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COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2026/2196

of 28 September 2026

on an assistance measure under the European Peace Facility to support the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 28(1) and Article 41(2) thereof,

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

Whereas:

(1) Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 ([1]) establishes the European Peace Facility (EPF) for the financing by Member States of Union actions under the common foreign and security policy to preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security pursuant to Article 21(2), point (c), of the Treaty. In particular, pursuant to Article 1(2) of Decision (CFSP) 2021/509, the EPF is to be used for the financing of assistance measures such as actions to strengthen the capacities of third States and regional and international organisations relating to military and defence matters.

(2) The West African maritime domain continues to face a challenging environment in which piracy, armed robbery at sea, kidnapping of seafarers, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, smuggling and trafficking of drugs and arms, as well as transnational organised crime pose a major and increasing threat to maritime security, affecting freedom of navigation, thus endangering major trade routes, jeopardising the sustainable development of the entire region and the economic livelihood of the population, and leading to the deterioration of the environment and biodiversity.

(3) Cabo Verde remains particularly exposed to various threats, including maritime piracy, terrorism, drug trafficking, human trafficking, cybercrime and IUU fishing due to its vast Exclusive Economic Zone and geostrategic location at the crossroads of the Atlantic, connecting Africa to Europe and the Americas. Strengthening the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde is an important element to enable and support maritime security efforts in Cabo Verde and within the Atlantic and Gulf of Guinea regions.

(4) During the 13th Ministerial Meeting under the European Union – Cabo Verde Special Partnership held in Brussels on 31 January 2025, both partners reaffirmed their engagement to strengthen their mutual cooperation under the security and stability pillar, with the aim to define an intensified concept for security, in line with the Union's Integrated Approach.

(5) On 8 July 2025, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2025/1340 ([2]).

(6) On 17 December 2025, the contract between the Administrator for EPF assistance measures and the implementing actor, the Ministry of National Defence of Portugal, funded under Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/1340, was concluded. In order to ensure continuity of EPF support in 2026 and to avoid potential operational gaps, the eligibility of certain expenditure financed under this Decision should start on 17 December 2025.

([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]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/1340 of 8 July 2025 on an assistance measure under the European Peace Facility to support the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde (OJ L, 2025/1340, 9.7.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2025/1340/oj).

(7) On 1 April 2026, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy received a request from Cabo Verde for the Union to assist the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde with the procurement of key infrastructure, equipment and services to strengthen the capabilities of their Coast Guard.

(8) Assistance measures are to be implemented taking into account the principles and requirements set out in Decision (CFSP) 2021/509, in particular compliance with Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP ([3]), and in line with the rules for the implementation of revenue and expenditure financed under the EPF.

(9) The Council reaffirms its determination to protect, promote and fulfil human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic principles and to strengthen the rule of law and good governance, in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Establishment, objectives, scope and duration

1. An assistance measure benefiting Cabo Verde (the 'beneficiary') to be financed under the European Peace Facility (EPF) (the 'assistance measure') is hereby established.

2. The objectives of the assistance measure are the following:

(a) to further strengthen the cooperation on security and defence between the Union and the beneficiary;

(b) to contribute to enhancing the overall security and defence capacities of the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde to protect the sovereignty of the beneficiary at sea and improve regional maritime security, thereby better protecting maritime vessels and resources, coastal populations and their livelihoods;

(c) to strengthen the beneficiary's potential with respect to its participation in the Union's common security and defence policy operations and its contribution to joint actions in the framework of the Yaoundé Architecture.

3. To achieve the objectives set out in paragraph 2, the assistance measure shall finance the following types of equipment not designed to deliver lethal force, infrastructure and services:

(a) equipment for the ocean patrol vessel, which is to be provided under the 2025 assistance measure under the EPF;

(b) an air-base for the Cabo Verdean Coast Guard on the Island of Sal and related equipment;

(c) workshop facilities for the Cabo Verdean Coast Guard and a base camp for the Cabo Verdean navy seals in Mindelo, island of São Vicente and related equipment;

(d) training courses in critical domains such as maintenance, logistics and communications;

(e) operational equipment for the Cabo Verdean Coast Guard including intervention, individual equipment and communication assets;

([3]) Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment (OJ L 335, 13.12.2008, p. 99, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/compos/2008/944/oj).

