provision of psycho-social assistance; subsistence costs.

In 2015, the EU-funded HRD mechanism ProtectDefenders.eu run by a consortium of 12 NGOs was established, providing a rather comprehensive protection package to human rights defenders worldwide, notably through the allocation of emergency grants, assistance to local organisations and relocation grants. Since the beginning of its operations to 30 September 2017, ProtectDefenders.eu provided: 681 emergency grants, providing defenders at risk with immediate support on the ground, 91 grants to local human rights organisations for bridging funds in difficult situations, capacity building and advocacy activities, and 261 grants to relocate defenders at risk away from danger (and their families when needed) – in partnership with a growing network of host organisations. In addition, the ProtectDefenders.eu

mechanism conducted trainings, trial observation missions, advocacy and fact-finding missions.

The creation and actions of ProtectDefenders.eu HRD mechanism significantly contributed to enhance EU profile in the field of support to human rights defenders and to create synergies among civil society actors engaged in this area. The HRD Mechanism has also crucially contributed to maintain and develop shelter capacities inside and outside Europe through advice, networking, as well as legal and financial support. In complementarity to these efforts, more support is needed to reinforce shelter capacities considering the growing needs of human rights defenders at risk.

With a view to maintain a strong EU engagement in supporting the work of human rights defenders and protecting those who are most at risk, EIDHR should continue supporting the two programmes dedicated to the protection of human rights defenders. First, EIDHR should dedicate increased resources to the Emergency Fund for the protection of Human Rights Defenders at risk directly managed by the European Commission, with a view to cope with the ever increasing level of demands, and maintain efficient operational processing of small grants through an intermediary (e.g. UNOPS). The Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) which was recently conducted assessed that, despite the difficulties inherent to operating in emergency situations, the project is effective in strengthening the resources and capacities of human rights defenders and organisations, mitigating the negative impact of the risks posed by threats and/or attacks, and fostering an enabling environment for HRDs to continue their human rights work as well as the defence of their own rights.

Second, the EIDHR should continue allocating funds to an EU HRD Mechanism managed by civil society organisations with a broad international coverage so that it can pursue its action, focusing on most essential and urgent needs of human rights defenders and organisations, such as emergency support, assistance to organisations, relocation and capacity-building. The mid-term evaluation of ProtectDefender.eu assessed that the project presented a high degree of effectiveness and that it generated positive outcomes (e.g. increased HRDs' security on the ground, improved their skills and connected them to peers). Support to shelters, including those located in regional 'safe havens', should be enhanced, be it through the same HRD Mechanism or as a separate component of this action.

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

The EIDHR complement other tools, which are used to implement EU policies for democracy and human rights. These range from political dialogue to various geographical and thematic instruments. The support provided to human rights defenders and organisations in difficulty under the Emergency Fund and the HRD Mechanism complement the 'EIDHR Facility' focusing on short- to mid-term support at the organisational level. Complementarity will be ensured with 'Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities' (CSO&LA), 'Global Public Goods and Challenges' (GPGC), 'Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace' (IcSP), ECHO operations and support provided to human rights defenders and civil society at the country level.

In addition, complementarity is sought in relation with other actors, including donors. The United Nations OHCHR, including through the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs, and regional organisations and mandates (e.g. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,

African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights, Council of Europe and OSCE) are supporting the work of HRDs by various means, including statements, individual communications to States, and third party interventions.

Complementarity and synergies with funding schemes available for the protection of HRDs and support to their work will be increased. The Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund, supported by 18 governments and two foundations, provides assistance to a variety of CSOs, including human rights organisations, journalist associations, student groups, labor unions, think tanks, and others, that conduct advocacy, provide concrete support and/or act in a watchdog capacity to promote and protect human rights. The EIDHR will act in complementarity with existing shelter initiatives (Justice and Peace, ICORN and others), as well as donors supporting them.

The added value of EIDHR Emergency Fund and the EU HRD Mechanism is the flexibility, adaptability and rapidity that they apply in order to assist various categories of human rights defenders and organisations.

The Commission services prepare their actions under this action programme based on consultation with civil society organisations, Member States and other donors, ensuring complementarity and synergies with their actions.

3.3 Cross-cutting issues

Cross-cutting issues for the implementation of this action include: non-discrimination, the rights of persons belonging to minorities, the rights of persons with disabilities, the rights of persons with life-threatening diseases and other vulnerable groups, core labour standards and social inclusion, the empowerment of women, the rule of law, capacity building for civil society, and promoting dialogue, participation and reconciliation, as well as institution building, including at local and regional level. The action will notably provide short, medium and long term support to women human rights defenders and HRDs working to promote gender equality. Both HRDs working online and offline will be included in the programme.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Objectives/results

The **overall objective** of this action is to ensure the promotion, protection and realisation of human rights in difficult situations.

