2026/2296

13.10.2026

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2026/2296

of 12 October 2026

on a European Union Support mission in Lebanon (EUSM Lebanon)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Articles 42(4) and 43(2) thereof,

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

Whereas:

(1) On 28 August 2025, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2790 (2025) urging the international community to intensify its support, including equipment, material and finance, to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in order to ensure their effective and sustainable deployment south of the Litani River and to enhance their capacities to implement Resolution 1701 (2006).

(2) On 10 February 2026, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) welcomed the Political Framework for Crisis Approach on Lebanon.

(3) In its conclusions of 19 June 2026, the European Council reaffirmed the Union's support for efforts to ensure the safety of the Lebanese people and for Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It reiterated its full support for the Lebanese Government's efforts to strengthen the country's institutions, including the LAF with a view to gaining control of the whole Lebanese territory, and to establish the State's monopoly on holding weapons. The Union will continue to support the LAF, including through a possible Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission and through continued and reinforced support under the European Peace Facility.

(4) On 24 July 2026, the Council approved a Crisis Management Concept for a possible CSDP mission in Lebanon. A CSDP mission should therefore be established.

(5) By letter dated 5 October 2026, the President of the Council of Ministers of Lebanon invited the Union to deploy the CSDP Mission in its territory.

(6) The Mission should have a civilian pillar, under the strategic command and control of the Civilian Operation Commander, and a military pillar, under the strategic command and control of a Military Commander. These pillars should share the same Union political and strategic objectives and mandate but carry out different, though complementary, tasks tailored to their respective field of competence, while ensuring close coordination in the implementation of the Mission's activities.

(7) The Civilian Operations Headquarters should be at the disposal of the Civilian Operation Commander for the planning and conduct of the civilian pillar of the Mission.

(8) The Military Planning and Conduct Capability should be the static command and control structure at the military strategic level and should be responsible for the operational planning and conduct of the military pillar of the Mission.

(9) The head of the civilian pillar should exercise the same functions as regards the civilian pillar of the Mission as the Head of Mission in a civilian CSDP Mission. The head of the military pillar should exercise the same functions as regards the military pillar of the Mission as the Mission Force Commander in a military CSDP Mission.

(10) Close coordination between the civilian and the military pillars should be ensured, including through the Joint Support Coordination Cell or other appropriate coordination arrangements, in order to ensure a coherent approach and the use of possible synergies in the implementation of the Mission's mandate and activities.

(11) Pursuant to Article 41(2) Treaty on European Union (TEU), operational expenditure arising from the civilian pillar of the Mission should be charged to the Union budget, while operational expenditure arising from the military pillar of the Mission is to be borne by the Member States in accordance with Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 establishing the European Peace Facility ([1]).

(12) The Mission will be conducted 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 TEU,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

SECTION I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Establishment

1. The Union hereby establishes a Union Support Mission in Lebanon ('EUSM Lebanon') under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

2. EUSM Lebanon shall initially operate within Lebanon north of the Litani River, and, in relation to south of the Litani river, when the necessary political and security conditions are met, and based on the agreement of the Lebanese government. The Council hereby authorises the Political and Security Committee (PSC) to take the relevant decisions to that effect.

Article 2

Mandate

1. EUSM Lebanon shall contribute to lasting stability and peace throughout Lebanon, in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701(2006), by supporting the strengthening of the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) in order to ensure State authority, territorial control and border security.

([1]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 of 22 March 2021 establishing a European Peace Facility, and repealing Decision (CFSP) 2015/528 (OJ L 102, 24.3.2021, p. 14, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/509/oj).

