

**Question for written answer E-007607/2015**  
**to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Political prisoners in Kazakhstan

Since the tragic events in Zhanaozen in December 2011, the Kazakh authorities have regularly clamped down on the pro-democratic opposition and on independent media and civil society representatives in the country, as well as on the few critics of the current regime that have fled the country and sought safety abroad, often in the EU.

While some of the detained oil workers and activists have recently been released or conditionally released, as reported by international NGOs, a number of political prisoners remain in Kazakhstan. Among these, three persons of note remain in detention: the politician Vladimir Kozlov, the human rights defender Vadim Kuramshin and the civic activist and poet Aaron Atabek. They have all been sentenced to long prison terms in trials deemed by the international community to be politically motivated.

1. How does the Vice-President / High Representative intend to use the process of preparation for the signing and subsequent ratification of the EU-Kazakhstan Enhanced PCA as an opportunity to draw the attention of the Kazakh authorities to these and other cases and to call for the liberation of the remaining political prisoners?
2. What action has the VP/HR undertaken so far to ensure progress in the area of fostering greater respect for basic civil and political rights in Kazakhstan, and with what results?