JUDGMENT OF THE GENERAL COURT (Fifth Chamber)

24 September 2025 (*)

(Common foreign and security policy – Restrictive measures taken in view of the situation in Syria – Freezing of funds – Lists of persons, entities and bodies subject to the freezing of funds and economic resources – Maintenance of the applicant's name on the lists – Concept of 'association with the Syrian regime' – Error of assessment – Obligation to state reasons – Proportionality)

In Case T-415/24,

Cham Wings Airlines LLC, established in Damascus (Syria), represented by L. Cloquet, lawyer,

applicant,

v

Council of the European Union, represented by E. Kübler and P. Mahnič, acting as Agents,

defendant,

THE GENERAL COURT (Fifth Chamber),

composed, at the time of the deliberations, of J. Svenningsen, President, J. Laitenberger and M. Stancu (Rapporteur), Judges,

Registrar: M. Zwozdziak-Carbonne, Administrator,

having regard to the written part of the procedure,

further to the hearing on 24 June 2025,

gives the following

Judgment

1 By its action under Article 263 TFEU, the applicant, Cham Wings Airlines LLC, seeks annulment of Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/1510 of 27 May 2024 amending Decision 2013/255/CFSP concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria (OJ L, 2024/1510) and Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1517 of 27 May 2024 implementing Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria (OJ L, 2024/1517), in so far as those acts concern it (together, 'the contested acts').

Background to the dispute

2 The applicant is a Syrian air carrier.

3 The present case has been brought in connection with the restrictive measures taken in view of the situation in Syria.

4 In that context, the Council of the European Union adopted Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 of 18 January 2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria and repealing Regulation (EU) No 442/2011 (OJ 2012 L 16, p. 1) and Decision 2013/255/CFSP of 31 May 2013 concerning restrictive measures against Syria (OJ 2013 L 147, p. 14).

5 On 12 October 2015, the Council adopted (i) Decision (CFSP) 2015/1836 amending Decision 2013/255 (OJ 2015 L 266, p. 75) and (ii) Regulation (EU) 2015/1828 amending Regulation No 36/2012 (OJ 2015 L 266,

p. 1).

6 The criterion for inclusion set out in Article 28(1) of Decision 2013/255, as amended by Decision 2015/1836, and reproduced in Article 15(1)(a) of Regulation No 36/2012, as amended by Regulation 2015/1828, provides, in essence, that persons and entities benefiting from or supporting the regime are to be subject to restrictive measures.

7 By Council Implementing Decision (CFSP) 2024/380 of 22 January 2024 implementing Decision 2013/255 (OJ L, 2024/380) and by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/362 of 22 January 2024 implementing Regulation No 36/2012 (OJ L, 2024/362) (together, 'the initial acts'), the applicant's name was included for the first time on the list in Section B (Entities) of Annex I to Decision 2013/255 and on the list in Section B (Entities) of Annex II to Regulation No 36/2012 (together, 'the lists at issue').

8 The reasons for including its name on the lists at issue were worded as follows:

'[The applicant] is a Syrian business entity which is owned by Muhammad Issam Shammout.

Also, [the applicant] uses its flights to engage in the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, [trading in arms], narcotics trafficking, and money laundering, which supports the activities of the Syrian regime. As the only private airline in Syria, [the applicant] is therefore benefiting from, and providing support to the Syrian regime.'

9 On 24 January 2024, the applicant's counsel submitted observations to the Council on the initial acts and requested access to the evidence file.

10 On 7 February 2024, the Council communicated to the applicant the evidence on which it had relied for the purposes of including its name on the lists at issue, namely document WK 16130/2023 REV 2 DCL 1.

11 By the contested acts, the Council extended the restrictive measures adopted against the applicant until 1 June 2025 on the basis of the same reasons as those set out in the initial acts.

12 On 28 May 2024, the Council informed the applicant of its decision to extend the measures taken against it by means of the contested acts.

Forms of order sought

13 The applicant claims that the Court should:

– annul the contested acts;

– order the Council to pay the costs.

14 The Council claims, in essence, that the Court should:

– dismiss the action;

– order the applicant to pay the costs;

– in the alternative, should the Court annul the contested acts, order that the effects of Decision 2024/1510 be maintained in so far as concerns the applicant until the partial annulment of Implementing Regulation 2024/1517 takes effect.

Law

15 In support of its action, the applicant raises three pleas in law, alleging, in essence, first, errors of assessment, second, infringement of the principle of proportionality and, third, infringement of the obligation to state reasons.