2. For that purpose, EUSM Lebanon shall:

(a) for the military pillar, support LAF capabilities as follows:

(i) Land Border Regiments: provide advisory support and training to strengthen border surveillance, patrolling, border control, and counter-smuggling capabilities, including exploring, where appropriate, possibilities for supporting operational coordination and communication on border security between the relevant Lebanese border authorities and, where feasible, their Syrian counterparts;

(ii) Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities: provide advisory support and specialised training to strengthen joint ISR planning, surveillance, early warning, drone operations and imagery analysis capabilities, in coordination with relevant assistance measures under the European Peace Facility;

(iii) maritime security: provide advisory support and training to enhance maritime surveillance, maritime domain awareness, search and rescue, information-sharing, and maritime law enforcement capabilities;

(b) for the civilian pillar, support the ISF capabilities as follows:

(i) ISF operational capabilities: provide advisory support and training to strengthen selected Mobile Force Units and Regional Gendarmerie Units in areas including public order, tactical response, counterterrorism and anti-smuggling, as well as rule of law;

(ii) port security governance: provide support for the development of port security governance arrangements in line with international standards;

(iii) ISF training capacity: provide support to the ISF Training Institute in developing a National Training Framework and specialised training programmes, including in areas such as cybercrime and anti-smuggling;

(c) additional specialised training activities, falling within the scope of points (a) or (b), such as on counter-improvised explosive device (C-IED) and explosive ordnance disposal, shall be defined in the planning documents, in response to further needs articulated by the Lebanese authorities.

3. EUSM Lebanon shall follow a scalable, modular and flexible approach allowing for adjustment over time in response to evolving needs and operational conditions.

4. EUSM Lebanon shall facilitate and work in complementarity with assistance measures under the European Peace Facility which may be decided by the Council in support of Lebanon.

5. International humanitarian law, human rights and the principle of gender equality, the protection of civilians and the agendas under United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325(2000) on Women, Peace and Security, UNSCR 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security, and UNSCR 1612 (2005) on Children and Armed Conflict shall be fully integrated and proactively mainstreamed in EUSM Lebanon's strategic and operational planning, activities and reporting.

Article 3

Political control and strategic direction

1. The PSC shall exercise, under the responsibility of the Council and of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the 'High Representative'), the political control and strategic direction of EUSM Lebanon. The Council hereby authorises the PSC to take the relevant decisions for this purpose in accordance with Article 38 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). That authorisation shall include powers to amend the planning documents, including the Operation Plan for the civilian pillar of EUSM Lebanon and the Mission Plan and rules of engagement for the military pillar EUSM Lebanon, and the chain of command. It shall also include powers to take decisions on the appointment of the heads of the civilian and the military pillars. Powers of decision with respect to the objectives and termination of EUSM Lebanon shall remain vested in the Council. The decisions of the PSC regarding the appointment of the heads of the civilian and the military pillars shall be published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

2. The PSC shall report to the Council at regular intervals.

3. The PSC shall receive, on a regular basis, reports from the chairman of the EU Military Committee (EUMC) regarding the activities of the military pillar of EUSM Lebanon. The PSC shall receive, on a regular basis and as required, reports by the Civilian Operation Commander regarding the activities of the civilian pillar of EUSM Lebanon. The PSC may invite the Civilian Operation Commander and the Military Commander to its meetings, as appropriate.

Article 4

Chain of command and structure

1. EUSM Lebanon shall have a unified chain of command as a crisis management operation.

2. EUSM Lebanon shall have its headquarters in Lebanon.

3. EUSM Lebanon shall have a civilian pillar under the strategic command and control of the Civilian Operation Commander (the 'civilian pillar'), and a military pillar under the strategic command and control of the Military Commander (the 'military pillar').

4. Close coordination between the civilian and military pillars shall be ensured, in particular through the Joint Support Coordination Cell, with a view to ensuring a coherent approach in the implementation of EUSM Lebanon's mandate and activities, without prejudice to the respective civilian and military chains of command and the distinct sources of financing applicable to the civilian and military pillars.

SECTION II

CIVILIAN PILLAR

Article 5

Civilian Operation Commander

1. The Managing Director of the Civilian Operations Headquarters (CivOpsHQ) shall be the Civilian Operation Commander for the civilian pillar.

2. The CivOpsHQ shall be at the disposal of the Civilian Operation Commander for the planning and conduct of the civilian pillar.

3. The Civilian Operation Commander, under the political control and strategic direction of the PSC and overall authority of the High Representative, shall exercise command and control of the civilian pillar at the strategic level.

