



2026/490

2.3.2026

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2026/490

of 26 February 2026

amending Decision 2014/119/CFSP concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of 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 5 March 2014, the Council adopted Decision 2014/119/CFSP⁽¹⁾.
- (2) On the basis of a review of Decision 2014/119/CFSP, the restrictive measures set out therein should be extended until 6 March 2027 and the information in the Annex to that Decision regarding the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection should be updated.
- (3) Decision 2014/119/CFSP should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Decision 2014/119/CFSP is amended as follows:

- (1) in Article 5, second paragraph, the date '6 March 2026' is replaced by the date '6 March 2027';
- (2) the Annex is amended in accordance with the Annex to this Decision.

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, 26 February 2026.

For the Council

The President

M. DAMIANOS

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision 2014/119/CFSP of 5 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine (OJ L 66, 6.3.2014, p. 26, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2014/119\(1\)/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2014/119(1)/oj)).

ANNEX

In the Annex to Decision 2014/119/CFSP, in Section B ('Rights of defence and right to effective judicial protection'), under the heading 'Application of the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection of each of the listed persons', the information in relation to Vitalii Yuriyovych Zakharchenko, Viktor Ivanovych Ratushniak and Serhiy Vitalyovych Kurchenko is replaced by the following:

'2. Vitalii Yuriyovych Zakharchenko

The criminal proceedings relating to the misappropriation of public funds or assets are still ongoing.

The information on the Council's file shows that the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection of Mr Zakharchenko, including the fundamental right to have his case heard within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal, were respected in the criminal proceedings on which the Council relied. This is demonstrated in particular by the decisions of the investigating judge of 19 April 2021 ordering detention in custody of Mr Zakharchenko as well as the ruling of the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv dated 10 August 2021 granting permission to carry out a special pre-trial investigation in criminal proceeding No 42016000000002929. Those decisions of the investigating judges confirm the status of suspect of Mr Zakharchenko and highlight that the suspect is hiding from the investigation to avoid criminal liability.

Moreover, the Council has information that the Ukrainian authorities took measures to search for Mr Zakharchenko. On 12 February 2020, the investigating body decided to put Mr Zakharchenko on the international wanted list and forwarded a request to the Department of International Police Cooperation of the National Police of Ukraine for entry into the Interpol database. Additionally, on 11 May 2021 Ukraine sent a request for international legal assistance to the Russian Federation to establish the whereabouts of Mr Zakharchenko, which was rejected by Russia on 31 August 2021.

The Council has information that on 9 February 2022 the pre-trial investigation in criminal proceeding No 42016000000002929 was completed and on 5 August 2022, following the fulfilment of the requirements of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, the Prosecutor General's Office sent an indictment to the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv City for the consideration of the merits of the case. Additionally, on 2 May 2023 the Sviatoshynskyi District Court of Kyiv granted the request of the prosecutor and arranged a trial as part of the special judicial proceedings (in absentia) in the absence of the accused. The Council was informed that the court hearings are ongoing, with twelve court hearings scheduled in 2024 and fourteen court hearings scheduled in 2025. Some of those court hearings did not take place, for reasons including allowing the newly appointed defence counsel of Mr Zakharchenko to familiarise himself with the case materials and because of a power outage in the court building following a missile attack. In parallel, the court is examining documents that constitute evidence in relation to the case.

Based on the information provided by the Ukrainian authorities, Mr Zakharchenko has not involved a defence counsel in the criminal proceedings in Ukraine but an assigned defence counsel has been representing his interests. No violation of the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection can be ascertained in the circumstances where the defence is not exercising those rights.

In accordance with the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, the Council considers that the periods during which Mr Zakharchenko has been avoiding investigation must be excluded from the calculation of the period relevant for the assessment of respect for the right to a trial within a reasonable time. The Council therefore considers that the circumstances described above attributed to Mr Zakharchenko have significantly contributed to the length of the investigation.

6. **Viktor Ivanovych Ratushniak**

The criminal proceedings relating to the misappropriation of public funds or assets are still ongoing.

The information on the Council's file shows that the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection of Mr Ratushniak, including the fundamental right to have his case heard within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal, were respected in the criminal proceedings on which the Council relied. This is demonstrated in particular by the decisions of the investigating judge of 19 April 2021 ordering detention in custody of Mr Ratushniak as well as the ruling of the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv dated 10 August 2021 granting permission to carry out a special pre-trial investigation in criminal proceeding No 42016000000002929. Those decisions of the investigating judges confirm the status of suspect of Mr Ratushniak and highlight that the suspect is hiding from the investigation to avoid criminal liability.

The Council has information that the Ukrainian authorities took measures to search for Mr Ratushniak. On 12 February 2020, the investigating body decided to put Mr Ratushniak on the international wanted list and forwarded a request to the Department of International Police Cooperation of the National Police of Ukraine for entry into the Interpol database. Additionally, on 11 May 2021 Ukraine sent a request for international legal assistance to the Russian Federation to establish the whereabouts of Mr Ratushniak, which was rejected by Russia on 31 August 2021.

