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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Draft Council Decision concerning the rules applicable to national experts on secondment to the General Secretariat of the Council and repealing Decision 2007/829/EC

On 21 April 2015, the Secretary-General of the Council approved the text of a new draft Council Decision 2015 concerning the rules applicable to national experts on secondment to the General Secretariat of the Council (hereinafter "SNEs") and repealing Decision 2007/829/EC. This draft Council Decision is annexed to the note.

The Latvian Presidency of the Council was duly informed and agreed to submitting it for examination to the Council Working Party on the Staff Regulations.

The existing Council 2007/829/EC¹ is suggested to be repealed and replaced with a new Council Decision for the following main reasons:

- a) The institutional and administrative changes resulting from the Lisbon Treaty and their impact on the functioning and operations of the General Secretariat of the Council (hereinafter "GSC");

¹ Council Decision of 5 December 2007 concerning the rules applicable to national experts and military staff on secondment to the General Secretariat of the Council and repealing Decision 2003/479/EC, OJ L 327, 13.12.2007, p. 10.

- b) The recent amendments to the Staff Regulations, as regards the calculation of distances for allowances' purposes and the need for a clear definition of various places used as references for the calculation of SNEs allowances;
- c) The inclusion of eventual secondments from international organisations and Agencies outside the EU to address any extraordinary GSC needs for specific technical expertise;
- d) The need to improve the administrative management of SNEs secondment in line with general human resources policies and to extend the period of secondment.

Draft Council Decision of xx/xx/2015 concerning the rules applicable to national experts on secondment to the General Secretariat of the Council and repealing Decision 2007/829/EC

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 240(2) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Seconded national experts (hereinafter "SNEs") should enable the General Secretariat of the Council (hereinafter the "GSC") to benefit from their high level of knowledge and professional experience, in particular in areas where such expertise is not readily available.

(2) This Decision should foster the exchange of professional experience and knowledge of European policies by temporarily assigning experts from Member States' public administrations or from international organisations or from other international bodies or agencies within the meaning of the first paragraph of Article 1 of this Decision to the GSC.

(3) SNEs should be drawn from public administrations in Member States or from international organisations or from other international bodies or agencies within the meaning of the first paragraph of Article 1 of this Decision.

(4) The secondment of SNEs might also enable them to acquire knowledge they will need in order to perform their tasks in future Council presidencies.

(5) The rights and obligations of SNEs set out in this Decision should ensure that they carry out their duties solely in the interests of the GSC.

(6) In view of the temporary nature of their work and their particular status, SNEs should not take responsibility on behalf of the GSC for the exercise of its public law prerogatives, as defined by the treaties, except where derogations are laid down in this Decision.

(7) This Decision should set out all the conditions of employment of SNEs and be applicable regardless of the origin of the budgetary appropriations used to cover the expenditure.

(8) Since these rules replace those laid down in Council Decision 2007/829/EC, that Decision should be repealed without prejudice to its continuing application to all secondments taking place at the time of entry into force of this Decision.

(9) Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1023/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 amended the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union, and in particular Annexes VII and X thereto,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Scope

1. These rules are applicable to seconded national experts (hereinafter "SNEs") seconded to the GSC by Member States' public administrations. They shall also apply to experts on secondment from an international organisation or from another international body or agency (with the exception of Union bodies within the meaning of Article 1a(2) of the Staff Regulations).
2. The persons covered by these rules shall remain in the service of their employer throughout the period of secondment and shall continue to be paid by that employer.
3. All powers conferred to the GSC under this Decision shall be exercised by the Secretary-General of the Council. The Secretary-General of the Council is authorised to delegate any or all of his powers to the Director-General for Administration.
4. The Secretary-General of the Council shall adopt rules for the implementation of this Decision.
5. SNEs shall be seconded in accordance with requirements and budgetary possibilities, and shall establish rules governing such recruitment.
6. Except where a derogation is granted, SNEs must be nationals of a Member State. SNEs shall be seconded on as wide a geographical basis as possible from among the nationals of the Member States. The Member States and the GSC shall cooperate to ensure, as far as possible, a balance between men and women and observe the principle of equal opportunities.