4. The Civilian Operation Commander shall ensure the proper and effective implementation of the decisions of the Council and of the PSC with regard to the conduct of operations, including by issuing instructions at the strategic level to the head of the civilian pillar, and by providing him or her with advice and technical support.

5. The Civilian Operation Commander shall report to the Council through the High Representative.

6. All staff seconded to the civilian pillar shall remain under the full command of the national authorities of the seconding State in accordance with national rules, of the Union institution concerned or of the European External Action Service (EEAS), as appropriate. The national authority, Union institution or the EEAS, as appropriate, shall transfer operational control of its seconded staff to the Civilian Operation Commander.

7. The Civilian Operation Commander shall have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Union's duty of care is properly discharged for staff in the civilian pillar.

Article 6

Head of the civilian pillar

1. The head of the civilian pillar shall assume responsibility for the civilian pillar and shall exercise command and control thereof, at the operational level. The head of the civilian pillar shall be directly responsible to the Civilian Operation Commander and shall act in accordance with the Civilian Operation Commander's instructions.

2. The head of the civilian pillar shall be the representative of the civilian pillar in its area of responsibility.

3. The head of the civilian pillar shall exercise administrative and logistic responsibility for the civilian pillar, including responsibility for the assets, resources and information placed at the disposal of the civilian pillar. The head of the civilian pillar may delegate management tasks relating to staff and financial matters to staff members of the civilian pillar, under the overall responsibility of the head of the civilian pillar.

4. The head of the civilian pillar shall issue instructions for the effective conduct of EUSM Lebanon in theatre, assuming its coordination and day-to-day management, following the instruction of the Civilian Operation Commander.

5. The head of the civilian pillar shall be responsible for disciplinary control over the staff of the civilian pillar. For seconded staff, disciplinary action shall be exercised by the national authorities of the seconding State in accordance with national rules, by the Union institution concerned or by the EEAS, as appropriate.

6. The head of the civilian pillar shall, without prejudice to the chain of command, receive local political guidance from the head of the Union delegation to Lebanon.

Article 7

Staff

1. The civilian pillar shall consist primarily of staff seconded by Member States, by Union institutions or by the EEAS. Each Member State, each Union institution, and the EEAS shall bear the costs related to any member of staff seconded by it, including travel expenses to and from the place of deployment, salaries, medical coverage and allowances other than applicable daily allowances.

2. The Member State, the Union institution or the EEAS, as appropriate, shall be responsible for answering any claims relating to the secondment of or concerning their members of staff seconded to the civilian pillar, and for bringing any actions against such persons.

3. International and local staff may be recruited on a contractual basis by the civilian pillar if the functions required cannot be provided by personnel seconded by Member States. Exceptionally, in duly justified cases where no qualified applicants from the Member States are available, nationals from participating third States may be recruited on a contractual basis.

4. The conditions of employment and the rights and obligations of international and local staff in the civilian pillar shall be laid down in the contracts between the civilian pillar and the staff member concerned.

Article 8

Security

1. The Civilian Operation Commander shall direct the head of the civilian pillar's planning of security measures and ensure the proper and effective implementation of those security measures by the civilian pillar in accordance with Article 5.

2. The head of the civilian pillar shall be responsible for the discharge of the duty of care in the civilian pillar and for ensuring compliance with the requirements applicable to the civilian pillar, in line with the Security and Duty of Care Policy for Civilian CSDP Missions, and its supporting instruments.

3. The head of the civilian pillar shall be assisted by a head of security and health, who shall report to the head of the civilian pillar and also maintain a close functional relationship with the CivOpsHQ.

4. The staff of the civilian pillar shall undergo mandatory security training before taking up their duties, in accordance with the Operation Plan. They shall also receive regular in-theatre refresher training organised by the head of security and health.

5. The head of the civilian pillar shall ensure the protection of EU classified information in accordance with Council Decision 2013/488/EU ([2]).

([2]) 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).

Article 9

Legal arrangements

The civilian pillar shall have the capacity to procure services and supplies, to enter into contracts and administrative arrangements, to employ staff, to hold bank accounts, to acquire and dispose of assets and to discharge its liabilities, and to be a party to legal proceedings, as required in order to implement this Decision.

