



Brussels, 22 May 2025
(OR. en)

8869/25

LIMITE

CORLX 459
CFSP/PESC 686
MAMA 88
COARM 90
FIN 505

LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2025/...

of ...

**amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP
concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 29 thereof,

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

Whereas:

- (1) On 31 May 2013, the Council adopted Decision 2013/255/CFSP¹.
- (2) On 27 May 2024, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2024/1510² extending the restrictive measures set out in Decision 2013/255/CFSP until 1 June 2025.
- (3) Following the fall of al-Assad's regime in Syria, on 24 February 2025, the Council eased a number of Union restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria in order to facilitate engagement with the country, its people and businesses in the areas of energy, transport and reconstruction, as well as to facilitate the associated financial and banking transactions.
- (4) On the same day, the Council issued a declaration stating that listings related to the al-Assad regime, the chemical weapons sector and illicit drug trade should be maintained. The Council also declared that it will continue to examine whether the suspensions remain appropriate, based on the close monitoring of the situation in the country, and it will consider the steps taken by Syria for an inclusive transition in line with the declarations of the transitional authorities, including accountability for the al-Assad regime's crimes, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Syrians without distinction of any kind, and rule of law and international law. The Council called for an end to interference in the country of destabilising foreign actors, recalling the respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Syria.

¹ Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP of 31 May 2013 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria (OJ L 147, 1.6.2013, p. 14, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2013/255/oj>).

² Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/1510 of 27 May 2024 amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria (OJ L, 2024/1510, 28.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/1510/oj>).

- (5) On 20 March 2025, the European Council underlined the importance of a peaceful and inclusive transition in Syria, free from harmful foreign interference, and the protection of the rights of Syrians from all ethnic and religious backgrounds without discrimination. The European Council also highlighted that comprehensive transitional justice in particular is essential on the path to reconciliation. The European Council outlined the Union's suspension of restrictive measures as part of a gradual, reversible approach on the basis of close monitoring of the situation in Syria.
- (6) On 20 May 2025, the Council announced its political decision to lift its economic sanctions on Syria, to support the Syrian people in reuniting and rebuilding a new, inclusive, pluralistic and peaceful Syria free from harmful foreign interference.
- (7) On this basis, the Council considers that all sectoral restrictive measures should be lifted, with the exception of those based on security grounds.

- (8) Despite the fall of the al-Assad regime and the establishment of the transitional authorities, the situation in Syria remains unstable and al-Assad's network, spread inside and outside Syria, has not yet been held accountable and cannot be considered dissolved. There remains a credible risk of destabilisation and a potential resurgence of the former regime's influence, exemplified by the incidents in support of the al-Assad regime aimed at undermining the transitional process, that have led to deadly violence in Syria's coastal region. Listed individuals and entities linked to the al-Assad regime continue to hold powerful influential roles and pose a risk of supporting, through financing or other means, further armed conflict, and may play a part in attempts to reverse the transition. In her statement of 11 March 2025 on behalf of the Union, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy expressed grave concerns about the widespread violence in Syria's coastal region and strongly condemned the attacks by pro-Assad militias against security forces and the horrific crimes committed against civilians, including summary killings, and stressed in this regard that effective measures must be taken to prevent such crimes from happening again.
- (9) Members of the al-Assad and Makhoul families and associated individuals have yet to be held accountable for their involvement in the brutal repression against the civilian population in Syria and pose a risk of trying to escalate conflict and hinder the peaceful transition in Syria.
- (10) Syrian Government Ministers in power after May 2011 under the former al-Assad regime are to be considered jointly and severally responsible for the policy of repression pursued by the former al-Assad regime and continue to pose a risk to the peaceful transition in Syria.

- (11) Militias, armed groups, security forces and intelligence bodies connected to the former al-Assad regime and loyal to the former regime pose a risk of further escalation and repression against the civilian population in Syria.
- (12) More than 100 suspected chemical weapons sites remain in Syria after the fall of the al-Assad regime, a number much higher than ever acknowledged before the fall of the al-Assad regime. The destruction of Syria's remaining chemical weapons stockpiles remains a priority to ensure the protection of the Syrian population, as outlined in the conclusions of the European Council of 19 December 2024.
- (13) Leading businesspersons operating in Syria linked to the al-Assad regime and who have amassed substantial wealth and power due to this connection remain influential and their networks have stayed in place. As such, these individuals carry an inherent risk of violent repression of the civil society and the peaceful transition in Syria.
- (14) On the basis of a review of Decision 2013/255/CFSP, the restrictive measures set out therein should be extended until 1 June 2026.
- (15) Decision 2013/255/CFSP should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Decision 2013/255/CFSP is amended as follows:

