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Persecution of civil society in Kazakhstan: personal sanctions must be imposed and trade co-operation reviewed

Written declaration No. 706

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:

Since November 2019, around 200 people were arbitrarily detained for participating in peaceful protests to release political prisoners, stop political prosecution and commemorate the victims of the Zhanaozen tragedy. On 16 December 2019, excessive use of force by police caused injuries to many activists (including Nuriyash Abdreimova, Anna Shukeyeva and Azamat Baikenov).

Following the written declarations Nos. 695 and 682, we learned that the number of political prisoners has been increased with several activists: Yerzhan Yelshibayev, Kairly Omar and Zhambul Kobeisnov, a trade union leader Yerlan Baltabay, and journalist Amangeldy Batyrbekov, while criminal proceedings against Dulat Agadil, Aliya Abulkhairova and Aigul Akberdy are still ongoing.

We share the concern of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe over the harassment and persecution of Botagoz Jardemalie, a human rights lawyer and political refugee residing in Belgium. We find the practice of abusing INTERPOL, extradition and mutual legal assistance instruments to silence Jardemalie and Zhanara Akhmetova, one of the exiled leaders of the Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan opposition movement, unacceptable.

We call for the immediate release of all political prisoners, we urge to review trade co-operation with Kazakhstan and impose personal sanctions against officials responsible for human rights violations and abuse of international co-operation instruments.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

RAMPI Roberto, Italy, SOC
ÆVARSDÓTTIR Thorhildur Sunna, Iceland, SOC
BAYR Petra, Austria, SOC
BEN CHIKHA Fourat, Belgium, SOC
BRUIJN-WEZEMAN Reina, de, Netherlands, ALDE
BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR Rósa Björk, Iceland, UEL
BUCCARELLA Maurizio, Italy, NR
EIDE Petter, Norway, UEL
FASSINO Piero, Italy, SOC
FOULKES George, United Kingdom, SOC
GIOVAGNOLI Gerardo, San Marino, SOC
KAMELCHUK Yuriy, Ukraine, EPP/CD
KAMOWSKI Catherine, France, ALDE
KRAVCHUK Yevheniia, Ukraine, ALDE
MANIERO Alvise, Italy, NR
MARILOTTI Gianni, Italy, NR
MASSEY Doreen, United Kingdom, SOC
MEHL Emilie Enger, Norway, ALDE
MORGANTI Giuseppe Maria, San Marino, SOC
NOWACKA Barbara, Poland, NR
PIPILI Foteini, Greece, EPP/CD
POPSOI Mihail, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
RUSSELL Simon, United Kingdom, EC/DA
SCHÄFER Axel, Germany, SOC
SCHWABE Frank, Germany, SOC
SHEPPARD Tommy, United Kingdom, NR
VOVC Liviu, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
ZINGERIS Emanuelis, Lithuania, EPP/CD

Total = 28

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC/DA: European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance
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