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COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2025/1967

of 16 September 2025

on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the extension of the deadline for accession of Kazakhstan to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 78(2), Article 82(2) and Article 84, in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

(1) The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the 'Convention') was concluded by the Union by Council Decision (EU) 2023/1075 [1] with regard to the institutions and public administration of the Union, and by Council Decision (EU) 2023/1076 [2] with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement, and entered into force for the Union on 1 October 2023. There are currently 39 Parties to the Convention, including the Union and 22 Member States.

(2) The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (the 'Committee of Ministers') is the Council of Europe's decision-making body. Each of the 46 members of the Council of Europe is entitled to one representative on the Committee of Ministers, and each representative is entitled to one vote. All Member States are members of the Council of Europe and thus represented in the Committee of Ministers.

(3) Pursuant to Article 76(1) of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers may, after consultation of the Parties to the Convention and obtaining their unanimous consent, decide to invite a non-member State of the Council of Europe to accede to the Convention. Such decision requires a two-thirds majority of the Committee of Ministers and unanimous vote of the representatives of the Parties to the Convention entitled to sit on the Committee of Ministers.

(4) On 22 April 2020, the Committee of Ministers decided to invite Kazakhstan to accede to the Convention. Pursuant to that decision, the invitation was valid for five years from its adoption, that is until 23 April 2025.

(5) By a letter dated 3 April 2025, Kazakhstan requested an extension of the deadline for the accession of Kazakhstan to the Convention of two years, that is until 23 April 2027, to be able to complete its internal procedures.

(6) The Committee of Ministers, at its meeting in September 2025, is expected to adopt a decision granting Kazakhstan a two-year extension of the deadline for accession to the Convention.

[1] Council Decision (EU) 2023/1075 of 1 June 2023 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with regard to institutions and public administration of the Union (OJ L 143 I, 2.6.2023, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/1075/oj).

[2] Council Decision (EU) 2023/1076 of 1 June 2023 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement (OJ L 143 I, 2.6.2023, p. 4, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/1076/oj).

(7) It is appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf within the Committee of Ministers with regard to the extension of the deadline for accession of Kazakhstan to the Convention, as such extension could have legal effects upon the Union. The effect of the extension would be renewal of the expired invitation to Kazakhstan to accede to the Convention, and therefore could lead to the establishment of treaty relations between the Union and Kazakhstan in the framework of the Convention. The effects of the extension could also influence the way in which decisions are taken within the Committee of the Parties of the Convention.

(8) The accession of Kazakhstan to the Convention would be beneficial for the Union, since it would extend the Convention's ambitious standards to that country. The Union's position should therefore be to grant Kazakhstan the two-year extension of the deadline for the accession to the Convention in order for Kazakhstan to complete its internal procedures.

(9) As the Union is not a member of the Council of Europe, but all Member States are, the Union's position is to be expressed by the Member States, acting jointly.

(10) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 21 on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice, annexed to the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and to the Treaty on the Functioning of European Union (TFEU), and without prejudice to Article 4 of that Protocol, Ireland is not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application

(11) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 22 on the position of Denmark, annexed to the TEU and to the TFEU, Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The position to be taken on the Union's behalf at the meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in September 2025, shall be to support the extension of the deadline for the accession of Kazakhstan to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence until 23 April 2027.

Article 2

The position referred to in Article 1 shall be expressed by the Member States that are members of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, acting jointly.

Article 3

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

Done at Brussels, 16 September 2025.

For the Council

The President

M. BJERRE