



2025/404

25.2.2025

**COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2025/404**

**of 24 February 2025**

**appointing the European Union Special Representative for Central Asia**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 33, in conjunction with Article 31(2) thereof,

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

Whereas:

- (1) On 13 June 2005, the Council agreed to appoint a European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for Central Asia <sup>(1)</sup>.
- (2) On 21 June 2021, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2021/1013 <sup>(2)</sup> appointing Ms Terhi HAKALA as the EUSR for Central Asia.
- (3) On 6 February 2023, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2023/260 <sup>(3)</sup> extending the mandate of Ms HAKALA as the EUSR for Central Asia. The EUSR's mandate expires on 28 February 2025.
- (4) Ms HAKALA has submitted her resignation, which took effect on 31 December 2024.
- (5) A new EUSR for Central Asia should be appointed for a period of 24 months.
- (6) The EUSR will implement the mandate in the context of a situation which may deteriorate and could impede the achievement of the objectives of the Union's external action as set out in Article 21 of the Treaty,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

**European Union Special Representative**

Mr Eduards STIPRAIS is hereby appointed as the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for Central Asia from 1 March 2025 to 28 February 2027. The Council may decide that the EUSR's mandate (the 'mandate') be extended or terminated earlier, on the basis of an assessment by the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and on a proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the 'High Representative').

*Article 2*

**Policy objectives**

The mandate shall be based on the Union's policy objectives in Central Asia. Those objectives include:

- (a) promoting relations between the Union and the countries of Central Asia on the basis of common values and interests as set out in relevant agreements;
- (b) contributing to strengthening stability and cooperation between the countries in the region;

<sup>(1)</sup> Council Joint Action 2005/588/CFSP of 28 July 2005 appointing a Special Representative of the European Union for Central Asia (OJ L 199, 29.7.2005, p. 100, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/joint\\_action/2005/588/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/joint_action/2005/588/oj)).

<sup>(2)</sup> Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1013 of 21 June 2021 appointing the European Union Special Representative for Central Asia (OJ L 222, 22.6.2021, p. 33, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/1013/oj>).

<sup>(3)</sup> Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/260 of 6 February 2023 extending the mandate of the European Union Special Representative for Central Asia and amending Decision (CFSP) 2021/1013 (OJ L 35, 7.2.2023, p. 25, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/260/oj>).

- (c) contributing to strengthening democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Central Asia;
- (d) addressing key threats, especially specific problems with direct implications for the Union;
- (e) enhancing the Union's effectiveness and visibility in the region, including through closer coordination with other relevant partners and international organisations, such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations (UN).

### *Article 3*

#### **Mandate**

1. In order to achieve the policy objectives set out in Article 2, the mandate shall be to:
  - (a) promote overall Union political coordination in Central Asia and help to ensure consistency of the external actions of the Union in the region;
  - (b) contribute to the implementation of the Union Strategy for a stronger partnership with Central Asia, complemented by relevant Council conclusions and subsequent progress reports on the implementation of the Union Strategy on Central Asia, and of the Joint Roadmap for Deepening Ties between the EU and Central Asia,
  - (c) make recommendations and report to relevant Council bodies on a regular basis;
  - (d) assist the Council in further developing a comprehensive policy towards Central Asia;
  - (e) support the regular organisation of high-level political meetings between the Union and countries of Central Asia;
  - (f) closely follow political developments in Central Asia by developing and maintaining close contacts with governments, parliaments, the judiciary, civil society and mass media;
  - (g) encourage Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to cooperate on regional issues of common interest;
  - (h) develop appropriate contacts and cooperation with the main interested actors in the region, and all relevant regional and international organisations, taking into account the growing presence of third countries in the region;
  - (i) contribute to the implementation of the Union's human rights policy in the region in cooperation with the EUSR for Human Rights, including the Union Guidelines on human rights and in particular the Union Guidelines on children and armed conflict and the Union Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them, and to the implementation of Union policy regarding UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, including by monitoring and reporting on developments as well as formulating recommendations in that regard;
  - (j) contribute, in close cooperation with the OSCE and the UN, towards conflict prevention and resolution by developing contacts with the authorities and other local actors such as non-governmental organisations, political parties, minorities, religious groups and their leaders;
  - (k) provide input to the formulation of aspects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy with respect to Central Asia relating to: connectivity, including the Global Gateway strategy; energy security; border security; countering of serious crime, including narcotics and trafficking in human beings; and water resource management, environment and climate change;
  - (l) promote regional security in Central Asia in the broader geopolitical context, including Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and developments in Afghanistan;
  - (m) support Union outreach and demarches to the countries of Central Asia, including on the prevention of circumvention of restrictive measures;

- (n) support Union outreach and demarches to the countries of Central Asia concerning respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States, including within the framework of all regional and international fora.
2. The EUSR shall support the work of the High Representative and maintain an overview of all activities of the Union in the region.

#### *Article 4*

### **Implementation of the mandate**

1. The EUSR shall be responsible for the implementation of the mandate, acting under the authority of the High Representative.
2. The PSC shall maintain a privileged link with the EUSR and shall be the EUSR's primary point of contact within the Council. The PSC shall provide the EUSR with strategic guidance and political direction within the framework of the mandate, without prejudice to the powers of the High Representative.
3. The EUSR shall work in close coordination with the relevant departments of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

#### *Article 5*

### **Financing**

1. The financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to the mandate (the 'expenditure') for the period from 1 March 2025 to 28 February 2027 shall be EUR 2 719 777,34.
2. The expenditure shall be managed in accordance with the procedures and rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.
3. The management of the expenditure shall be subject to a contract between the EUSR and the Commission. The EUSR shall be accountable to the Commission for all expenditure.