- (1) in Article 27, paragraphs 1 and 2 are replaced by the following:
- ‘1. Member States shall take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into, or transit through, their territories of the persons responsible for the violent repression against the civilian population in Syria, persons benefiting from or supporting the former al-Assad regime, and persons associated with them, as listed in Annex I.
 2. In accordance with the assessments and determinations made by the Council in the context of the situation in Syria as set out in recitals 5 to 12 of Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1836* and recitals 8 to 13 of Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/...^{***}, Member States shall also take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into, or transit through, their territories of:
 - (a) leading businesspersons operating in Syria linked to the former al-Assad regime;
 - (b) members of the al-Assad or Makhoul families;
 - (c) Syrian Government Ministers in power between May 2011 and December 2024;
 - (d) members of the Syrian Armed Forces of the rank of “colonel” and the equivalent or higher in post between May 2011 and December 2024;

⁺ OJ: Please insert the reference number of this Decision.

- (e) members of the Syrian security and intelligence services in post between May 2011 and December 2024;
 - (f) members of al-Assad regime-affiliated militias; or
 - (g) persons operating in the chemical weapons proliferation sector,
- and persons associated with them, as listed in Annex I.

* Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1836 of 12 October 2015 amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria (OJ L 266, 13.10.2015, p. 75, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2015/1836/oj>).

** Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/... of ... amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria (OJ L, ..., ELI: ...)⁺;

(2) Article 28 is amended as follows:

(a) paragraphs 1 and 2 are replaced by the following:

‘1. All funds and economic resources belonging to, or owned, held or controlled by persons responsible for the violent repression against the civilian population in Syria, persons and entities benefiting from or supporting the former al-Assad regime, and persons and entities associated with them, as listed in Annex I, shall be frozen.

⁺ OJ: Please insert the reference number, date and publication reference for this Decision.

2. In accordance with the assessments and determinations made by the Council in the context of the situation in Syria as set out in recitals 5 to 12 of Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/1836 and recitals 8 to 13 of Decision (CFSP) 2025/...⁺, all funds and economic resources belonging to, or owned, held or controlled by:

- (a) leading businesspersons operating in Syria linked to the former al-Assad regime;
- (b) members of the al-Assad or Makhoul families;
- (c) Syrian Government Ministers in power between May 2011 and December 2024;
- (d) members of the Syrian Armed Forces of the rank of “colonel” and the equivalent or higher in post between May 2011 and December 2024;
- (e) members of the Syrian security and intelligence services in post between May 2011 and December 2024;
- (f) members of al-Assad regime-affiliated militias; or
- (g) members of entities, units, agencies, bodies or institutions operating in the chemical weapons proliferation sector,

and persons and entities associated with them, as listed in Annex I, shall be frozen.’;

⁺ OJ: Please insert the reference number of this Decision.

(b) paragraph 5 is replaced by the following:

‘5. No funds or economic resources shall be made available, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of, the natural or legal persons or entities listed in Annex I.’;

(c) paragraph 6, point (a) is replaced by the following:

‘(a) necessary to satisfy the basic needs of the persons listed in Annex I and their dependent family members, including payments for foodstuffs, rent or mortgage, medicines and medical treatment, taxes, insurance premiums, and public utility charges.’;

(d) paragraph 6, point (h) is replaced by the following:

‘(h) intended for the Syrian State-owned entities, as listed in Annex I, to make payments on behalf of the Syrian Arab Republic to the OPCW for activities related to the OPCW verification mission and the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, and in particular to the OPCW Syrian Special Trust Fund for activities related to the complete destruction of Syrian chemical weapons outside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic.’;