Article 10

Financial arrangements

1. The financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to the civilian pillar for the six months following the entry into force of this Decision shall be EUR 4 303 135,85. The financial reference amount for any subsequent period shall be decided by the Council.

2. All expenditure for the civilian pillar shall be managed in accordance with the rules and procedures applicable to the general budget of the Union. Participation of natural and legal persons in the award of procurement contracts by the civilian pillar shall be open without limitations. Moreover, no rule of origin for goods purchased by the civilian pillar shall apply. Subject to the Commission's approval, the civilian pillar may conclude technical arrangements with Member States, the host state, participating third States and other international actors regarding the provision of equipment, services and premises to the civilian pillar.

3. The civilian pillar shall be responsible for the implementation of its budget. For that purpose, the civilian pillar shall sign an agreement with the Commission. The financial arrangements shall respect the chain of command provided for in Articles 4, 5 and 6 and the operational requirements of EUSM Lebanon.

4. The civilian pillar shall report fully to, and be supervised by, the Commission as regards the financial activities undertaken in the framework of the agreement referred to in paragraph 3.

5. The expenditure related to the civilian pillar shall be eligible as of the date of adoption of this Decision.

SECTION III

MILITARY PILLAR

Article 11

The Military Commander

1. The Director of the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) shall be the Military Commander for the military pillar.

2. The MPCC shall be the static command and control structure at the military strategic level outside the area of operations and shall be responsible for the operational planning and conduct of the military pillar.

3. The Military Commander, under the political control and strategic direction of the PSC and overall authority of the High Representative, shall exercise command and control of the military pillar at the strategic level.

4. The Military Commander shall ensure the proper and effective implementation of the decisions of the Council and the PSC with regard to the conduct of operations of the military pillar, including by issuing instructions to its personnel.

5. The Military Commander shall report to the Council through the High Representative.

6. All staff seconded to the military pillar shall remain under the full command of the national authorities of the seconding State in accordance with national rules, of the Union institution concerned or of the EEAS, as appropriate. The national authority, Union institution or the EEAS, as appropriate, shall transfer operational control of its seconded staff to the Military Commander.

7. The Military Commander shall have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Union's duty of care is properly discharged for staff in the military pillar.

Article 12

Head of the military pillar

1. The head of the military pillar shall assume responsibility for the military pillar and shall exercise command and control thereof, at the operational level.

2. The head of the military pillar shall be directly responsible to the Military Commander and shall act in accordance with the Military Commander's instructions.

3. The head of the military pillar shall, without prejudice to the chain of command, receive local political guidance from the head of the Union delegation to Lebanon.

Article 13

Military direction

1. The EUMC shall monitor the proper execution of the tasks by the military pillar, conducted under the responsibility of the Military Commander.

2. The EUMC shall receive, on a regular basis, reports from the Military Commander. The EUMC may invite the Military Commander and the head of the military pillar to its meetings, as appropriate.

3. The chairman of the EUMC shall act as the primary point of contact with the Military Commander.

Article 14

Financial arrangements

1. The common costs of the military pillar shall be administered in accordance with Decision (CFSP) 2021/509.

2. The financial reference amount for the common costs of the military pillar for the period of six months following the entry into force of this Decision shall be EUR 2 880 000. The percentage of the reference amount referred to in Article 51(2) of Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 shall be 70 % for commitments and 35 % for payments. The financial reference amount for any subsequent period shall be decided by the Council.

SECTION IV

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 15

Consistency of the Union's response and coordination

1. The High Representative shall ensure the implementation of this Decision and its consistency with the Union's external action as a whole, including the Union's development programmes and its humanitarian assistance programmes.

2. The head of the civilian pillar and the head of the military pillar shall, without prejudice to the chain of command, receive local political guidance from the head of the Union delegation to Lebanon.

3. EUSM Lebanon shall coordinate its activities with Member States' bilateral activities in the field of security and defence in Lebanon, Union institutions and relevant UN and Union agencies, as appropriate. EUSM Lebanon shall coordinate, where appropriate, with like-minded third States. The military pillar shall also work in close coordination with the Military Technical Committee for Lebanon (MTC4L), within the scope of its role in coordinating international support for the Lebanese Armed Forces.

