



MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Vice-President of the European Commission

Madam High Representative,
Dear Federica,

Some worrying cases, in which the International Criminal Police Organization, or Interpol's system, has been abused by Kazakh authorities in politically motivated persecution of the leaders of democratic opposition, have motivated us to write to you. Article 3 of Interpol's Constitution forbids Member States to undertake any intervention or activities of a political character.

There is a compelling case of misuse of the Interpol system in the persecution of members of the Kazakh political opposition. Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov, a Kazakh opposition politician, who was the target of an international arrest warrant issued by Russia and Ukraine, has been detained in France while awaiting the decision of the French Supreme Court on whether he is to be extradited to Russia or Ukraine, which cooperate with the Kazakh government. The decision should be made public on the 4th of March, 2015.

Mr Muratbek Ketebayev, another leader of the political opposition in Kazakhstan, was arrested in Spain in December 2014 and has since been conditionally released this January. However, he is still, like Mr Ablyazov, awaiting the final decision on his possible extradition to Kazakhstan. Poland granted Mr Ketebayev a refugee status in 2013, precisely due to the same politically motivated accusations and arrest warrant sent to Interpol by the Kazakh authorities.

EU Member States should not cooperate in capturing and rendering people in automatic and blind compliance with international arrests warrants issued by authoritarian states. In our view, these measures put these individuals at great risk of human rights violations, especially if extradited to third countries, where they risk being subjected to death, torture or ill-treatment, and where their procedural rights will not be respected.

We call on you, therefore, to raise the issue of the threat of extradition of Mr Ablyazov and Mr Ketebayev with the EU governments concerned and publicly appeal to the judges not to allow their extradition.

We ask you, as well, to alert the Member States of politically motivated arrests under the Interpol system.

Sincerely,

Ana Gomes
Member of the European Parliament

Marju Lauristin
Member of the European Parliament