16 The Court considers it appropriate to address, first of all, the third plea in law, then the first plea in law and, last, the second plea in law.

The third plea in law, alleging infringement of the obligation to state reasons

17 Under the third plea in law, the applicant claims that 'the reasons adopted by the Council in the [contested acts] have apparently not been genuinely examined by [it]' and that 'the reasons underlying the [contested acts] are in reality purely formal and probably did not form the object of a reflection by the Council'.

18 The Council disputes those arguments.

19 It should be noted at the outset that the applicant's arguments in support of the third plea in law are in reality seeking to challenge the facts on which the Council relied when it adopted the contested acts.

20 It should be recalled in that regard that the obligation to state reasons laid down in Article 296 TFEU is an essential procedural requirement, to be distinguished from the question of whether the reasoning is well founded, which goes to the substantive legality of the contested act. The reasoning on which a decision is based consists in a formal statement of the grounds on which that decision is based. If those grounds are vitiated by errors, the latter will vitiate the substantive legality of the decision, but not the statement of reasons in it, which may be adequate even though it sets out reasons which are incorrect (see judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 32 and the case-law cited).

21 Since that plea in law seeks to call into question not the sufficiency of the statement of reasons in the contested acts specifically, but rather the merits of the reasons for inclusion, in particular the existence of links between the applicant and the Syrian regime, the applicant's arguments will be examined in the context of the first plea in law, which alleges errors of assessment (see, to that effect and by analogy, judgments of 24 November 2021, *Assi* v *Council*, T-256/19, EU:T:2021:818, paragraph 47 (not published); of 24 November 2021, *Foz* v *Council*, T-258/19, not published, EU:T:2021:820, paragraph 44; of 24 November 2021, *Aman Dimashq* v *Council*, T-259/19, EU:T:2021:821, paragraph 42 (not published); of 18 May 2022, *Foz* v *Council*, T-296/20, EU:T:2022:298, paragraph 51 (not published); and of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 32).

22 In any event, as stated in paragraph 11 above, the maintenance of the applicant's name on the lists at issue is justified for the same reasons as those in the initial acts. The statement of reasons in those acts, as set out in paragraph 8 above, appears to be clear and unequivocal.

23 First, in that statement of reasons, the conclusion that the applicant 'is … benefiting from, and providing support to the Syrian regime' refers explicitly to the criterion referred to in paragraph 6 above, according to which the names of persons and entities benefiting from or supporting the Syrian regime are to be included and maintained on the lists at issue. Second, that statement of reasons sets out the actual and specific reasons why the applicant is considered to be an entity benefiting from and supporting the Syrian regime.

24 Furthermore, the arguments put forward in connection with the pleas in law raised by the applicant in its written submissions indicate that it was placed in a position in which it could ascertain the reasons for the measures taken against it so as to be able to challenge them effectively before the Courts of the European Union (see, to that effect and by analogy, judgments of 24 November 2021, *Assi* v *Council*, T-256/19, EU:T:2021:818, paragraph 54 (not published); of 24 November 2021, *Foz* v *Council*, T-258/19, not published, EU:T:2021:820, paragraph 49; of 24 November 2021, *Aman Dimashq* v *Council*, T-259/19, EU:T:2021:821, paragraph 47 (not published); of 18 May 2022, *Foz* v *Council*, T-296/20, EU:T:2022:298, paragraph 50 (not published); and of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 31).

25 In the light of the foregoing, the third plea in law, alleging infringement of the obligation to state reasons, must be rejected.

The first plea in law, alleging errors of assessment

26 The applicant submits that the Council made an error of assessment in failing to prove to the requisite legal standard that it or its owner, Mr Shammout, were associated with the Syrian regime, that they exercised influence over that regime or that they posed any risk of circumvention.

27 In support of its arguments, first of all, the applicant claims that it has distanced itself from the Syrian regime and from any act or link which might lead to EU sanctions.

28 It further submits that both it and Mr Shammout are discriminated against by the Syrian regime. In that regard, the applicant explains that, in 2018, it successfully brought proceedings against Syrian Arab Airlines, the Syrian state-owned airline, before the Syrian Court of Cassation, which ordered Syrian Arab Airlines to reimburse it for fees levied amounting to 2 585 095 United States dollars (USD). However, in 2019 Mr Shammout was taken to the Syrian Ministry of Transport and forced, '[by the use of] threats', to agree not to rely on that judgment and to pay Syrian Arab Airlines additional fees amounting to USD 14 543 235.