7. Secondment shall be implemented by an exchange of letters between the Director-General for Administration of the GSC and the administration seconding the SNE. The place of secondment and the function group to which the SNE will belong (AD or AST, as defined in the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union) must be indicated in the exchange of letters. The exchange of letters must also mention the SNE's superior within the Directorate-General, directorate, unit or department to which he is seconded, and a detailed description of the tasks he is to carry out. A copy of the rules applicable to SNEs on secondment to the GSC shall be attached to the exchange of letters.

8. Free secondment of SNEs, as referred to in Chapter IV of this Decision, may be authorised on a case-by-case basis. The decision should take into consideration the SNE's place of origin, the Directorate-General in question, geographical balance and the duties proposed.

Article 2

Period of secondment

1. The period of secondment may not be less than six months nor exceed two years and may be renewed successively up to a total period not exceeding six years.
2. The intended period of secondment shall be fixed in the exchange of letters provided for in Article 1(5). The same procedure shall apply in the case of a renewal of the period of secondment.
3. An SNE who has already been seconded to the GSC may be seconded again, in accordance with internal rules laying down maximum periods during which such persons may be present in GSC departments and subject to the following conditions:
 - a) the SNE must continue to meet the conditions for secondment;

- b) a period of at least six years must have elapsed between the end of the previous period of secondment and any further secondment. If at the end of the first secondment the SNE has received another, additional contract, the six-year period shall begin to run from the expiry of that contract. This provision shall not prevent the GSC from accepting the secondment of an SNE whose initial secondment lasted for less than six years, but in that case the new secondment shall not exceed the unexpired part of the six-year period. In exceptional cases, the minimum period of six years between two secondments may be shortened.

Article 3

Place of secondment

SNEs shall be seconded to Brussels.

Article 4

Duties

1. An SNE shall assist GSC officials and other staff and carry out the tasks assigned to him.

Under the terms of Article 1(5), the duties carried out shall be defined by mutual agreement between the GSC and the administration which seconds the SNE in the interest of the department and taking into account the candidate's qualifications.

2. Assigned tasks may include, but are not limited to, analyses, studies, exchanges of knowledge between administrations, project management, and assistance to the Secretariat of the Council's groups and preparatory committees.

Notwithstanding the first subparagraph of paragraph 1 and the first subparagraph of paragraph 2, the Secretary-General may, on a proposal from the Director-General of the department to which the SNE is assigned, entrust the SNE with specific duties and charge him with the conduct of one or more specific missions after verifying that there is no conflict of interest.

3. An SNE shall take part in missions and meetings only:
 - a) if accompanying a GSC official or other staff member; or
 - b) as an observer or solely for information purposes, if alone.

Unless a special mandate has been granted, in accordance with the arrangements for implementing this Decision, by the Director-General of the department concerned, the SNE may not commit the GSC externally.

4. The GSC shall retain sole responsibility for approving the results of tasks performed by the SNE.
5. The GSC departments concerned, the SNE's employer and the SNE shall make every effort to avoid any conflict of interest or appearance of such a conflict in relation to the SNE's duties during secondment. To that end, the GSC shall, in good time, inform the SNE and the employer of the intended duties and shall ask each of them to confirm in writing that they know of no reason why the SNE should not be assigned to those duties. The SNE shall be asked in particular to declare any potential conflict between his family circumstances (in particular the professional activities of close or extended family members, or any important financial interests of his own or of family members) and the proposed duties while on secondment.

The employer and the SNE shall undertake to notify the GSC of any change of circumstances during the secondment which could give rise to any such conflict.

6. Where the GSC considers that the nature of the tasks entrusted to the SNE requires particular security precautions, security clearance shall be obtained before the SNE is seconded.
7. In the event of failure to comply with the provisions of paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5, the GSC may terminate the secondment of the SNE under the terms of Article 9(2)(c).