- (e) paragraph 7, point (a) is replaced by the following:
- ‘(a) the funds or economic resources are subject of an arbitral decision rendered prior to the date on which the person or entity referred to in paragraph 1 or 2 was listed in Annex I or of a judicial or administrative decision rendered in the Union, or a judicial decision enforceable in the Member State concerned, prior to or after that date;’;
- (f) paragraph 7, point (c) is replaced by the following:
- ‘(c) the decision is not for the benefit of a person or entity listed in Annex I; and’;
- (g) paragraph 9 is deleted;
- (h) paragraph 13 is replaced by the following:
- ‘13. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 5 shall not apply to a transfer, by or through a financial entity listed in Annex I, of frozen funds or economic resources where the transfer is related to a payment by a person or entity not listed in Annex I in connection with the provision of financial support to Syrian nationals pursuing an education, professional training or engaged in academic research in the Union, provided that the relevant Member State has determined, on a case-by-case basis, that the payment is not directly or indirectly received by a person or entity referred to in paragraph 1 or 2.’;
- (i) paragraph 15 is deleted;
- (j) paragraph 16 is deleted;

(3) Article 28a is amended as follows:

(a) paragraph 2 is replaced by the following:

‘2. The prohibition set out in Article 28(5) shall not apply to funds or economic resources made available to the natural or legal persons and entities listed in Annex I by public bodies, or by legal persons or entities which receive public funding to provide humanitarian relief in Syria or to provide assistance to the civilian population in Syria, where the provision of such funds or economic resources is for the purchase or transport of petroleum products, or associated financing or financial assistance, for the sole purposes of providing humanitarian relief in Syria or to provide assistance to the civilian population in Syria.’;

(b) paragraph 5 is replaced by the following:

‘5. The prohibition set out in Article 28(5) shall not apply to funds or economic resources made available to the natural or legal persons or entities listed in Annex I by diplomatic or consular missions.’;

(c) the following paragraphs are added:

- ‘7. By way of derogation from Article 28(1), (2) and (5), the competent authorities of a Member State may authorise the release of certain frozen funds or economic resources, or the making available of certain funds or economic resources, to entities listed as Number 42 and Number 43 in “Section B. Entities” in Annex I, under such conditions as they deem appropriate, after having determined that the provision of such funds or economic resources is necessary for the cooperation between those entities and a Member State’s governmental entity or body in the areas of reconstruction, capacity-building, counter-terrorism and migration.
8. In the absence of a negative decision, a request for information or a notification for additional time from the relevant competent authority within five working days of the date of receipt of a request for authorisation under paragraph 7, that authorisation shall be considered granted.
9. The Member State concerned shall inform the other Member States and the Commission of any authorisations granted under paragraph 7 within four weeks of such authorisation.’;

- (4) Article 29 is replaced by the following:

‘Article 29

No claims, including for compensation or indemnification or any other such claim, such as a claim of set-off, fines or a claim under a guarantee, claims for extension or payment of a bond, financial guarantee, including claims arising from letters of credit and similar instruments in connection with any contract or transaction the performance of which was affected, directly or indirectly, wholly or in part, by reason of measures covered by this Decision, shall be granted to the designated persons or entities listed in Annex I, or any other person or entity in Syria, including the Government of Syria, its public bodies, corporations and agencies, or any person or entity claiming through or for the benefit of any such person or entity.’;

- (5) in Article 30, paragraph 1 is replaced by the following:

‘1. The Council, acting upon a proposal by a Member State or the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, shall establish and amend the list in Annex I.’;

- (6) Article 31 is replaced by the following:

‘Article 31

1. Annex I shall include the grounds for listing the persons and entities concerned.

2. Annex I shall also contain, where available, the information necessary to identify the persons or entities concerned. With regard to persons, such information may include names, including aliases, date and place of birth, nationality, passport and identity card numbers, gender, address if known, and function or profession. With regard to entities, such information may include names, place and date of registration, registration number and place of business.’;

(7) Article 34 is replaced by the following:

‘Article 34

1. This Decision shall apply until 1 June 2026. It shall be kept under constant review. It may be renewed, or amended as appropriate, if the Council deems that its objectives have not been met. The exceptions referred to in Article 28a(1) to (4) as regards Article 28(1), (2) and (5) shall be reviewed at regular intervals, and at least every 12 months, or at the urgent request of any Member State, the High Representative or the Commission following a fundamental change in circumstances.
2. The Council underlines the importance of preventing the violation of the sovereign rights of Member States within their maritime zones in accordance with the law of the sea. At the request of a Member State, any such violation shall immediately trigger a discussion for the amendment of restrictive measures, in the context of the constant review of the restrictive measures.’;

(8) Articles 5, 6, 7, 7a, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28b are deleted;

- (9) Annex II is deleted;
- (10) Annex III is deleted.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at ..., ...

For the Council
The President