

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2021/1011
of 21 June 2021
appointing the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 33 and 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 7 December 2015, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2015/2274 ⁽¹⁾ appointing Mr Ángel LOSADA FERNÁNDEZ as the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Sahel.
- (2) On 25 June 2018, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2018/906 ⁽²⁾ extending the mandate of Mr LOSADA FERNÁNDEZ as the EUSR for the Sahel. That Decision was last amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/283 ⁽³⁾. The EUSR's mandate is to expire on 30 June 2021.
- (3) A new EUSR for the Sahel should be appointed for a period of 14 months.
- (4) 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

1. Ms Emanuela DEL RE is hereby appointed as the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Sahel from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2022. The Council may decide that the mandate of the EUSR be extended or terminated earlier, based on an assessment by the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and a proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR).
2. For the purposes of the EUSR's mandate, the Sahel is defined as comprising that area which is the main geographic scope of the European Union's Integrated Strategy in the Sahel (the 'Strategy') as adopted by Council conclusions on 16 April 2021, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. The EUSR shall also engage with the countries of the Lake Chad Basin and other countries and regional or international entities beyond the Sahel, including the Maghreb, West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea, as appropriate.

Article 2

Policy objectives

1. Based on the policy objectives of the Strategy, the EUSR's mandate shall be to contribute actively and giving priority to regional and international efforts to achieve lasting peace, security, stability and sustainable development in the region. The EUSR shall furthermore aim to enhance the quality, impact and visibility of the Union's multi-faceted engagement in the Sahel.

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2015/2274 of 7 December 2015 appointing the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel (OJ L 322, 8.12.2015, p. 44).

⁽²⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/906 of 25 June 2018 extending the mandate of the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel (OJ L 161, 26.6.2018, p. 22).

⁽³⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/283 of 22 February 2021 amending Decision (CFSP) 2018/906 extending the mandate of the European Union Special Representative for the Sahel (OJ L 62, 23.2.2021, p. 47).

2. The EUSR shall contribute to developing and implementing the Union's efforts in the region in an integrated way, including in the political, security and development areas, and to coordinating all relevant instruments and stakeholders for Union actions. The EUSR shall contribute to deepening the Union's engagement and coordination efforts with national, regional and international mechanisms, notably the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel (P3S), the Sahel Alliance and the Coalition for the Sahel as a framework for political and strategic engagement with the Sahel.

3. The EUSR action shall be pursued in close cooperation and coordination with the European external action service, the Union delegations, the Commission, Member States and other relevant stakeholders. Particular focus shall be given to strengthening and deepening the partnership with the G5 Sahel and contributing to international reflection on permanent and predictable funding in support of the G5 Sahel Joint Force.

Article 3

Mandate

1. In order to achieve the policy objectives in the Sahel, the EUSR's mandate shall be to:
 - (a) actively contribute to the implementation of the Strategy and coordinate and further develop the Union's integrated approach to the crises in the region, with a view to enhancing the overall coherence and effectiveness of Union activities in the Sahel;
 - (b) engage, including through shuttle diplomacy, with all relevant stakeholders in the region, governments, regional organisations, in particular the G5 Sahel and its Joint Force, the signatories of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali resulting from the Algiers Process (the 'Mali Peace Agreement'), international organisations, civil society and diasporas, and the countries of the Maghreb, the Gulf of Guinea and the Lake Chad Basin, with a view to furthering the Union's objectives and contributing to a better understanding of the role of the Union in the Sahel. With the G5 Sahel attention shall be paid, inter alia, to promoting respect for human rights and to non-military elements of its Joint Force such as the police component;
 - (c) represent and promote the interests and visibility of the Union in relevant regional and international fora and by participating in the Comité de Suivi of the Mali Peace Agreement, and other national processes relevant for the stability of the region;
 - (d) facilitate fully coordinated and comprehensive Union action in the region drawing on all relevant instruments, including the European Peace Facility, on development cooperation, Member States' activities and Union support to crisis management and conflict prevention through the European Union military mission to contribute to the training of the Malian armed Forces (EUTM Mali), the European Union CSDP mission in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali), the European Union CSDP mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger), and on stabilisation efforts within the Coalition for the Sahel, in particular the P3S and the Sahel Alliance and their respective secretariats;
 - (e) maintain close cooperation with the United Nations (UN), in particular the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, the Special Coordinator for development in the Sahel, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Head of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the African Union, in particular the African Union High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, the G5 Sahel, in particular the G5 Presidency and its Executive Secretary, the High Representative of the Coalition for the Sahel, the Economic Community of West African States, the Lake Chad Basin Commission; the Liptako-Gourma Authority; and other leading national, regional and international stakeholders, including other special envoys for the Sahel, as well as with the relevant authorities especially in the Maghreb, in the Horn of Africa, in the Gulf of Guinea and in the Middle East area;
 - (f) closely follow, analyse and report on the impact of root causes of instability and long-term trends in the region, including climate change, biodiversity loss, pastoralism, access to natural resources, notably land and water, as well as promote sustainable management of and cooperation over natural resources that reinforce stability, and support efforts to limit the spread of instability, by paying particular attention to the most vulnerable regions in terms of security, notably the Liptako-Gourma and Lake Chad regions;