Article 16

Participation of third States

1. Without prejudice to the decision-making autonomy of the Union and its single institutional framework, and in accordance with the relevant guidelines of the European Council, third States may be invited to participate in EUSM Lebanon.

2. The Council hereby authorises the PSC to invite third States to offer contributions and to take relevant decisions on acceptance of the proposed contributions, upon the recommendation of the Military Commander and the EUMC, or of the Civilian Operation Commander, respectively.

3. Detailed arrangements regarding the participation of third States shall be covered by agreements concluded pursuant to Article 37 TEU and in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 218 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Where the Union and a third State have concluded an agreement establishing a framework for the latter's participation in crisis management missions of the Union, the provisions of such an agreement shall apply in the context of EUSM Lebanon.

4. Third States making contributions to the civilian pillar or significant military contributions to its military pillar shall have the same rights and obligations as Member States in terms of the day-to-day management of EUSM Lebanon.

5. The Council hereby authorises the PSC to take relevant decisions on the establishment of a civilian or a military Committee of Contributors, should third States make contributions to the civilian pillar or significant military contributions to the military pillar.

Article 17

Status of the EUSM Lebanon and its personnel

The status of EUSM Lebanon and its personnel, including the privileges, immunities and further guarantees necessary for the completion and smooth functioning of EUSM Lebanon, shall be the subject of an agreement concluded by the Union with Lebanon pursuant to Article 37 TEU and in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 218 TFEU.

Article 18

Release of information

1. The High Representative shall be authorised to release to the third States associated with this Decision, as appropriate and in accordance with the needs of the EUSM Lebanon, EU classified information generated for the purposes of EUSM Lebanon, in accordance with Decision 2013/488/EU:

(a) up to the level provided in the applicable security of information agreements concluded between the Union and the third State concerned; or

(b) up to the level 'CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL' in other cases.

2. In the event of a specific and immediate operational need, the High Representative shall also be authorised to release to the relevant authorities of Lebanon any EU classified information up to 'RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED' level which is generated for the purposes of EUSM Lebanon, in accordance with Decision 2013/488/EU. Arrangements between the High Representative and the competent authorities of Lebanon shall be drawn up for that purpose.

3. The High Representative shall be authorised to release to the third States associated with this Decision any EU non-classified documents connected with the deliberations of the Council relating to EUSM Lebanon and covered by the obligation of professional secrecy pursuant to Article 6(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure ([3]).

4. The High Representative may delegate the powers referred to in paragraphs 1 to 3, as well as the ability to conclude the arrangements referred to in paragraph 2, to persons placed under his or her authority, to the Civilian Operation Commander or to the Military Commander.

Article 19

Watch-Keeping Capability

The Watch-Keeping Capability shall be activated for EUSM Lebanon.

Article 20

Planning and launch of EUSM Lebanon

1. The Decision to launch EUSM Lebanon shall be adopted by the Council following approval of the Operation Plan for the civilian pillar and of the Mission Plan, including the Rules of Engagement, for the military pillar. EUSM Lebanon shall be launched on the date recommended by the Military Commander and Civilian Operation Commander of EUSM Lebanon.

2. The core military and civilian planning teams of EUSM Lebanon shall make the necessary preparations to allow EUSM Lebanon to reach its initial operational capability. Any deployment to the area of operations shall be preceded by an in-depth assessment of the security situation and of the associated requirements to be met.

([3]) Council Decision 2009/937/EU of 1 December 2009 adopting the Council's Rules of Procedure (OJ L 325, 11.12.2009, p. 35, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2009/937/oj).

Article 21

Entry into force and termination

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

2. It shall apply for a period of three years from the launch of EUSM Lebanon.

3. This Decision shall be repealed in accordance with the plans approved for the termination of EUSM Lebanon, and without prejudice to the procedures regarding the audit and presentation of the accounts of the military pillar laid down in Decision (CFSP) 2021/509.

Done at Luxembourg, 12 October 2026.

For the Council

The President

K. KALLAS