

Question for written answer E-011548/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
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Subject: VP/HR - Use of secret services and Interpol arrest warrants by authoritarian states to persecute opposition and political dissidents living in Europe

Recent developments in a number of cases involving the detention of Kazakh, Russian and Ukrainian dissidents in different Member States through the use of secret services and Interpol arrest warrants raise a serious issue as to how international cooperation agreements and other international tools are being used by authoritarian states to persecute dissidents living abroad.

We are currently witnessing an increasing number of arrests among representatives of the opposition in Kazakhstan. For example, Tatiana Paraskevich was detained in the Czech Republic and is awaiting a decision on her potential extradition to Ukraine or Russia. Another example is the case of Muratbek Ketebayev, who was detained in Poland under an Interpol arrest warrant but subsequently released, as the charges against him were deemed to be most likely political.

The most urgent case at present is that of Alexandr Pavlov. The National High Court of Spain was to make a decision on 27 September 2013 concerning his extradition to Kazakhstan, but suspended that decision until 25 October 2013 in order to analyse information on a similar case, that of Muratbek Ketebayev in Poland. Should Alexandr Pavlov be extradited, he would be under imminent threat of ill-treatment, torture or even death. The above-mentioned cases and the clamp-down on the opposition and civil society in Kazakhstan over the last two years are clear indicators of what Pavlov can expect if he is sent back to his country.

Is the Vice-President / High Representative aware of the above-mentioned cases and, if so, is she monitoring developments?

Can the EEAS say whether there are any arrangements in place to prevent the misuse of these international collaboration mechanisms by countries with poor human rights records?

Does the EEAS intend to create a group of experts and to use the analyses carried out by independent specialists and organisations in order to prepare recommendations to the Member States so that bilateral and international agreements are not used as a tool to persecute dissidents?