The **specific objective** is to support and enable human rights defenders as well as organisations to perform their work and functions, especially in contexts where they are the most vulnerable and threatened.

As outputs, the integrity and capacity to operate of human rights defenders and organisations is preserved and reinforced when needed, including in difficult and repressive contexts.

This programme will indirectly contribute to all goals of the Agenda 2030. Directly, this Action Document contributes to the progressive achievement of SDG Goal 16: promote

peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, but also promotes progress towards Goal SDG 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

4.2 Main activities

This action entails **two components**.

Under the **first component** dedicated to the Emergency Fund for human rights defenders at risk, the European Union will provide direct support through low-value grants of a maximum of 10 000 EUR to individual human rights defenders and organisations who are most at risk, on the basis of a political decision taken by the EU - DG DEVCO in agreement with the EU Delegations concerned and the EEAS - and justified by criteria such as the gravity of the situation and the effectiveness of the action. An intermediary (e.g. UNOPS) will assist in implementing a smooth and efficient allocation of the grants under the supervision of the European Commission. The level of resources requested and allocated to the emergency fund steadily increases due to the deteriorating situation of HRDs worldwide, higher level of risks, threats and obstacles and therefore more important demand for protection.

The assistance provided under the Emergency Fund may cover urgent needs such as: legal assistance to and representation of human rights defenders, medical treatment and rehabilitation of victims of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment, including psycho-social assistance, purchase of security material for home of a defender or office of an organisation, temporary support to the concerned individual or its relatives (subsistence costs), temporary relocation of human rights defenders forced to leave their place of residence or their countries for security reasons, social reinsertion and ad-hoc strategies to counter offline and online smear campaigns among others.

Under the **second component**, the European Union will support a broad-based HRD Mechanism led by specialised organisations, aiming at providing stable and comprehensive coordination of the EU support to human rights defenders worldwide. The main forms of support by the HRD Mechanism will include in particular emergency support to individuals, assistance to organisations, temporary relocation and capacity-building. While the Emergency Fund under component 1 is directly managed by the European Commission with the assistance of an intermediary (e.g. UNOPS), serving as a flexible tool which can be mobilised rapidly by the EU to address most difficult situations, the second component under the form of the HRD Mechanism is managed by specialised NGOs and broadly supports human rights defenders and organisations in difficulties, notably at country level.

Actions under this component will include:

- Short-term support, in complementarity with component 1, including physical and digital protection, medical support and rehabilitation, legal counselling, urgent relocation, assistance to families, urgent monitoring and reporting, and access to digital security tools to react to defamation, smear and stigmatisation;
- Medium-term support, including follow-up to individual cases, legal representation, prison visits, trial monitoring, trainings courses notably in risk prevention and security including digital security, and temporary shelter;

-Long-term support, including continuous legal support to long judicial proceedings, regular monitoring and early warning, training and capacity building notably to counter offline and online restrictions and sanctions, awareness raising and advocacy for pro-HRDs legislative frameworks, improving accountability and access to both judicial and non-judicial remedies against impunity, supporting dialogues and mediation activities including in the most difficult situations and access to international human rights mechanisms and UN special procedures.

- Shelters: specific focus will be put on enhancing shelter capacities for human rights defenders at risk who need to be relocated. These shelters may be in and outside Europe (e.g. regional 'safe-havens'.)

4.3 Intervention logic

Human rights defenders and organisations as well as other independent civil society actors are essential vectors of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. With a view to ensuring the promotion, protection and realisation of human rights, the EU chooses to support and enable human rights defenders as well as organisations to perform their work and functions, especially in contexts where they are the most vulnerable and threatened. Thanks to direct support to individual HRDs and organisations, the comprehensive action of a Human Rights Defenders Mechanism and the provision of safe shelters, the EU will contribute to preserve and reinforce the integrity and capacity to operate of human rights defenders and organisations, including those in difficult and repressive contexts.

(1) Responding to emergencies: Direct support to individual HRDs and organisations who are most at risk

Concerning the EIDHR Emergency Fund for the protection of human rights defenders at risk, it is essential that the intervention logic provides for the flexibility, timeliness and confidentiality that are needed for this action. Considering that this process is demand-driven and that it aims to address needs for urgent support as they arise, there is no pre-determined thematic or geographic scope for the action. The European Commission, in consultation with the concerned EU Delegations and the European External Action Service (EEAS), is responsible for the selection procedure and the political decision on allocating direct support. In this process, coordination is ensured with other actors, such as the EU HRD Mechanism and other actors providing emergency assistance, on the evaluation of cases. The European Commission then delegates to an intermediary (e.g. UNOPS) the implementation of the grant support agreements to the selected grantees, delivery of the funds, follow-up with the grantees with informal reports on implementation progresses, and narrative and financial reporting.