Article 5
Rights and obligations

1. During the period of secondment:
 - a) an SNE shall carry out his duties and shall behave solely with the interests of the Council and the European Council in mind;
 - b) an SNE shall abstain from any action, and in particular any public expression of opinion, which may reflect on his position at the GSC;
 - c) any SNE who, in the performance of his duties, is called upon to give a decision on the handling or outcome of a matter in which he has a personal interest that could impair his independence, shall inform his superior under the terms of Article 1(5);
 - d) an SNE shall not, whether alone or together with others, publish or cause to be published any text dealing with the work of the European Union without obtaining permission in accordance with the conditions and rules in force at the GSC. Permission shall be refused only where the intended publication is liable to prejudice the interests of the European Union;
 - e) all rights in any work done by an SNE in the performance of his duties shall be the property of the GSC;
 - f) an SNE shall reside at the place of secondment or at no greater distance therefrom than is compatible with the proper performance of his activities;
 - g) an SNE shall assist and tender advice to the superior to whom he is assigned and shall be responsible to his superior for the performance of the duties entrusted to him;
 - h) an SNE shall, in the exercise of his duties, accept no instructions from his employer or national government. He shall not undertake any activities for his employer, nor for governments, nor for any other person, private company or public body.

2. Both during and after the period of secondment, an SNE shall exercise the greatest discretion with regard to all facts and information of which he becomes aware in the course of or in connection with the performance of his duties. He shall not in any form whatsoever disclose to any unauthorised person any document or information not already lawfully made public, nor shall he use it for personal gain.

3. At the end of the secondment an SNE shall continue to be bound by the obligation to act with integrity and discretion in the exercise of new duties assigned to him and in accepting certain posts or advantages.

To that end, in the three years following the period of secondment an SNE shall inform the GSC forthwith of any duties or tasks he has to perform for his employer which are likely to give rise to a conflict of interest in relation to the tasks he carried out during secondment.

4. SNEs shall be subject to the security rules in force in the GSC, including data protection rules and GSC network protection rules. SNEs shall also be subject to the rules governing the protection of the Union's financial interests.

5. Failure to comply with the provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 during the period of secondment shall entitle the GSC to terminate the secondment of an SNE under the terms of Article 9(2)(c).

6. If, in the course of his secondment, an SNE becomes aware of facts which give rise to a presumption of the existence of possible illegal activity, including fraud or corruption detrimental to the interests of the Union, or of conduct relating to the discharge of professional duties which may constitute a serious failure to comply with the obligations of officials of the Union or of SNEs, he shall immediately notify his superior under the terms of Article 1(5).

Notifications referred to in the first subparagraph shall be given in writing.

This paragraph shall also apply in the event of serious failure to comply with a similar obligation on the part of a member of an institution or any other person in the service of or carrying out work for an institution.

7. If the superior under the terms of Article 1(5) receives notification as referred to in paragraph 6, he must take the measures provided for in Article 22a(2) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union. Articles 22a, 22b and 22c of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union shall apply to the superior under the terms of Article 1(5). These provisions shall also apply *mutatis mutandis* to the SNE concerned, to ensure that his rights are respected.

Article 6

Level, professional experience and knowledge of languages

1. To qualify for secondment to the GSC, an SNE must have at least three years' full-time experience of administrative, scientific, technical, advisory or supervisory functions relevant to the performance of the duties assigned to him under the terms of Article 1(5). Before the secondment, the SNE's employer shall supply the GSC with a statement of the expert's employment covering the previous twelve months.
2. An SNE must have a thorough knowledge of one European Union language and a satisfactory knowledge of a second language for the performance of his duties.

Article 7

Selection procedures

1. SNEs shall be selected according to a procedure whose practical details shall be laid down in the arrangements for implementing this Decision. The vacancy notice shall be sent to the Member States' Permanent Representations to the EU.

In duly justified, exceptional circumstances, and in the interests of the service, the GSC may decide that an SNE shall be selected without following the selection procedures.

