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Financial assistance for Kazakhstan must be withheld unless significant human rights progress is made

Written declaration No. 663

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

As mentioned in written declaration No. 660, over 140 people were detained and about 40 were incarcerated. Iskander Yerimbetov, Ablovas Dzhumayev, Kezhenbek Abishev, Almat Zhumagulov, Muratbek Tungishbayev are examples of many politically persecuted persons who are deprived of the right to a fair trial. The Council of Europe must call upon the Kazakhstani authorities to immediately release 30 individuals listed by the Political Prisoners Protection Committee and to stop prosecuting peaceful protesters, bloggers and lawyers.

On 7 October 2018, Kazakhstani human rights defender Elena Semenova was banned from leaving the country to participate in meetings with members of the Parliamentary Assembly.

The European Union financed the € 5,5 million project "Enhancing Criminal Justice in Kazakhstan", while the Council of Europe and the European Union co-financed the programme "Support to the Kazakh Authorities in Improving the Quality and Efficiency of the Kazakh Justice System". According to the reports of human rights watchdogs and independent international watchdogs, the officially presented outcomes do not correspond to reality.

We urge the European Union and the Council of Europe to withhold the financial support for Kazakhstan, unless it makes genuine progress in terms of human rights.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

OMTZIGT Pieter, Netherlands, EPP/CD
BARDELL Hannah, United Kingdom, NR
BARNETT Doris, Germany, SOC
BRUIJN-WEZEMAN Reina, de, Netherlands, ALDE
COAKER Vernon, United Kingdom, SOC
CORREIA Telmo, Portugal, EPP/CD
CREASY Stella, United Kingdom, SOC
FIALA Doris, Switzerland, ALDE
GAVAN Paul, Ireland, UEL
GOODWILL Robert, United Kingdom, EC
GUNNARSSON Jonas, Sweden, SOC
GURMAI Zita, Hungary, SOC
HEINRICH Gabriela, Germany, SOC
JANSSON Eva-Lena, Sweden, SOC
JONES Susan Elan, United Kingdom, SOC
KOX Tiny, Netherlands, UEL
MULLEN Rónán, Ireland, EPP/CD
MUNYAMA Killion, Poland, EPP/CD
MURRAY Ian, United Kingdom, SOC
O'REILLY Joseph, Ireland, EPP/CD
OHLSSON Carina, Sweden, SOC
RAMPI Roberto, Italy, SOC
ROJHAN GUSTAFSSON Azadeh, Sweden, SOC
SANDBÆK Ulla, Denmark, UEL
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC
SHEHU Tritan, Albania, EPP/CD
SOTNYK Olena, Ukraine, ALDE
STRIK Tineke, Netherlands, SOC
SUTTER Petra, De, Belgium, SOC
TRUSKOLASKI Krzysztof, Poland, ALDE
VEN Mart, van de, Netherlands, ALDE
WHITFIELD Martin, United Kingdom, SOC
ZINGERIS Emanuelis, Lithuania, EPP/CD

Total = 33

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group