(2) Ensuring synergies and filling up the gaps: supporting a Human Rights Defenders mechanism

On the basis of article 2.1 (b)(iii) of the EIDHR Regulation, the European Commission established an HRDs Mechanism (ProtectDefenders.eu), which started operating in October 2015 and has been instrumental in providing urgent assistance to HRDs at risk, supporting to activities of human rights organisations operating in difficult situations, relocating human rights defenders at risk away from danger, training human rights defenders to better manage their protection concerns, enhancing human rights monitoring and advocacy, and reaching out

to endangered groups of human rights defenders working in remote locations. The project has provided for strengthened cooperation between civil society actors in the field of support and protection to HRDs and for a more comprehensive, continuous and coordinated EU support to HRDs. As the project is due to end in September 2019, a new call for proposals will be launched to cover the next period on the basis of the results achieved by and lessons learnt from the project.

3) Providing safe shelters for relocated human rights defenders at risk

Further to the support already provided in the past by the HRD Mechanism to support existing shelter capacities, there is a need to increase assistance to shelters inside and outside Europe in order to cope with the increasing needs of human rights defenders at risk who should be relocated away from danger and benefitting from rest and respite. This additional support will be part of the EU HRD Mechanism or will be included in a separate process.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4.1 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the adoption by the Commission of this Action Document.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's authorising officer responsible by amending this decision and the relevant contracts and agreements; such amendments to this decision constitute technical amendments in the sense of point (i) of Article 2(3)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014.

5.3 Implementation of the budget support component: N/A

5.4 Implementation modalities

Both in indirect and direct management, the Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate 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 affecting the respective countries of operation⁸.

5.4.1.1 Grants: call for proposals: EU Human Rights Defenders Mechanism, including shelter initiative (direct management)

(a) Objectives of the grants, fields of intervention, priorities of the year and expected results

⁸ https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/restrictive_measures-2017-04-26-clean.pdf

Following the end of the ProtectDefenders.eu project, the grant, which will kick off in the third trimester of 2019, will aim at renewing the HRDs mechanism, addressing a combination of short, medium and long term support, including emergency support to human rights defenders at risk (in complementarity with the direct support provided by the EIDHR Emergency Fund), support to activities of human rights organisations and defenders operating in restrictive conditions, relocation of human rights defenders away from danger, training and capacity-building for human rights defenders at risk, monitoring of HRDs situation, international, regional and national advocacy and outreach, as well as an enhanced shelter initiatives in various regions of the world.

It is foreseen that organisations and experts in the field will be selected to provide for consistent and comprehensive coordination of EU support to human rights defenders worldwide.

(b) Eligibility conditions

The eligibility criteria for applicants will be based on their experience, expertise and engagement in the field of support and protection to human rights defenders, as well as their capacity to deliver the requested action.

Subject to information to be published in the call for proposals, the indicative amount of the EU contribution per grant is EUR 15 million. The indicative duration of the grant (its implementation period) is 48 months.

(c) Essential selection and award criteria

The essential selection criteria are financial and operational capacity of the applicant, as well as the expertise of the applicant in the field of the call.

The essential award criteria are relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the call; design, effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

(d) Maximum rate of co-financing

The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants under this call is 95%.

If full funding is essential for the action to be carried out, the maximum possible rate of co-financing may be increased up to 100 %. The essentiality of full funding will be justified by the Commission's authorising officer responsible in the award decision, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

(e) Indicative timing to launch the call

Third trimester of 2018, the call will be launched with a suspensive clause subject to the budget availability of the 2019 funding which will become available early 2019.

5.4.1.2 Indirect management with an international organisation

As mentioned above, the part of this action related to the Emergency Fund for the protection of human rights defenders at risk (component 1) may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Worldwide geographical coverage
- Sound know-how and operational capacity for administration of small grants

- Reputation of a trusted partner able to respect strict confidentiality principles and protection of personal data
- Alignment with the EU values and with the provisions of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

The implementation by this entity entails administration of grant support agreements of a maximum value of EUR 10,000 per action, delivery of the funds to the grantees (i.e. the human rights defenders at risk in need of urgent support) and follow-up with the grantees.

The Commission will be (i) responsible for review and selection of grantees, and for grantees' performance, and (ii) will approve grant total amount through authorisation notifications (in the form of Administrative order). This is imperative given the sensitivity and political importance of the action. Only the implementation of the action (i.e. management of funds; contract signature and payments) and follow-up (collection of narrative and financial reports on action implementation) will be provided by the contractor.