2. After the SNE's selection, an individual file shall be created for him at the GSC. This file shall contain administrative information concerning him.

Article 8

Suspension of secondment

1. The GSC may authorise suspensions of secondment and specify the terms applicable. During such suspensions:
 - a) the allowances referred to in Article 18 shall not be payable;
 - b) the expenses referred to in Article 19 shall be payable only if the suspension is at the GSC's request.
2. The GSC shall inform the SNE's employer.

Article 9

Termination of periods of secondment

1. Subject to paragraph 2, secondment may be terminated at the request of the GSC or of the SNE's employer, provided three months' notice is given. It may also be terminated at the SNE's request provided the same notice is given and subject to the GSC's agreement.
2. In certain exceptional circumstances the secondment may be terminated without notice:
 - a) by the SNE's employer, if the employer's essential interests so require;
 - b) by mutual agreement between the GSC and the SNE's employer, at the request of the SNE to both parties, if the SNE's essential personal or professional interests so require;
 - c) by the GSC in the event of failure by the SNE to comply with his obligations under these rules. The SNE shall first be given an opportunity to submit his defence.

3. In the event of termination under paragraph 2(c), the GSC shall immediately inform the employer.

CHAPTER II WORKING CONDITIONS

Article 10 Social security

1. Before the period of secondment begins, the employer from which the national expert is to be seconded shall certify to the GSC that, throughout the period of secondment, the SNE will remain subject to the social security legislation applicable to the public administration or international organisation, or international body or agency within the meaning of the first paragraph of Article 1 of this Decision, which employs the SNE and that this legislation provides for the defrayal of expenses incurred abroad. To this end, the SNE's employer shall supply the GSC with the certificate referred to in Article 11(1) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 574/72¹.

2. From the commencement of his secondment, the SNE shall be covered against the risk of accident. The GSC shall provide him with a copy of the terms of this cover on the day on which he reports to the relevant department of the Directorate-General for Administration to complete the administrative formalities related to the secondment.

3. When, in the context of a mission in which the SNE is participating under the terms of Articles 4(3) and 28, additional or specific insurance is required, the relevant costs shall be borne by the GSC.

¹ OJ L 74, 27.3.1972, p. 1.

Article 11
Working hours

1. An SNE shall be subject to the rules in force in the GSC as regards working hours, depending on the requirements of the post to which he is assigned within the GSC.
2. An SNE shall serve on a full-time basis throughout the period of secondment. Following a duly justified request from a Directorate-General and subject to compatibility with the interests of the GSC, the GSC may authorise an SNE to work part-time, after agreement from his employer.
3. Where part-time working is authorised, the SNE shall work at least half of the normal working time.
4. The allowances in force within the GSC for shift-work or standby duty may be paid to SNEs.

Article 12
Absence for reasons of sickness or accident

1. In the event of absence for reasons of sickness or accident, an SNE shall notify his superior under the terms of Article 1(5) as soon as possible, stating his present address. The SNE shall produce a medical certificate if absent for more than three consecutive days and may be required to undergo a medical examination arranged by the GSC.
2. If absence due to sickness or accident of not more than three days exceeds a total of twelve days over a period of twelve months, an SNE shall be required to produce a medical certificate for any further absence due to sickness.
3. Where the period of sick leave exceeds one month or the period of service performed by the SNE, whichever is the longer, the allowances referred to in Article 18(1) and (2) shall be automatically suspended. This provision shall not apply in the event of illness linked to pregnancy. Sick leave may not extend beyond the duration of the secondment of the person concerned.

4. However, an SNE who is the victim of a work-related injury which occurs during the secondment shall continue to receive in full the allowances provided for in Article 18(1) and (2) throughout the period during which he is unfit for work up to the end of the period of secondment.