- (g) closely follow other regional and trans-boundary dimensions of the challenges the region is facing, including pandemics, terrorism, radicalisation, organised crime, cyber-threats, arms smuggling, trafficking in human beings and smuggling, drug trafficking, maritime insecurity, refugee and migration flows and related illicit financial flows;
- (h) closely follow the humanitarian, political, security and development consequences of large scale refugee and migration flows, including internally displaced persons. Upon request, engage in dialogues on migration with relevant stakeholders and contribute more generally to the Union's policy on migration and refugees with respect to the region, in line with the Union's political priorities, in order to continue to promote fruitful cooperation in the areas of migration, based on the constructive partnerships established in recent years;
- (i) in close cooperation with the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, contribute to the further implementation of the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as of the relevant Council Conclusions on preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism. Maintain regular high level political contacts with the countries in the region affected by terrorism and international organised crime and ensure the Union's key role in the efforts to fight terrorism and international organised crime and their root causes. This includes the Union's efforts to enhance its support to regional capacity of the security sector through the regionalisation of the common security and defence policy (CSDP) missions and active support to regional capacity building in particular of the G5 Sahel Joint Force, its coordination with international players such as MINUSMA, and its relation with the local population, in line with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2359 (2017) and 2391 (2017);
- (j) closely follow the political, security and development consequences of humanitarian crises in the region;
- (k) contribute, in cooperation with the EUSR for Human Rights, to the implementation of the Union's human rights policy in the region, in line with the Union Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, the Union Guidelines on human rights, in particular the Union Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict, as well as on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them, and the Union's policy on Women, Peace and Security in line with the Union Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019-2024, promote inclusiveness and gender equality in the state building process, in line with UNSCR 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, including UNSCR 2242 (2015), and support the implementation of UNSCR 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security;
- (l) continue to pay particular attention to the justice sector as a whole, and to accountability mechanisms that can be used to fight impunity and to restore the population's trust in its justice system. The EUSR's contribution shall include regular monitoring and reporting on developments, as well as formulating recommendations in this regard and maintaining regular contacts with the relevant authorities in the region, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and engage with the human rights defenders and observers in the region;
- (m) through frequent contacts in the region, including with local actors, increase the Union's knowledge on local expectations and local contexts. Based on a thorough and continuous analysis of the situation, facilitate reflection and contribute to the early response and the strategic and long-term vision of the Union in the Sahel;
- (n) follow up and report on compliance with relevant UNSCRs, in particular UNSCRs 2056 (2012), 2071 (2012), 2085 (2012), 2100 (2013), 2227 (2015), 2295 (2016), 2364 (2017), 2374 (2017), 2359 (2017), 2391 (2017), 2423 (2018), 2432 (2018), 2480 (2019), 2484 (2019), 2531 (2020) and 2541 (2020).

