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COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2025/2585

of 15 December 2025

amending Decision 2012/642/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Belarus and the involvement of Belarus in the Russian aggression against 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 15 October 2012, the Council adopted Decision 2012/642/CFSP [1].

(2) On 15 December 2020, the Council adopted conclusions calling for further enhanced responses at Union level to counter hybrid threats, including disinformation, and to strengthen resilience. The Council noted that new technologies and crises offer opportunities for hostile actors to expand their interference activities. Those activities pose additional challenges for Member States and Union institutions.

(3) Following the adoption of the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence in March 2022, the Union established the EU hybrid toolbox. That toolbox comprises the preventive, cooperative, stability-building, restrictive and support measures referred to in the 21 June 2022 Council conclusions on a Framework for a coordinated EU response to hybrid campaigns.

(4) In its conclusions of 21 June 2022, as well as those of 18 July 2022, the Council reiterated the call for the High Representative and the Commission to present options, fully respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, for well-defined measures that could be taken against actors engaged in Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference ('FIMI') where necessary to protect public order and security in the Union. That call came against the backdrop of the 2018 Action Plan Against Disinformation, and the Rapid Alert System which was set up in 2019 to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices among Union institutions and Member States on countering disinformation.

(5) In February 2023, the European External Action Service published a report on FIMI threats, in which it defined FIMI as a mostly non-illegal pattern of behaviour that threatens or has the potential to negatively impact values, procedures and political processes. Such activity is manipulative in character and conducted in an intentional and coordinated manner by state or non-state actors, including their proxies inside and outside of their own territory. That report was followed up by the development of the FIMI toolbox, which was endorsed by the Council in December 2023 which provides a shared framework for responses, alongside the European External Action Service methodology for detecting and responding to FIMI campaigns.

(6) In its conclusions of 19 February 2024, the Council strongly condemned hybrid attacks at the Union's external borders, including the instrumentalisation of migrants by the Belarusian regime, in which Russia was complicit, for political purposes.

(7) On 11 December 2024, the Commission adopted a communication to support the Member States in countering hybrid threats from the weaponisation by Russia and Belarus of migration and in strengthening security at the EU's external borders.

(8) In its conclusions of 21 May 2024, the Council acknowledged that state and non-state actors are increasingly using hybrid tactics, posing a growing threat to the security of the Union, its Member States and its partners and called on Union institutions and the Member States to step up action to monitor attempts by foreign actors to interfere in the Union's democratic process.

[1] Council Decision 2012/642/CFSP of 15 October 2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Belarus and the involvement of Belarus in the Russian aggression against Ukraine (OJ L 285, 17.10.2012, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2012/642/oj).

(9) In its conclusions of 23 October 2025, the European Council pointed to Russia's and Belarus' intensified hybrid attacks and the recent violations of the Union's airspace.

(10) On 29 October 2025, the High Representative issued a statement on behalf of the European Union condemning Belarus' persistent, provocative and unacceptable actions against the Union and the Member States. Meteorological balloon incursions into Lithuania's airspace from Belarus, which have disrupted hundreds of flights and inflicted substantial losses on Lithuanian airports and thousands of travellers, are an attempt to intimidate Union citizens by posing direct threats to civilian aviation and risk destabilising a Member State of the Union. Those balloons are not merely smuggling tools, rather their incursions occur in the context of a broader targeted hybrid campaign, along with other actions, including state-sponsored migrant smuggling.

(11) The Council therefore considers it necessary to introduce in Decision 2012/642/CFSP an additional criterion for the listing of natural or legal persons, entities or bodies responsible for, implementing, supporting, benefitting from, involved in or facilitating actions or policies attributable to the Republic of Belarus which undermine or threaten democracy, the rule of law, stability or security in the Union or in one or several of its Member States, in an international organisation or in a third country, or which undermine or threaten the sovereignty or independence of one or several of its Member States, or of a third country, including in cases where it results in the disruption of the functioning of critical infrastructure, where it is reasonable to believe the natural or legal persons, entities or bodies were at least aware of the potential effects.

(12) Decision 2012/642/CFSP should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Decision 2012/642/CFSP is amended as follows:

(1) Article 3(1) is amended as follows:

(a) the following points are inserted:

'(ca) are responsible for, implementing, supporting, benefitting from, involved in or facilitating actions or policies attributable to the Republic of Belarus which undermine or threaten democracy, the rule of law, stability or security in the Union or in one or several of its Member States, in an international organisation or in a third country, or which undermine or threaten the sovereignty or independence of one or several of its Member States, or of a third country, through the following actions:

(i) planning, directing, engaging in, directly or indirectly, supporting, or otherwise facilitating the use of information manipulation and interference;

(ii) planning, directing, engaging in, directly or indirectly, supporting, or otherwise facilitating any actions targeted at the functioning of democratic institutions, economic activities or services of public interest, including by unauthorised entry into the territory of a Member State, including its airspace, or aimed at interfering with, damaging or destroying, including through sabotage or malicious cyber activities as part of hybrid activities, critical infrastructure;

(iii) planning, directing, engaging in, directly or indirectly, supporting, or otherwise facilitating or enabling widespread or systematic actions disrupting the functioning of critical infrastructure;

(cb) are natural persons supporting the persons engaged in activities referred to in point (ca);';

(b) point (f) is replaced by the following:

'(f) are natural persons associated with persons referred to in points (b), (c), (ca), (d) or (e).'.

(2) Article 4(1) is amended as follows:

(a) the following points are inserted:

'(ca) natural or legal persons, entities or bodies responsible for, implementing, supporting, benefitting from, involved in or facilitating actions or policies attributable to the Republic of Belarus which undermine or threaten democracy, the rule of law, stability or security in the Union or in one or several of its Member States, in an international organisation or in a third country, or which undermine or threaten the sovereignty or independence of one or several of its Member States, or of a third country, through the following actions:

(i) planning, directing, engaging in, directly or indirectly, supporting, or otherwise facilitating the use of information manipulation and interference;

(ii) planning, directing, engaging in, directly or indirectly, supporting, or otherwise facilitating any actions targeted at the functioning of democratic institutions, economic activities or services of public interest, including by unauthorised entry into the territory of a Member State, including its airspace, or aimed at interfering with, damaging or destroying, including through sabotage or malicious cyber activities as part of hybrid activities, critical infrastructure;

(iii) planning, directing, engaging in, directly or indirectly, supporting, or otherwise facilitating or enabling widespread or systematic actions disrupting the functioning of critical infrastructure;

(cb) natural or legal persons, entities or bodies supporting the persons, entities or bodies engaged in activities referred to in point (ca);';

(b) point (f) is replaced by the following:

'(f) natural or legal persons, entities or bodies associated with the persons, entities or bodies referred to in points (b), (c), (ca), (d) or (da).'.

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 Brussels, 15 December 2025.

For the Council

The President

K. KALLAS