Article 13

Annual leave, special leave and holidays

1. An SNE shall be entitled to two-and-a-half working days of leave per whole month of service (30 days per calendar year).
2. Leave is subject to prior authorisation by the department to which the SNE is assigned.
3. An SNE may, on reasoned application, be granted special leave in the following cases:
 - marriage of the SNE: two days,
 - serious illness of spouse: up to three days annually,
 - death of spouse: four days,
 - serious illness of a relative in the ascending line: up to two days annually,
 - death of a relative in the ascending line: two days,
 - birth of a child: ten days to be taken during the month following the birth,
 - birth of a disabled or seriously ill child: 20 days, to be taken during the 14 weeks following the birth,
 - serious illness of a child: up to two days annually,
 - removal to take up duties: up to two days,
 - death of a child: four days,
 - adoption: 20 weeks (24 weeks if the child is disabled or seriously ill).

If the other adopting parent is an official or agent of an EU institution, the special leave may be shared between them as they wish. If the other adoptive parent is not an official or staff member of an EU institution and is eligible for comparable leave, the number of days of such leave is deducted from the special leave granted to the SNE. If the other adopting parent, irrespective of whether or not they are an official or staff member of an EU institution, is not at the time of the adoption in at least half-time paid employment, the period of special leave may be reduced to ten days by analogy with the special leave for the birth of a child and in accordance with the rules for that leave.

Additional special leave of two days per period of twelve months may be granted at the request (with due justification) of the person concerned.

4. Upon a duly substantiated application by the SNE's employer, up to two days of additional special leave in a twelve-month period may be granted by the GSC. Requests are examined on a case-by-case basis.
5. In the case of part-time work, annual leave shall be reduced proportionately.
6. Days of annual leave not taken by the end of the period of secondment shall be forfeited.
7. Paragraph 3 shall not apply to those SNEs whose period of secondment is less than six months. However, an SNE whose period of secondment is less than six months may be granted special leave, on the basis of a reasoned application and subject to a decision by the Director-General of the department to which he is assigned. That special leave may not exceed three days for the whole period of secondment. Before granting such leave, the Director-General of the department must hold a prior consultation with the relevant GSC departments in accordance with the arrangements for implementing this Decision.
8. For the purposes of this Article, the unmarried partner of an SNE shall be treated as the spouse where the first three conditions in point (c) of Article 1(2) of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union are met.

Article 14
Special leave for training

Notwithstanding Article 13(4), additional special leave may be granted by the GSC for the training of the SNE by the employer, subject to a duly reasoned application by the employer. The allowances referred to in Article 18 shall not be paid during this additional special leave. [Proposal: this special leave may not be granted to those SNEs whose period of secondment is less than six months.]

Article 15
Maternity leave

1. An SNE who is pregnant shall be granted maternity leave of 20 weeks, during which period she shall receive the allowances provided for in Article 18. The leave shall begin not earlier than six weeks before the probable date of delivery indicated in the certificate drawn up by her doctor and to be submitted to the Administration of the GSC, and shall end not earlier than 14 weeks after the date of delivery. In the case of multiple or premature birth or the birth of a child with a disability or serious illness, the duration shall be 24 weeks. For the purposes of this provision, a premature birth shall be one which occurs before the end of the 34th week of pregnancy.
2. Where the national legislation of the SNE's employer grants longer maternity leave, at the SNE's request the secondment shall be suspended for the period exceeding that granted by the GSC. In that case, a period equivalent to the suspension shall be added at the end of the secondment if the interests of the GSC warrant it.
3. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, an SNE may apply for a suspension of the secondment to cover the whole of the period allowed for maternity. In that case, a period equivalent to the suspension shall be added at the end of the secondment if the interests of the GSC warrant it.
4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 shall also apply to the cases of adoption referred to in the last indent of paragraph 3 of Article 13.

Article 16
Management and control

The management and control of working time and absences shall be the task of the Administration of the GSC and the Directorate General or department to which the SNE is assigned, in accordance with the rules and procedures in force within the GSC.

