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The international community must respond to mass arrests and political prosecution in Kazakhstan

Written declaration No. 695

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.

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

From February 2018 to October 2019, more than 6 000 people were arbitrarily detained for participating in peaceful anti-government protests to free political prisoners and cease Chinese expansion in Kazakhstan.

On the eve of the rally on 21 September 2019, at least 65 people were detained, 43 of whom were subjected to administrative arrests or fines. On 21 September 2019, observers estimated that the authorities detained more than 200 people. The police beat protesters and dragged them into transport vehicles, brutally seizing them by their arms and legs. The detainees included minors and the elderly, as well as journalists and human rights activists.

While newly-elected President Tokayev has announced his "openness to dialogue", Kazakhstan is completely ignoring 23 recommendations of the United Nations, which concluded that the prosecution of Mukhtar Dzhakishev, Maks Bokayev, Iskander Yerimbetov and other prisoners violated international law. Following the election, the number of political prisoners increased to 21 persons, including Serik Zhahin, Oksana Shevchuk, Zhazira Demeuova, Gulzipa Dzhaukerova, Akmaral Kerimbayeva, Gulmira Kalykova, who have been prosecuted recently.

We underline that personal sanctions must be imposed upon those responsible for the aforementioned human rights violations. We hereby call for the immediate release of all political prisoners.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

GATTOLIN André, France, ALDE
ÅBERG Boriana, Sweden, EPP/CD
ÆVARSDÓTTIR Thorhildur Sunna, Iceland, SOC
BAYR Petra, Austria, SOC
BERLINGHIERI Marina, Italy, SOC
BUCCARELLA Maurizio, Italy, NR
CILEVIČS Boriss, Latvia, SOC
COAKER Vernon, United Kingdom, SOC
FOULKES George, United Kingdom, SOC
GAVAN Paul, Ireland, UEL
GRIGORIU Inga, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
HUNKO Andrej, Germany, UEL
JALLOW Momodou Malcolm, Sweden, UEL
JONES Susan Elan, United Kingdom, SOC
KÖCK Eduard, Austria, EPP/CD
KOPŘIVA František, Czech Republic, ALDE
MAIRE Jacques, France, ALDE
MANIERO Alvise, Italy, NR
MARILOTTI Gianni, Italy, NR
MURRAY Ian, United Kingdom, SOC
OHLSSON Carina, Sweden, SOC
PRINGLE Thomas, Ireland, UEL
RAMPI Roberto, Italy, SOC
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC
SCHWABE Frank, Germany, SOC

Total = 25

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
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