#### *Article 6*

### **Composition of the EUSR's team**

1. Within the limits of the mandate and the corresponding financial means made available, the EUSR shall be responsible for assembling a team. The EUSR's team shall include the expertise on specific policy issues as required by the mandate. The EUSR shall keep the Council and the Commission promptly informed of the composition of the EUSR's team.
2. Member States, institutions of the Union and the EEAS may propose the secondment of personnel to work on the EUSR's team. The salaries of such seconded personnel shall be covered by the seconding Member State, by the institution of the Union concerned or by the EEAS, as appropriate. Experts posted by Member States to the institutions of the Union or to the EEAS may also be seconded to work on the EUSR's team. International contracted personnel shall have the nationality of a Member State.
3. All seconded personnel shall remain under the administrative authority of the seconding Member State, of the institution of the Union concerned or of the EEAS and shall carry out their duties and act in the interest of the mandate.
4. The EUSR's team shall be co-located with the relevant EEAS departments or Union delegations in order to ensure the coherence and consistency of their respective activities.

#### *Article 7*

### **Privileges and immunities of the EUSR and members of the EUSR's team**

The privileges, immunities and further guarantees relating to the EUSR and to the members of the EUSR's team which are necessary for the completion and smooth functioning of the mandate shall be agreed with the host parties, as appropriate. Member States and the EEAS shall grant all necessary support to that effect.

*Article 8***Security of EU classified information**

The EUSR and the members of the EUSR's team shall respect the security principles and minimum standards established by Council Decision 2013/488/EU <sup>(4)</sup>.

*Article 9***Access to information and logistical support**

1. Member States, the Commission, the EEAS and the General Secretariat of the Council shall ensure that the EUSR is given access to any relevant information.
2. The Union delegations in the region and the Member States, as appropriate, shall provide logistical support to the EUSR and to the members of the EUSR's team.

*Article 10***Access to documents, archives and data protection**

1. The EUSR shall apply the rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(5)</sup>. The High Representative shall adopt relevant implementing rules concerning the EUSR.
2. The EUSR shall protect individuals with regard to the processing of their personal data in accordance with the rules laid down in Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(6)</sup>. The High Representative shall adopt relevant implementing rules concerning the EUSR.

*Article 11***Security**

In accordance with the Union's policy on the security of personnel deployed outside the Union in an operational capacity under Title V of the Treaty, the EUSR shall take all reasonably practicable measures, in conformity with the mandate and on the basis of the security situation in the area of responsibility, for the security of all personnel under the EUSR's direct authority, in particular by:

- (a) establishing a specific security plan based on guidance from the EEAS, including specific physical, organisational and procedural security measures governing the management of the secure movement of personnel to, and within, the area of responsibility and the management of security incidents, and by establishing a contingency plan and an evacuation plan;
- (b) ensuring that all personnel deployed outside the Union are covered by high-risk insurance, as required by the conditions in the area of responsibility;
- (c) ensuring that all personnel to be deployed outside the Union, including locally contracted personnel, have received appropriate security training before or upon arriving in the area of responsibility, based on the risk ratings assigned to that area by the EEAS;
- (d) ensuring that all agreed recommendations made following regular security assessments are implemented, and providing the High Representative, the Council and the Commission with written reports on the implementation of those recommendations and on other security issues within the framework of the regular progress reports and the final comprehensive mandate implementation report referred to in Article 15.

<sup>(4)</sup> Council Decision 2013/488/EU of 23 September 2013 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 274, 15.10.2013, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2013/488/oj>).

<sup>(5)</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2001/1049/oj>).

<sup>(6)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1725/oj>).

*Article 12***Reporting**

The EUSR shall regularly provide the High Representative with reports. The EUSR shall report regularly to the PSC, and as necessary to Council working parties. Regular reports shall be circulated through the COREU network. The EUSR may provide the Foreign Affairs Council with reports. In accordance with Article 36 of the Treaty, the EUSR may be involved in briefing the European Parliament.

*Article 13***Coordination**

1. The EUSR shall contribute to the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the Union's action and shall help ensure that all Union instruments and actions of the Member States are engaged consistently in order to attain the Union's policy objectives. Liaison with Member States shall be sought where appropriate. The activities of the EUSR shall be coordinated with those of the relevant geographic department of the EEAS and with the Commission. The EUSR shall provide regular briefings to the missions of the Member States and to Union delegations.

2. In the field, the EUSR shall liaise closely with the relevant Member States' Heads of Missions and the Heads of the Union delegations. They shall make every effort to assist the EUSR in the implementation of the mandate. The EUSR shall also liaise with other international and regional actors in the field.

*Article 14***Assistance in relation to claims**

The EUSR and the members of the EUSR's team shall provide assistance in responding to any claims and obligations arising from the mandates of the previous EUSRs for Central Asia, and shall provide administrative assistance and access to relevant documents for such purposes.

*Article 15***Review**

The implementation of this Decision and its consistency with other contributions by the Union to the region shall be kept under regular review. The EUSR shall present the High Representative, the Council and the Commission with regular progress reports and with a final comprehensive mandate implementation report by 30 November 2026.

*Article 16***Entry into force**

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 24 February 2025.

*For the Council*

*The President*

K. KALLAS