The Council has information that on 9 February 2022 the pre-trial investigation in criminal proceeding No 42016000000002929 was completed and on 5 August 2022, following the fulfilment of the requirements of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, the Prosecutor General's Office sent an indictment to the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv City for the consideration of the merits of the case. Additionally, on 2 May 2023 the Sviatoshynskyi District Court of Kyiv granted the request of the prosecutor and arranged a trial as part of the special judicial proceedings (in absentia) in the absence of the accused. The Council was informed that the court hearings are ongoing, with twelve court hearings scheduled in 2024 and fourteen court hearings scheduled in 2025. Some of those court hearings did not take place, for reasons including a power outage in the court building following a missile attack. In parallel, the court is examining documents that constitute evidence in relation to the case.

Based on the information provided by the Ukrainian authorities, Mr Ratushniak has not involved a defence counsel in the criminal proceedings in Ukraine but an assigned defence counsel has been representing his interests. No violation of the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection can be ascertained in the circumstances where the defence is not exercising those rights.

In accordance with the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, the Council considers that the periods during which Mr Ratushniak has been avoiding investigation must be excluded from the calculation of the period relevant for the assessment of respect for the right to a trial within a reasonable time. The Council therefore considers that the circumstances described above attributed to Mr Ratushniak have significantly contributed to the length of the investigation.

12. **Serhiy Vitalyovych Kurchenko**

The criminal proceedings relating to the misappropriation of public funds or assets are still ongoing.

The information on the Council's file shows that the rights of defence and the right to effective judicial protection of Mr Kurchenko, including the fundamental right to have his case heard within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal, were respected in the criminal proceedings on which the Council relied. This is demonstrated in particular by the fact that the defence was notified about the completion of the pre-trial investigation in criminal proceeding No 42016000000003393 on 28 March 2019 and was provided access to the materials for familiarisation. On 11 October 2021, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine additionally informed the defence lawyers of Mr Kurchenko about the completion of the pre-trial investigation and the provision of access to the materials of the pre-trial investigation for familiarisation. The Council received information that the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine filed a motion to establish a term for the review by the defence party in order to address the delay of the defence party in reviewing the materials of the pre-trial investigation. The Council was informed that the High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine in its decision dated 27 June 2022 set a time limit until 1 December 2022 for the defence party to complete the familiarisation process, after which they are considered to have exercised their right to access the materials. On 7 December 2022, the Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office sent an indictment to the High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine for the consideration of the merits of the case. On 30 March 2023, the court held a preliminary hearing and decided to arrange a trial. On the same date, the court also granted the request of the prosecutor to conduct special court proceedings (in absentia) against the accused. The Council was informed that the court hearings are ongoing and that the written evidence of the prosecution is being examined by the court. The defence counsel of Mr Kurchenko participates in the trial.

In relation to criminal proceeding No 12014160020000076, in its decision of 18 September 2020 the Odessa Court of Appeal granted the appeal by the prosecutor and imposed a preventive measure of detention in custody on Mr Kurchenko. The court also stated that Mr Kurchenko departed Ukraine in 2014 and that his location cannot be established. The court concluded that Mr Kurchenko is hiding from the pre-trial investigation bodies in order to avoid criminal liability. On 20 December 2021, the Kyivskyi District Court of Odesa City granted permission to carry out a special pre-trial investigation in absentia. Furthermore, on 20 October 2021 the Kyivskyi District Court of Odesa City dismissed the appeal by Mr Kurchenko's lawyers to cancel the resolution of the prosecutor on the suspension of the pre-trial investigation dated 27 July 2021.

The Council has information that the Ukrainian authorities took measures to search for Mr Kurchenko. On 13 May 2021, the Main Department of the National Police in Odessa Region forwarded a request to the Ukrainian Bureau of Interpol and Europol to publish a Red Notice concerning Mr Kurchenko, which is under consideration. The Council was informed that on 29 April 2020 the Ukrainian authorities sent a request for international legal assistance to the Russian Federation, which was returned on 28 July 2020 without execution.

The Council was informed that on 6 May 2022 the pre-trial investigation in criminal proceeding No 12014160020000076 was completed and on 1 August 2022 the Odessa Region Prosecutor's Office sent an indictment to the Prymorskyi District Court of Odesa City for the consideration of the merits of the case. On 18 April 2023, the court granted the request of the prosecutor to conduct special court proceedings (in absentia) against the accused. The Council was informed that the court hearings are ongoing, with numerous dates scheduled in 2024 and 2025. For example, at the court hearing on 25 January 2024, the accused's defence counsel filed an application for the disqualification of the judge, which was considered on 21 March 2024 and rejected. Another hearing on 22 May 2024 did not take place due to the defence counsel's application for the disqualification of the judge, which was considered on 3 April 2025 and rejected. The Council was also informed that the written evidence of the prosecution is being examined by the court.

The defence counsel of Mr Kurchenko participates in each court hearing.

In accordance with the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, the Council considers that the periods during which Mr Kurchenko has been avoiding investigation must be excluded from the calculation of the period relevant for the assessment of respect for the right to a trial within a reasonable time. The Council therefore considers that the circumstances described in the decision of the Odessa Court of Appeal attributed to Mr Kurchenko as well as the non-execution of the request for international legal assistance have significantly contributed to the length of the investigation.'.