DECISIONS

COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2022/151

of 3 February 2022

on a European Union action to support the evacuation of certain particularly vulnerable persons from Afghanistan

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

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

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

Whereas:

(1) On 10 December 2001, the Council adopted Joint Action 2001/875/CFSP ([1]) appointing a European Union Special Representative in Afghanistan (EUSR). The mandate of the EUSR was extended several times, most recently by Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/289 ([2]), until 31 August 2017.

(2) On 30 May 2007, the Council adopted Joint Action 2007/369/CFSP ([3]) establishing a European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan). EUPOL Afghanistan was extended several times, most recently by Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2040 ([4]), until 15 September 2017.

(3) On 1 May 2021, the Taliban launched an offensive and started to seize control of a gradually increasing number of districts in Afghanistan. On 15 August 2021, Taliban forces seized control of Kabul and overthrew the constitutionally based government.

(4) In a statement of 31 August 2021 on the situation in Afghanistan, the Council noted: '*the evacuation of our citizens and to the extent possible of Afghan nationals who have cooperated with the European Union and its Member States and their families has been conducted as a matter of priority and will continue*'.

(5) In its conclusions of 15 September 2021 on Afghanistan, the Council noted: '*… since August 2021, the international community, including the European Union and its Member States, undertook a collective effort, under extreme circumstances, to evacuate thousands of European Union citizens and third country nationals, including Afghans who worked for diplomatic missions and other Afghans at risk, due to their principled engagement for our common values. This was a true demonstration of EU solidarity.*'

(6) In these exceptional circumstances, the European External Action Service (EEAS) has organised and managed since 1 June 2021 the evacuation of Afghans, in particular of those who had worked for the EUSR or for EUPOL Afghanistan, of other particularly vulnerable Afghans who had collaborated with the Union, and of their dependent close relatives. Such evacuations should continue during the year 2022. A list of the persons eligible for this evacuation has been established by the EEAS as of 1 October 2021. It may be updated as necessary by the EEAS.

([1]) Council Joint Action 2001/875/CFSP of 10 December 2001 concerning the appointment of the Special Representative of the European Union (OJ L 326, 11.12.2001, p. 1).

([2]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/289 of 17 February 2017 amending Decision (CFSP) 2015/2005 extending the mandate of the European Union Special Representative in Afghanistan (OJ L 42, 18.2.2017, p. 13).

([3]) Council Joint Action 2007/369/CFSP of 30 May 2007 on establishment of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL AFGANISTAN) (OJ L 139, 31.5.2007, p. 33).

([4]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2040 of 21 November 2016 amending Decision 2010/279/CFSP on the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL AFGHANISTAN), providing for its liquidation (OJ L 314, 22.11.2016, p. 20).

(7) An operational action under the Common Foreign and Security Policy should support those evacuations,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Objectives and scope

1. The Union shall support the evacuation from Afghanistan, between 1 June 2021 and 31 December 2022, of:

(a) former members of the staff of the EU Special Representative in Afghanistan (EUSR);

(b) former members of the staff of EUPOL Afghanistan;

(c) the following other particularly vulnerable persons:

— officials or other professionals, active in the political or security sector in Afghanistan (such as judges, prosecutors, police officers, military personnel and journalists), who were trained under, or who were involved in, the implementation of Union policies;

— members of the staff of former suppliers of EUPOL Afghanistan and of the EUSR; and,

— members of the staff of suppliers of the Union delegation in Kabul, employed in that capacity in the period between 16 August 2019 and 15 August 2021; and,

(d) the dependent spouses, children, parents and unmarried sisters of persons listed in points (a), (b) or (c).

2. The evacuation referred to in paragraph 1 shall be organised and managed by the EEAS, under the authority of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the High Representative).

3. The High Representative shall be responsible for the implementation of this Decision.

Article 2

Financial arrangements

1. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the present action shall be EUR 1 990 000.

2. All expenditure shall be managed in accordance with the rules and procedures applicable to the general budget of the Union.

3. The Commission shall supervise the proper management of the expenditure referred to in paragraph 2. For that purpose, it shall conclude the necessary agreement with the EEAS.

Article 3

Entry into force and duration

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

It shall apply from 1 June 2021.

Done at Brussels, 3 February 2022.

For the Council
The President
J.-Y. LE DRIAN