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LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2024/...

of ...

**amending Decision 2014/512/CFSP concerning restrictive measures
in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine**

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 July 2014, the Council adopted Decision 2014/512/CFSP¹.
- (2) In its conclusions of 24 February 2022, the European Council condemned in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine and stated that by its illegal military actions, Russia was grossly violating international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and undermining European and global security and stability. The European Council called for the urgent preparation and adoption of a further individual and economic sanctions package. The European Council called on Russia and Russia-backed armed formations to stop their disinformation campaign.
- (3) In its conclusions of 10 May 2021, the Council underlined the need to further strengthen the Union's and Member States' resilience as well as their ability to counter hybrid threats, including disinformation, ensuring the coordinated and integrated use of existing and possible new tools for countering hybrid threats at Union and Member States' level, and possible responses in the field of hybrid threats including, inter alia, to foreign interference and influence operations, which may cover preventive measures as well as the imposition of costs on hostile state and non-state actors.

¹ Council Decision 2014/512/CFSP of 31 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine (OJ L 229, 31.7.2014, p. 13).

- (4) In its conclusions of 21 and 22 March 2024, the European Council reaffirmed the Union's steadfast support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression. It also called for further steps to weaken Russia's ability to continue waging its war of aggression, including by strengthening sanctions.
- (5) The Russian Federation has engaged in a systematic, international campaign of media manipulation and distortion of facts in order to enhance its strategy of destabilisation of its neighbouring countries, and of the Union and its Member States. In particular, the propaganda has repeatedly and consistently targeted European political parties, especially during election periods, as well as targeting civil society, asylum seekers, Russian ethnic minorities, gender minorities, and the functioning of democratic institutions in the Union and its Member States.
- (6) In order to justify and support its aggression against Ukraine, the Russian Federation has engaged in continuous and concerted propaganda actions targeted at civil society in the Union and neighbouring countries, gravely distorting and manipulating facts.
- (7) Those propaganda actions have been channelled through a number of media outlets under the permanent direct or indirect control of the leadership of the Russian Federation. Such actions constitute a significant and direct threat to the Union's public order and security. Those media outlets are essential and instrumental in bringing forward and supporting Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and for the destabilisation of its neighbouring countries.

- (8) In view of the gravity of the situation, and in response to Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, it is necessary, consistent with the fundamental rights and freedoms recognised in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, in particular the rights of freedom of expression and information as recognised in Article 11 thereof, to urgently suspend the broadcasting activities of additional media outlets in the Union, or directed at the Union. Those measures should be maintained until the Russian aggression against Ukraine is brought to an end, and until the Russian Federation, and its associated media outlets, cease to conduct propaganda actions against the Union and its Member States.
- (9) Consistent with the fundamental rights and freedoms recognised in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, in particular freedom of expression and of information, the freedom to conduct a business and the right to property as recognised in Articles 11, 16 and 17, respectively, thereof, the measures provided for in this Decision do not prevent the media outlets concerned and their staff from carrying out activities in the Union other than broadcasting, such as research and interviews. In particular, those measures do not modify the obligation to respect the rights, freedoms and principles referred to in Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union, set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and in Member States' constitutions, within their respective fields of application.
- (10) Further action by the Union is needed in order to implement certain measures.
- (11) Decision 2014/512/CFSP should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Annex IX to Decision 2014/512/CFSP is amended in accordance with the Annex to this Decision.

The amendment referred to in the first paragraph shall apply from 25 June 2024, provided that the Council, having examined the respective cases of the entities set out in that amendment, so decides by unanimity.

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

ANNEX

In Annex IX to Decision 2014/512/CFSP, the following entries are added:

‘Voice of Europe

RIA Novosti

Izvestija

Rossiiskaja Gazeta’.