2. For the purpose of the fulfilment of the EUSR's mandate, the EUSR shall, inter alia:

- (a) advise and report on the formulation of Union positions in regional and international fora, as appropriate, in order to proactively promote action based on partnership and mutual accountability and strengthen the Union's integrated approach towards the Sahel;
- (b) contribute to maintaining an overview of all Union activities and cooperate closely with relevant Union delegations and Member States.

*Article 4***Implementation of the mandate**

1. The EUSR shall be responsible for the implementation of the mandate, acting under the authority of the HR.
2. The PSC shall maintain a privileged link with the EUSR and shall be the EUSR's primary point of contact with 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 HR.
3. The EUSR shall cooperate and work in close coordination with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and its relevant departments.

*Article 5***Financing**

1. The financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to the EUSR's mandate for the period from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2022 shall be EUR 1 588 000.
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***Constitution and composition of the team**

1. Within the limits of the EUSR's mandate and the corresponding financial means made available, the EUSR shall be responsible for constituting a team. The 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 team.
2. Member States, institutions of the Union and the EEAS may propose the secondment of staff to work with the EUSR. The salary of such seconded personnel shall be covered by the Member State, the institution of the Union concerned or the EEAS, respectively. Experts seconded by Member States to the institutions of the Union or the EEAS may also be posted to work with the EUSR. International contracted staff shall have the nationality of a Member State.
3. All seconded personnel shall remain under the administrative authority of the sending Member State, institution of the Union or the EEAS and shall carry out their duties and act in the interest of the EUSR's mandate.
4. The EUSR staff 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 the EUSR's staff**

The privileges, immunities and further guarantees necessary for the completion and smooth functioning of the EUSR's mission and the members of the EUSR's staff shall be agreed with the host countries, as appropriate. Member States and the EEAS shall grant all necessary support to such 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 ⁽⁴⁾.

*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/or Member States, as appropriate, shall provide logistical support in the region.

*Article 10***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 accordance with the EUSR's mandate and 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 management of the secure movement of personnel to, and within, the area of responsibility, as well as management of security incidents, and including a contingency plan and 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 members of the EUSR's team 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 HR, the Council and the Commission with written reports on their implementation and on other security issues within the framework of the regular progress reports and a final comprehensive mandate implementation report.

*Article 11***Reporting**

The EUSR shall regularly provide the HR and the PSC with oral and written reports. The EUSR shall also report to Council working parties as necessary. 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.

⁽⁴⁾ 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).

*Article 12***Coordination**

1. In the framework of the Strategy, the EUSR shall contribute to the unity, consistency and effectiveness of the Union's action and shall help ensure that all Union instruments and Member States' actions are engaged consistently, 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 Union delegations and the Commission, as well as those of other EUSRs active in the region. The EUSR shall provide regular briefings to the Union delegations and to Member States' missions in the region.

2. In the field, close liaison shall be maintained with the relevant Member States' Heads of missions, the Heads of Union delegations and the Heads of CSDP missions. They shall make every effort to assist the EUSR in the implementation of the mandate. The EUSR, in close coordination with the relevant Union delegations, shall provide the Heads of missions of EUCAP Sahel Niger and of EUCAP Sahel Mali and the Mission Commander of EUTM Mali with local political guidance. The EUSR, the Mission Commander of EUTM Mali and the Civilian Operation Commander shall consult each other as required. The EUSR shall also liaise with other international and regional actors in the field.

*Article 13***Assistance in relation to claims**

The EUSR and the EUSR's staff shall assist in providing elements to respond to any claims and obligations arising from the mandates of the previous EUSRs for the Sahel, and shall provide administrative assistance and access to relevant files for such purposes.

*Article 14***Review**

The implementation of this Decision and its consistency with other contributions from the Union to the region shall be kept under regular review. The EUSR shall present the HR, the Council and the Commission with regular progress reports and a final comprehensive mandate implementation report by 31 May 2022.

*Article 15***Entry into force**

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

Done at Luxembourg, 21 June 2021.

For the Council
The President
J. BORRELL FONTELLES