29 Next, the applicant criticises the Council for finding that it could have been knowingly involved in possible unlawful activities such as the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, trading in arms, narcotics trafficking and money laundering.

30 Last, in the reply, the applicant claims that, after the fall of the Syrian regime led by President Bashar Al-Assad on 8 December 2024, the restrictive measures taken against Syria, and in particular those adopted by means of the contested acts, became devoid of purpose.

31 The Council disputes those arguments.

32 It should be borne in mind that the effectiveness of the judicial review guaranteed by Article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union requires, inter alia, that the Courts of the European Union ensure that the decision by which restrictive measures were adopted or maintained, which affects the person or entity concerned individually, is taken on a sufficiently solid factual basis. That entails a verification of the factual allegations in the statement of reasons underpinning that decision, with the consequence that judicial review cannot be restricted to an assessment of the cogency in the abstract of the reasons relied on, but must concern whether those reasons, or, at the very least, one of those reasons, deemed sufficient in itself to support that decision, are substantiated (see judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 59 and the case-law cited).

33 It is the task of the competent EU authority to establish, in the event of challenge, that the reasons relied on against the person or entity concerned are well founded, and not the task of that person or that entity to adduce evidence of the negative, that those reasons are not well founded (see judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 61 and the case-law cited).

34 If the competent EU authority provides relevant information or evidence, the Courts of the European Union must then determine whether the facts alleged are made out in the light of that information or evidence and assess the probative value of that information or evidence in the circumstances of the particular case and in the light of any observations submitted in relation to them by, among others, the person or entity concerned (see judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 63 and the case-law cited).

35 That assessment must be carried out by examining the evidence and information not in isolation, but in their context (see, to that effect, judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 64 and the case-law cited). The Council discharges the burden of proof it bears if it produces before the Courts of the European Union a sufficiently concrete, precise and consistent body of evidence to establish that there is a sufficient link between the entity subject to a measure freezing its funds and the regime or, in general, the situations, being combated (see, to that effect, judgment of 8 March 2023, *Assaad* v *Council*, T-426/21, EU:T:2023:114, paragraph 161 and the case-law cited).

36 In the present case, in the light of the reasons for inclusion set out in paragraph 8 above, the Council included and maintained the applicant's name on the lists at issue on the grounds that, first, as an entity owned by Mr Shammout and as the only private airline in Syria, it benefited from the Syrian regime and, second, on account of its activities in connection with the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, trading in arms, narcotics trafficking and money laundering, it provided support to that regime.

The links between the applicant and Mr Shammout

37 First, the Court notes that the applicant is not disputing that Mr Shammout is its owner and the chairman of its board of directors or that it is the only private airline in Syria.

38 Second, it must be stated that the applicant claims to have distanced itself from the Syrian regime and from any wrongdoing on the part of that regime and that it has no links with that regime that might lead to EU sanctions, without, however, adducing any evidence to support its assertion (see, by analogy, judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 99).

39 Third, with regard to the alleged discrimination against Mr Shammout and the applicant by the Syrian regime, the existence of a legal dispute between a regime and a person subject to restrictive measures on account of the links between the person concerned and that regime cannot be considered sufficient to demonstrate that such links are no longer relevant. Such persons must prove that the dispute has given rise to unfavourable treatment of them by that regime which is such as to call into question the assessment that, at the time when the contested acts were adopted, they continued to have links with the regime in question.

40 As regards the applicant's claim that Mr Shammout was forced, '[by the use of] threats', to sign an agreement not to rely on the judgment of the Syrian Court of Cassation and an undertaking to pay the Syrian state-owned airline, Syrian Arab Airlines, USD 14 543 235 by way of additional fees, it must be noted that that claim is not supported by any evidence.

41 In that regard, the applicant simply submits three letters which Mr Shammout himself signed on 12 December 2019 as chairman of its board of directors. The first letter concerns the agreement not to rely on the judgment of the Syrian Court of Cassation and an undertaking to withdraw another action before the Administrative Court in Damascus (Syria). The second letter refers again to the agreement not to rely on that judgment and the undertaking to pay 'commercial compensation and other dues' to Syrian Arab Airlines, although without specifying the nature and amount thereof. The third letter contains an undertaking to pay USD 14 543 235 to Syrian Arab Airlines in return for technical ground services provided by it to the applicant. While the first two letters also bear the stamp of the Syrian Ministry of Transport, the third letter contains only Mr Shammout's handwritten signature.

