

COUNCIL COMMON POSITION 2008/844/CFSP**of 10 November 2008****amending Common Position 2006/276/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

HAS ADOPTED THIS COMMON POSITION:

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 15 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) On 10 April 2006, the Council adopted Common Position 2006/276/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus and repealing Common Position 2004/661/CFSP ⁽¹⁾.
- (2) On 13 October 2008, the Council agreed that the restrictive measures provided for by Common Position 2006/276/CFSP should be extended for a period of 12 months. However, the Council also decided that the travel restrictions imposed on certain leading figures in Belarus, with the exception of those involved in the disappearances which occurred in 1999 and 2000 and of the President of the Central Electoral Commission, should not apply for a period of six months, which could be renewed, with a view to encouraging dialogue with the Belarusian authorities and the adoption of measures to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights.
- (3) At the end of the aforementioned six-month period, the Council will re-examine the situation in Belarus and evaluate the progress which the Belarusian authorities have made towards reforms of the Electoral Code to bring it into line with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. The Council will also consider any other concrete actions to strengthen respect for democratic values, human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and of the media, freedom of assembly and political association and the rule of law. The Council may decide to apply travel restrictions sooner if necessary, in the light of the actions of the Belarusian authorities in the sphere of democracy and human rights.
- (4) Council Common Position 2008/288/CFSP of 7 April 2008 renewing restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus until 10 April 2009 should be repealed,

Article 1

Common Position 2006/276/CFSP is hereby extended until 13 October 2009.

Article 2

1. The measures referred to in Article 1(1)(b) of Common Position 2006/276/CFSP, insofar as they apply to Mr Yuri Nikolaïevich Podobed, are hereby suspended until 13 April 2009.

2. The measures referred to in Article 1(1)(c) of Common Position 2006/276/CFSP are hereby suspended until 13 April 2009.

Article 3

Before 13 April 2009, this Common Position shall be re-examined in the light of the situation in Belarus.

Article 4

Common Position 2008/288/CFSP is hereby repealed.

Article 5

This Common Position shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Article 6

This Common Position shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 10 November 2008.

For the Council
The President
B. KOUCHNER

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 101, 11.4.2006, p. 5.