5.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

5.6 Indicative budget

Module	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified
5.4.1.1 - Call for proposals new EU Human Rights Defenders Mechanism, including shelters (direct management)	15,000,000	789,474
5.4.1.4. – Indirect management – Direct support to individual HRDs – Emergency Fund for the protection of HRDs	4,000,000	0
Totals	19,000,000	789,474

5.7 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The procurement and management of the grants resulting from this decision will be carried out by the European Commission Headquarters. As mentioned above, the EU will be responsible for the selection procedure and the political decision on allocating direct support

to human rights defenders at risk under the Emergency Fund. The EU will be part of the Steering Committee of the HRD Mechanisms and interact on a regular basis with the Board members and the Secretariat/s with a view to ensure adequate implementation of the action.

5.8 Performance 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 through the elaboration and submission of progress reports and final reports.

The project will also be monitored according to standard procedures and be achieved through DEVCO monitoring system (ROM - Results Oriented Monitoring). Project monitoring will be based on periodic assessment of progress on delivery of specified project results and towards achievement of project objectives. Clear indicators will be identified. In elaborating the logframe matrix to be annexed to the grant agreements, the implementing partners will elaborate detailed result indicators and baseline data.

Reporting will be done in accordance to the requirements set in the General Conditions.

Progress reports will be prepared during the period of implementation of the tasks. They will be provided along with the corresponding the financial report and an expenditure verification report, if foreseen, defined in the General Conditions. There must be a final report and the financial report accompanied by an expenditure verification report, if foreseen, at the end of the period of implementation of the tasks.

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).

5.9 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission and via implementing partners.

Mid-term evaluations will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes and will feed in the preparation of the next components and follow-up phases of the action.

Final evaluations will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that actions targeting Objective 1 of EIDHR are on the increase at the HQ and EU delegations levels.

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

5.10 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.

5.11 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 and supported with the budget indicated in section 5.6 above.

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 Manual for European Union External Action shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

However, the visibility requirements of some of the activities financed under this Action Fiche will be removed or limited due to the total or partial confidentiality of the Action, and the beneficiaries may not be requested to submit a communication plan. The beneficiaries will comply with the rules on visibility to the best possible extent.

APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX (FOR PROJECT MODALITY) ⁹

The indicative logframe matrix will evolve during the lifetime of the action: new lines will be added for including the activities as well as new columns for intermediary targets (milestones) for the output and outcome indicators whenever it is relevant for monitoring and reporting purposes. Indicators will be disaggregated by sex whenever relevant.

	Results chain	Indicators	Baselines (incl. reference year) ¹⁰	Targets (incl. reference year)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective: Impact	OO: To ensure the promotion, protection and realisation of human rights in difficult situations	Number of countries where human rights defenders are able to contribute to the promotion, protection and realisation of human rights	To be identified during inception phase	To be identified during inception phase	Reports by UN treaty bodies and special procedures (in particular the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders), UN resolutions, UPR reports, documents and reports by regional and national mechanisms, including courts. Reports and information (e.g urgent appeals) from international, regional and national human rights organisations and defenders, as well as from other civil	

⁹ Mark indicators aligned with the relevant programming document mark with '*' and indicators aligned to the EU Results Framework with '**'.

¹⁰ In elaborating the logframe matrix to be annexed to the grant agreement, the implementing partners will elaborate detailed result indicators and baseline data.

					society actors such as the media.	
Specific objective(s): Outcome(s)	SO: To support and enable human rights defenders as well as organisations to perform their work and functions, especially in contexts where they are the most vulnerable and threatened.	1.1 Number of human rights defenders and organisations who are supported and enabled to perform their work and functions**			1.1 Project partners' annual interim and final reports.	Project partners operate without impediments on a continuous basis.
Outputs	<p>Non-exhaustive list of outputs defined on a case-by-case basis:</p> <p>-short term support: physical and digital protection, medical support and rehabilitation, legal counselling, urgent relocation, assistance to families, urgent monitoring and reporting, and access to digital tools to react to defamation, smear and stigmatisation.</p> <p>-medium-term support: follow-up to individual cases, legal representation, prison visits, trial monitoring, lifeline support to organisations, training courses notably in risk prevention and security including digital security, and temporary shelter.</p> <p>-long-term support: continuous legal support during long judicial proceedings, regular monitoring and early warning, training and capacity-building,</p>	Number of beneficiaries of follow up services (disaggregated by sex of beneficiary, country and type of service)** ¹¹			Idem as above.	Project implementers and intermediary organisations are able to undertake the support actions approved in spite of the challenges on the ground (political instability, restrictions on human rights operations, difficulties to obtain visas for relocation).

¹¹ To measure an actual outcome, the indicator measures the situation of human rights defenders and organisations some time after the intervention, to distinguish it from the output indicator measuring the number of beneficiaries.

	awareness-raising and advocacy in support of pro-human rights defenders initiatives, improving accountability and access to both judicial and non-judicial remedies against impunity, supporting access to international human rights mechanisms -shelters (EU and regional)					
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