CHAPTER III
ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

Article 17
Determination of the parameters for calculating allowances and travel expenses

1. For the purposes of this Decision, the place of origin of an SNE is determined or amended by the GSC in terms of its geographical position based on its latitude and longitude, established in an appropriate database by the GSC Appointing Authority¹. The place of origin for each Member State shall be the capital of that Member State or the regional capital of the administration which employs the SNE.

2. The geographical distance, referred to in Articles 18 and 19 of this Decision, between the place of secondment, on the one hand, and the place of origin or recruitment or return, on the other, is determined by the great circle distance between the two points according to their latitude and longitude, based on the WGS 84 coordinate system (World Geodetic System 1984).

3. For the purposes of these rules:

¹ This can be consulted on the following website: www.geonames.org.

- the place of recruitment shall be the place where the SNE performed his duties for the employer prior to secondment;
- the place of secondment shall be Brussels, as provided for in Article 3 of this Decision;
- the place of origin shall be the place where the SNE employer's head office is located;
- the place of return shall be the place where the SNE will perform his main activity after the secondment is terminated.

4. If either the place of recruitment or the place of return is located outside the territory of the European Union or in a Member State other than that in which the SNE employer's head office is located, or if the SNE does not pursue a professional activity after his secondment is terminated, the place of origin shall be considered to be the place of recruitment or place of return, as appropriate.

The place of recruitment and the place of origin shall be determined in the exchange of letters referred to in Article 1(5). The place of return shall be determined on the basis of a declaration by the SNE's employer.

5. For the purposes of applying this Article, circumstances arising from work done by SNEs for a State other than that of the place of secondment or for an international organisation, or for another international body or agency, within the meaning of the first paragraph of Article 1 of this Decision, shall not be taken into account.

Article 18 Allowances

1. An SNE shall be entitled to a daily subsistence allowance throughout the period of secondment. The daily subsistence allowance of EUR 128.67 shall be granted according to the same criteria as the expatriation allowance for officials referred to in Article 4 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations. If those criteria are not met, the daily subsistence allowance shall be EUR 32.18.

2. An SNE shall be entitled, throughout the period of secondment, to an additional monthly allowance paid as shown in the table below:

Geographical distance between place of origin and place of secondment	Amount in EUR
(in km)	
0 - 150	0.00
> 150	82.70
> 300	147.03
> 500	238.95
> 800	385.98
> 1 300	606.55
> 2 000	726.04

3. These allowances shall be payable for periods of mission, annual leave, maternity or adoption leave, special leave and holidays granted by the GSC, save as otherwise provided by Articles 13, 14 or 15.

4. When the SNE starts the secondment, he shall receive an advance amount equivalent to 75 days of the subsistence allowance, whereupon entitlement to any further such allowances shall cease during the corresponding period. If the secondment to the GSC is ended before the expiry of the period taken into account to calculate the advance, the SNE shall be obliged to return the amount corresponding to the remaining part of that period.

5. At the time of the exchange of letters provided for in Article 1(5), the administration seconding the SNE shall inform the GSC of any payment received by the SNE similar to those mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article. Any such amounts shall be deducted from the corresponding allowances paid by the GSC to the SNE.

6. The adjustments to remuneration adopted by application of Article 65 of and Annex XI to the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union shall apply automatically to the subsistence allowances in the month following their adoption. Following adaptation, the new amounts will be communicated to SNEs.

Article 19
Travel expenses

1. An SNE shall be entitled to the flat-rate reimbursement for himself of travel expenses at the beginning of the secondment.
2. The flat-rate reimbursement shall be based on an allowance per kilometre of geographical distance between the places referred to in Article 17. The kilometric allowance shall be determined in accordance with Article 7 of Annex VII to the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union.
3. An SNE shall be entitled to reimbursement for himself of travel expenses to the place of return at the end of the secondment within the limits laid down in Article 17. The reimbursement may not be for a sum higher than that to which the SNE would have been entitled if he had returned to his place of recruitment.

Article 20
Missions and mission expenses

1. An SNE may be sent on mission subject to Article 4(2) and (3).
2. Mission expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the provisions in force at the GSC.