42 There is nothing in the wording of those letters to suggest that Mr Shammout's signature was obtained by coercion.

43 It is clear from the terms of those letters that the agreement not to rely on the judgment of the Syrian Court of Cassation and the undertaking to pay USD 14 543 235 occurred in the context of the business relations between the applicant and Syrian Arab Airlines. In particular, the third letter produced by the applicant, in Annex A.5 to the application, shows that the sum of USD 14 543 235 was the outcome of offsetting in respect of the contractual services provided reciprocally between the applicant and Syrian Arab Airlines, resulting in a payment to the latter. That letter states that the sum was calculated on the basis of the 'attached table as [an accounting] balance in favo[u]r of Syrian Arab Airlines' and represents consideration for technical ground services which it provided to the applicant.

44 It is true that the applicant claims that the Syrian Ministry of Transport and Syrian Arab Airlines imposed unfair and asymmetrical conditions on its entry into the air transport market, including USD 200 per passenger in fees with no service in return. However, none of the evidence produced by the applicant corroborates that claim. As stated in paragraph 43 above, the third letter produced by the applicant, in Annex A.5 to the application, states that the sum of USD 14 543 235 was calculated on the basis of the 'attached table as [an accounting] balance in

favo[u]r of Syrian Arab Airlines' and represents consideration for technical ground services which it provided to the applicant.

45 It must also be stated that the applicant's claims regarding alleged discrimination by the Syrian regime are contradicted by the development of its activities both before and after 12 December 2019. As is clear from the application, since its foundation in 2007, the applicant has continually developed and expanded its activities. In that regard, the applicant itself states, in paragraph 6 of the application, that '[it] currently serves more than 17 direct destinations and 20 indirect destinations [and] employs around 500 employees' and, in paragraph 18 of the application, that 'during 2019, [it] further expanded its network by adding new indirect [routes] to Bangkok [(Thailand)] and Shenzhen [(People's Republic of China)] via Tehran [(Iran)]' and 'launched [holiday programmes] to Dubai [(United Arab Emirates)], Yerevan [(Armenia)], Tehran and Kuala Lumpur [(Malaysia)]'. Furthermore, the evidence in document WK 16130/2023 REV 2 DCL 1, which all post-dates 12 December 2019 and the reliability and content of which are not seriously challenged by the applicant, also confirms that it did not scale back its activities after December 2019.

46 It therefore follows from paragraphs 39 to 45 above that the argument regarding the alleged discrimination by the Syrian regime against the applicant and Mr Shammout is unfounded.

47 In any event, it should be noted that Mr Shammout himself is also the subject of restrictive measures as a leading businessperson operating in Syria and that, by the judgment delivered today in Case T-413/24, the Court dismissed Mr Shammout's action seeking annulment of the restrictive measures to which he is subject. In particular, he was unable to rebut the presumption, laid down in recital 6 of Decision 2015/1836, of a link with the Syrian regime, in so far as he failed to prove that his activities, including those performed by the applicant, did not benefit from a close association with that regime.

48 In the light of all the foregoing, it must be concluded that the Council did not make an error of assessment when it found that, as an entity owned by Mr Shammout and as the only private airline in Syria, the applicant benefitted from the Syrian regime.

The applicant's involvement in activities such as the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, trading in arms, narcotics trafficking and money laundering

49 In that regard, in so far as the applicant criticises the Council for finding that it could have been knowingly involved in possible unlawful activities such as the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, trading in arms, narcotics trafficking and money laundering, it should be noted at the outset that the applicant does not challenge in a precise and substantiated manner the content of the evidence in document WK 16130/2023 REV 2 DCL 1 on which the Council relied for the purpose of including and maintaining its name on the lists at issue. At the very most, it simply states that the Council's allegations 'are not supported by any reliable evidence'.

50 A general and unsubstantiated remark of that nature is not in any way sufficient to call into question the reliability of the evidence contained in document WK 16130/2023 REV 2 DCL 1. Since that evidence, which was communicated to the applicant, is from publicly accessible sources, the applicant was able to indicate which items of evidence were, in its view, untrustworthy. It should be noted in that regard that, while it is for the Council to provide evidence in support of the inclusion and maintenance of its name on the lists at issue, it is for the applicant to indicate which items of evidence might raise doubts as to their reliability. Consequently, general and declaratory allegations which the applicant does not support with any concrete evidence cannot call into question the soundness and reliability of the evidence contained in document WK 16130/2023 REV 2 DCL 1 (see, to that effect and by analogy, judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraphs 77 and 78).

