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CONOP 43

LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION in support of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (ME WMDFZ) in a dynamic regional security environment

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2026/...

of ...

**in support of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East
(ME WMDFZ) in a dynamic regional security environment**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 28(1) and Article 31(1),
thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and
Security Policy,

Whereas:

- (1) The 2016 European Union Global Strategy for the Union's Foreign and Security Policy as well as the 2003 European Union Strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) are founded on the conviction that a multilateral approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international order.
- (2) The Union's policy, therefore, is to uphold, implement and strengthen the implementation and universalisation of existing disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, agreements, and norms and to cooperate with and assist third countries in the fulfilment of their obligations under multilateral conventions and regimes.
- (3) The Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean of 13 July 2008, which established the Union for the Mediterranean, reaffirmed the common aspiration to achieve peace as well as regional security, as set out in the Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of 27-28 November 1995, inter alia, by adhering to international WMD Treaties and Conventions, as well as by means of regional arrangements such as zones free of nuclear weapons.
- (4) The 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference emphasised the importance of a process leading to the full implementation of its 1995 Resolution on the Middle East (the '1995 Resolution'). To that end, the 2010 NPT Review Conference endorsed practical steps, inter alia, consideration of all offers aimed at supporting the implementation of the 1995 Resolution, including the offer of the Union to host a follow-up seminar related to the one organised in June 2008.

- (5) The 2010 NPT Review Conference further recognised the important role played by civil society in contributing to the implementation of the 1995 Resolution and encouraged all efforts in that regard.
- (6) In his Agenda for Disarmament ‘Securing our Common Future’ presented on 24 May 2018, the United Nations Secretary-General pledged to work with UN Member States to strengthen and consolidate nuclear-weapon-free zones, including by supporting further establishment of such zones, including in the Middle East. These intentions were further underlined in the United Nations Pact for the Future, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 September 2024, in which the UN Member States declared their intention to enhance international peace and security through, inter alia, the pursuit of nuclear-weapon-free zones.
- (7) The Union has continuously expressed its readiness to assist in the process leading to the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East (ME WMDFZ) by supporting confidence-building processes, in particular through Union seminars and workshops such as those held in 2008, 2011 and 2012, as well as through Union-supported projects by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on confidence-building measures leading to the establishment of such a zone, pursuant to Council Decisions (CFSP) 2019/938¹ and (CFSP) 2023/1306².

¹ Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/938 of 6 June 2019 in support of a process of confidence-building leading to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (OJ L 149, 7.6.2019, p. 63, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2019/938/oj>).

² Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1306 of 26 June 2023 in support of a project on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (ME WMDFZ) in an evolving regional security environment (OJ L 161, 27.6.2023, p. 70, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/1306/oj>).

- (8) Therefore, the Union should continue to support a process leading to a ME WMDFZ by continuing to support work by UNIDIR to that effect,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:



Article 1

1. For the purpose of advancing the Union's commitment to establishing a ME WMDFZ, the Union shall support a project by UNIDIR with the following overarching objectives:
 - assisting in mitigating regional WMD proliferation trends;
 - encouraging regional security arrangements and arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament norms and processes;
 - developing a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between the ME WMDFZ and current regional and international developments; and
 - promoting an effective, verifiable, inclusive, and sustainable ME WMDFZ.
2. A detailed description of the project is set out in the Project Document in the Annex to this Decision.

Article 2

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the 'High Representative') shall be responsible for the implementation of this Decision.
2. The technical implementation of the project referred to in Article 1(1) shall be carried out by UNIDIR, which shall perform this task under the responsibility of the High Representative. For that purpose, the High Representative shall enter into the necessary arrangements with UNIDIR.

Article 3

1. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the project referred to in Article 1(1) shall be EUR 2 000 001.
2. The expenditure financed by the amount set out in paragraph 1 shall be managed in accordance with the rules and procedures applicable to the general budget of the Union.
3. The Commission shall supervise the proper management of the expenditure financed by the amount referred to in paragraph 1. For that purpose, it shall conclude a contribution agreement with UNIDIR. That agreement shall stipulate that UNIDIR is to ensure visibility of the Union contribution, appropriate to its size.
4. The Commission shall endeavour to conclude the contribution agreement referred to in paragraph 3 as soon as possible after the entry into force of this Decision. It shall inform the Council of any difficulties in that process and of the date of conclusion of that agreement.

Article 4

1. The High Representative shall report to the Council on the implementation of this Decision on the basis of 12-monthly narrative reports prepared by UNIDIR. Those reports shall form the basis for the evaluation carried out by the Council.
2. The Commission shall provide information on the financial aspects of the implementation of the project referred to in Article 1(1).

Article 5

1. This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.
2. This Decision shall expire 36 months after the date of the conclusion of the contribution agreement referred to in Article 3(3). However, it shall expire six months after its entry into force if no financing agreement has been concluded by that time.

Done at ..., ...

For the Council

The President