(f) air-ground-sea communication systems and equipment for Cabo Verde's national Maritime Operations Center (COSMAR);

(g) an aircraft for the Cabo Verdean Coast Guard.

The assistance measure shall also finance related supplies and services, including technical training, where needed.

4. The duration of the assistance measure shall be 48 months from the date of adoption of this Decision.

Article 2

Financial arrangements

1. The financial reference amount intended to cover the expenditure related to the assistance measure shall be EUR 60 000 000.

2. All expenditure shall be managed in accordance with Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 and in line with the rules for the implementation of revenue and expenditure financed under the EPF.

3. Expenditure related to Article 1(3), points (a) and (d), shall be eligible from the 17 December 2025.

Article 3

Arrangements with the beneficiary

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the 'High Representative') shall make the necessary arrangements with the beneficiary to ensure its compliance with the requirements and conditions established by this Decision as a condition for the provision of support under the assistance measure.

2. The arrangements referred to in paragraph 1 shall include provisions obliging the beneficiary to ensure:

(a) compliance of the units of the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde supported under the assistance measure with relevant international law, in particular international human rights law and international humanitarian law;

(b) proper and efficient use of any assets provided under the assistance measure for the purposes for which they were provided;

(c) sufficient maintenance of any assets provided under the assistance measure to ensure their usability and operational availability over their life cycle;

(d) that any assets provided under the assistance measure are not lost or transferred to persons or entities other than those identified in those arrangements.

3. The arrangements referred to in paragraph 1 shall include provisions on the suspension and termination of support under the assistance measure in the event of the beneficiary being found in breach of the obligations set out in paragraph 2.

Article 4

Implementation

1. The High Representative shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Decision in accordance with Decision (CFSP) 2021/509, and in line with the rules for the implementation of revenue and expenditure financed under the EPF and with the Integrated Methodological Framework for assessing and identifying the required measures and controls for assistance measures under the EPF.

2. The implementation of the activities referred to in Article 1(3) shall be carried out by the Ministry of National Defence of Portugal in respect of points (a), (d) and (g) thereof, and by Expertise France in respect of points (b), (c), (e) and (f) thereof.

Article 5

Monitoring, control and evaluation

1. The High Representative shall monitor the compliance by the beneficiary with the obligations set out in Article 3. That monitoring shall be used to provide awareness of the context and the risks of breaches of the obligations set out in Article 3, and to contribute to the prevention of such breaches, including violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by the units of the Armed Forces of Cabo Verde supported under the assistance measure.

2. The post-shipment control of equipment and supplies shall be organised as follows:

(a) delivery verification, whereby EPF delivery certificates are to be signed by the end-user forces upon transfer of ownership;

(b) reporting, whereby the beneficiary is to report annually on the activities conducted with the equipment, infrastructure, supplies and services provided under the assistance measure and on the inventory of designated items until such reporting is no longer deemed necessary by the Political and Security Committee (PSC);

(c) on-site visits, whereby the beneficiary is to grant the High Representative and the EPF auditors access to conduct on-site checks and EPF audits, upon request.

3. The High Representative shall conduct a final evaluation upon completion of the assistance measure to assess whether the assistance measure has contributed to reaching the objectives set out in Article 1(2).

Article 6

Reporting

During the period of implementation, the High Representative shall provide the PSC with six-monthly reports on the implementation of the assistance measure, in accordance with Article 63 of Decision (CFSP) 2021/509. The administrator for assistance measures shall regularly inform the Facility Committee established by Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 on the implementation of revenue and expenditure in accordance with Article 38 of that Decision, including by providing information on the suppliers and subcontractors involved.

Article 7

Suspension and termination

1. The PSC may decide to suspend wholly or partially the implementation of the assistance measure in accordance with Article 64 of Decision (CFSP) 2021/509.

2. The PSC may recommend that the Council terminate the assistance measure.

Article 8

Entry into force

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

It shall apply in respect of expenditure related to Article 1(3), points (a) and (d), from 17 December 2025.

Done at Brussels, 28 September 2026.

For the Council

The President

K. KALLAS