51 As regards the merits of the reasons for maintaining the applicant's name on the lists at issue on account of its involvement in activities such as the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, trading in arms, narcotics trafficking and money laundering, the Court notes that the evidence relied on by the Council constitutes a sufficiently concrete, precise and consistent body of evidence to establish that the applicant was involved in such activities.

52 In particular, the Council produced the following documents:

– Item of evidence 1, an article published on 23 June 2023 on the website ‘syrianobserver.com’, which states that the applicant is involved in migrant trafficking, transporting asylum seekers from Syria to Libya, from where they attempt to travel by boat to Europe and that revenue from those operations benefits the Syrian regime and the Al-Assad family;

– Item of evidence 2, an article published on 4 December 2023 on the website ‘lybiaupdate.com’, which refers to the applicant’s involvement in human trafficking operations between Bangladesh and Libya;

– Item of evidence 4, an article published on 2 April 2023 on the website ‘maltatoday.com’, which relates that the applicant has been identified in intelligence reports as facilitating the smuggling of Bangladeshi migrants from Damascus to Benghazi (Libya), where they embark on boats attempting the hazardous journey across the Mediterranean to reach Europe;

– Item of evidence 5, a report by the ‘Syrian Reporting Center’ of 14 September 2023, which states that the applicant is involved in migrant trafficking and that in that context it employs the services of ‘Freebird Company’, an agency that works with numerous Syrian companies close to the regime and facilitates, inter alia, the movement of Syrian military personnel into the European Union. The report also states that the regime uses front companies, including those linked to the applicant, to conduct economic and security operations such as human trafficking, drug smuggling and the gathering of information abroad for the Syrian intelligence services;

– Item of evidence 6, namely the final report, published on 8 March 2021, of the Panel of Experts on Libya established pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 1973 (2011), which states that the applicant’s flights were used for illicit transfers of weapons and of Syrian mercenaries, who had been recruited by the Wagner private military company in infringement of paragraph 9, on the supply of military equipment to Libya, of United Nations Security Council resolution 1970 (2011). The report also states that the applicant does not officially advertise flights to Benghazi in Libya, but that it has been confirmed that those flights had taken place, not from the civilian terminal but from the military terminal at Damascus, and that many of the passengers were dressed in military attire;

– Item of evidence 7, an article from the German magazine *Der Spiegel* published on the internet on 8 September 2023, and Item of evidence 9, a study of 8 September 2023 published on the website ‘omranstudies.org’, which refer to the existence of a link between Mr Mahmoud Al-Dj’s narcotics trafficking operations and the applicant, including through the ‘Freebird Company’ agency, and to the applicant’s involvement in the illicit trafficking of arms and mercenaries and in money laundering. Those articles also state that such activities are made possible by the support of the Syrian regime, since only those who support that regime are allowed to do business in Syria;

– Item of evidence 8, an article of 29 September 2023 published on the website ‘newarab.com’, which describes the functioning of the travel agencies handling ticket sales on behalf of the applicant in connection with migrant trafficking, an activity which also benefits from the collaboration of the army of Field Marshal Haftar.

53 It should also be recalled that the Court has already acknowledged that the applicant transported weapons and equipment for the Syrian regime (see, to that effect, judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 103).

54 It therefore follows from paragraphs 52 and 53 above that the Council did not make an error of assessment in finding that, on the date of adoption of the contested acts, the applicant had used its flights to engage in the transfer of Syrian mercenaries, trading in arms, narcotics trafficking and money laundering and that those activities revealed its support for the Syrian regime.

55 In that regard, it must be pointed out, in particular, that the concept of ‘support to the regime’ for the purposes of the criterion referred to in paragraph 6 above encompasses not only financial or material support for

the Syrian regime, but refers to any form of support for that regime (see, to that effect and by analogy, judgment of 6 September 2023, *Gutseriev* v *Council*, T-526/21, not published, EU:T:2023:512, paragraph 52).

56 In the light of the foregoing, it must be concluded that the reasons for maintaining the applicant's name on the lists at issue are substantiated to the requisite legal standard.

57 That conclusion cannot be called into question by the applicant's argument that, after the fall of the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad on 8 December 2024, the restrictive measures taken against Syria, and in particular the contested acts, became devoid of purpose.