Article 21
Training

An SNE shall be entitled to attend training courses organised by the GSC, if the interests of the GSC warrant it. The reasonable interests of the SNE, having regard in particular to his professional career after the secondment, shall be considered when a decision on permission to attend courses is taken.

Article 22
Administrative provisions

1. The SNE shall report to the relevant department of the Directorate-General for Administration on the first day of secondment to complete the requisite administrative formalities. He shall take up his duties on either the first or the 16th of the month.
2. Payments shall be made by the GSC in euro into a bank account opened at a banking institution in Brussels or in the European Union.

CHAPTER IV
NATIONAL EXPERTS ON FREE SHORT-TERM SECONDMENT

Article 23
SNEs on free short-term secondment

1. For the purposes of this Decision, an SNE on free short-term secondment (SNE-FSTS) shall mean a highly specialised SNE seconded to perform specific duties for a maximum period of six months which may be extended in accordance with the provisions of Article 24(1). Such secondment entails the payment of no allowances or expenses for the GSC except, where appropriate, those provided for in Article 28 and without prejudice to a different agreement between the GSC and the administration which seconds the SNE-FSTS.
2. Subject to Articles 24 to 28, the rules laid down in Articles 1 to 16 and 20 to 22 shall also apply to SNEs-FSTS.
3. Without prejudice to Article 5, an SNE-FSTS's conduct must always reflect the fact that he is seconded to the GSC and must never reflect adversely on his position.

Article 24
Period of secondment

1. The period referred to in Article 23(1) may be extended once for a maximum period of six months. In exceptional cases, the GSC may, however, decide to grant an extension of more than six months.
2. The SNE-CDSF, having been seconded to the GSC, may be seconded again in accordance with the rules laid down in this Decision, provided that a period of at least one year has elapsed between the end of the previous period of secondment and a new secondment.
3. In exceptional cases, the period indicated in paragraph 2 may be shortened.

Article 25
Scope

1. In the exchange of letters provided for in Article 1(5) reference shall be made to the person in charge within the Directorate-General or directorate, unit, or other department to which the SNE-FSTS will be seconded and the duties to be performed by the latter shall be described in detail.
2. As for the specific duties which devolve upon him, the SNE-FSTS shall receive instructions from the person in charge referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 26
Insurance

Without prejudice to Article 28 and notwithstanding Article 10(2) and (3), an SNE-FSTS will not be covered by the GSC against risks of accident.

Article 27

Working conditions

1. Notwithstanding the second sentence of Article 11(2), an SNE-FSTS shall work only on a full-time basis during his secondment.
2. Article 11(4) shall not apply to an SNE-FSTS.
3. Article 13(3), (4), (7) and (8) shall not apply to an SNE-FSTS. However, he may be granted special leave by decision of the Director-General of the department to which he is seconded, on the basis of a reasoned application submitted by him. Such leave may not exceed three days over the entire period of secondment. The Director-General of the department must hold a prior consultation with the relevant GSC departments in accordance with the arrangements for implementing this Decision.

Article 28

Missions

1. If an SNE-FSTS takes part in missions, he will be reimbursed in accordance with the rules in force for the reimbursement of missions involving officials, except where another arrangement has been agreed between the GSC and the administration which seconds an SNE-FSTS.
2. If, in connection with a mission, special 'high risk' insurance is provided by the GSC for officials, this facility shall also apply to an SNE-FSTS who takes part in the same mission.
3. An SNE-FSTS who takes part in a mission outside the territory of the EU will be subject to the security arrangements in force in the GSC for such missions.

CHAPTER V

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 29

Repeals

Council Decision 2007/829/EC shall be repealed. However, Articles 15 to 19 and the first paragraph of Article 2 thereof shall remain applicable to all secondments taking place at the time of entry into force of this Decision, without prejudice to Article 30.

Article 30

Entry into force and application

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. It shall apply from the first day of the month following its entry into force to each new secondment or renewal of secondment.

Done at Brussels, XX/XX/2015.

For the Council

The President