58 In that regard, it need only be borne in mind that the legality of those acts may be assessed only on the basis of the elements of fact and of law on which they were adopted and not on the basis of information brought to the Council's knowledge after the adoption of those measures (see judgment of 9 September 2016, *Tri-Ocean Trading* v *Council*, T-709/14, not published, EU:T:2016:459, paragraph 43 and the case-law cited).

59 Given that the fall of the Syrian regime headed by President Bashar Al-Assad occurred after the adoption of the contested acts, which, as stated in paragraph 1 above, were adopted on 27 May 2024, that circumstance cannot call the legality of those acts into question.

60 The first plea in law must therefore be rejected.

The second plea in law, alleging infringement of the principle of proportionality

61 According to the applicant, the contested acts are likely to close its access to the international air transport industry since it carries on a substantial part of its business with international airports, business partners and customers. Moreover, the contested acts could result in numerous ongoing contracts being cancelled and in the applicant being liable in contract and quasi-delict to its customers and contractual partners. The applicant also submits that the economic consequences of the sanctions taken against it are disastrous and disproportionate and that they have a detrimental impact on its reputation.

62 The Council disputes, first, the admissibility of that plea in law in the light of Article 76 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Court, as the applicant provides no details or the slightest evidence supporting its claims, and, second, the merits of that plea in law.

63 In that regard, although it is not necessary to rule on the plea of inadmissibility raised by the Council, it should be recalled that the principle of proportionality, which is one of the general principles of EU law and is reflected in Article 5(4) TEU, requires that measures implemented through provisions of EU law be appropriate for attaining the legitimate objectives pursued by the legislation at issue and must not go beyond what is necessary to achieve them (see judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 114 and the case-law cited).

64 Furthermore, it is certainly the case that the rights of the party concerned are to a certain extent curtailed by the restrictive measures adopted against it due to the fact that it cannot, in particular, dispose of any funds that may be in the territory of the European Union or transfer its funds to the European Union, save with special authorisation. Likewise, the measures imposed on the party concerned may cause its associates and customers to regard it with a certain suspicion or mistrust (see, to that effect, judgment of 23 September 2020, *Kaddour* v *Council*, T-510/18, EU:T:2020:436, paragraph 174 (not published)).

65 However, in the present case, it must be held that, contrary to the applicant's claims, there is a reasonable relationship between the restrictive measures adopted by mean of the contested acts and the objective pursued.

66 In the first place, the adoption of restrictive measures against the applicant is appropriate, since it is compatible with an objective of general interest as fundamental to the international community as the protection of civilian populations. The freezing of the funds, financial assets and other economic resources of persons or entities identified as being involved in supporting the Syrian regime cannot, in itself, be regarded as

inappropriate (see, to that effect, judgment of 12 June 2024, *Shammout* v *Council*, T-649/22, not published, EU:T:2024:376, paragraph 116 and the case-law cited).

67 In the second place, the measures at issue are reversible and temporary.

68 It should be recalled that Article 28(6) of Decision 2013/255, as amended by Decision 2015/1836, and Article 16 of Regulation No 36/2012, as amended by Regulation 2015/1828, provide for the possibility, first, of authorising the use of frozen funds to meet essential needs or to meet certain commitments and, second, of granting specific authorisations to unfreeze funds, other financial assets or other economic resources.

69 Furthermore, in the context of the adoption of the restrictive measures at issue, the Council is required to carry out a periodic review, in accordance with the second and third sentences of Article 34 of Decision 2013/255, as amended by Decision 2015/1836, and with Article 32(4) of Regulation No 36/2012, as amended by Regulation 2015/1828, which, each time, includes an opportunity for the person or entity concerned to put forward arguments and to submit facts supporting the assertions being made by that person or entity.

70 In the light of the foregoing, the second plea in law must be rejected as unfounded and, accordingly, the action must be dismissed in its entirety.

Costs

71 Under Article 134(1) of the Rules of Procedure, the unsuccessful party is to be ordered to pay the costs if they have been applied for in the successful party's pleadings.

72 In the present case, since the applicant has been unsuccessful, it must be ordered to bear its own costs and to pay those incurred by the Council, in accordance with the form of order sought by the Council.

On those grounds,

THE GENERAL COURT (Fifth Chamber)

hereby:

1. **Dismisses the action;**

2. **Orders Cham Wings Airlines LLC to pay the costs.**

Svenningsen Laitenberger Stancu

Delivered in open court in Luxembourg on 24 September 2025.

V. Di Bucci S. Papasavvas

Registrar President

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* Language of the case: English.