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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Bart Staes and Cem Özdemir,

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on the situation in Kazakhstan

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Kazakhstan

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Kazakhstan and the Central Asia Republics,
 - having regard to the European Union's Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Kazakhstan, which was signed on 23 January 1995 and entered into force on 1 July 1999,
 - having regard to the Commission's Central Asia Strategy Paper 2002-2006,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the fourth meeting of the Cooperation Council between the EU and Kazakhstan,
 - having regard to the official results of the presidential elections of 4 December 2005,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Mr Altynbek Sarsenbayev, a well-known prominent politician co-Chairman of the “Naghiz Ak Zhol” opposition party was kidnapped on 11 February 2006 and was found shot dead on the outskirts of Almaty on 13 February 2006 together with his bodyguard and driver,
- B. whereas on 12 November 2005 another opposition leader, Nurkalidov Zamanbek, was killed under "mysterious circumstances" after he had accused the government of corruption and threatened to disclose material proving this and whereas the official investigation concluded that Nurkalidov had committed suicide,
- C. whereas Askhat Sharipzhanov, a famous journalist, and Oksana Nikitima, the daughter of an opposition activist, were also killed,
- D. whereas twelve opposition activists as well a number of journalists were jailed for five to 15 days for holding a rally on 26 February 2006 in memory of the slain opposition leader Altynbek Sarsenbayev,
- E. whereas several of the activists are on hunger strike to protest against their imprisonment,
- F. whereas the Senate General Secretary was arrested for the killing of Sarsenbayev together with 5 members of the state security service charged with kidnapping and killing, prompting the resignation of the head of the state security agency,
- G. whereas the presidential elections of 4 December 2005, which confirmed Nazarbayev in power once again, were marred by widespread irregularities, violations and fraud according to the opposition and failed to meet international standards according to the OSCE,
- H. whereas the political situation is rapidly deteriorating with the security forces cracking down on the opposition and increasing restrictions being placed on democratic forces and

stressing that respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law is a fundamental element of the EU-Kazakhstan Partnership and Cooperation agreement, upon which the development of future relations will be based,

1. Utterly condemns the murder of Altynbek Sarsenbayev and all other politically motivated killings and extends its condolences to the families of the victims;
2. Expresses its concern at the reports about the presidential elections and the overall deterioration of the political environment in Kazakhstan, where human rights activists, independent journalists and opposition members are increasingly subject to violence and harassment;
3. Calls on the Kazakhstan authorities to carry out an immediate, full, independent and transparent investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Altynbek Sarsenbayev and the two persons who accompanied him and to refrain from restricting the independent media and international observers from freely contributing to the clarification of the circumstances of the murder;
4. Urges the EU Special Representative for the Central Asia Republics to follow closely and actively the development of the situation and to report back to the European Parliament; calls on the Commission to offer assistance and provide technical and personnel support to the Kazakh judicial authorities in their efforts to carry out the investigation;
5. Condemns the jailing of opposition activists and journalists for five to fifteen days for their part in the unauthorised rally marking the death of Mr Altynbek Sarsenbayev and calls for their immediate release;
6. Urges the Kazakhstan Government to honour its commitments under the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with regard, in particular, to the respect for democracy, the rule of law and human rights, moving towards genuine democratisation of the country;
7. Calls on the Council and the Commission to put the question of respect for human rights at the core of the next Cooperation Council meeting, linking progress in this field to the further implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and to strengthen TACIS democracy programmes for Kazakhstan, aiming, in particular, at strengthening and developing democratic institutions and civil society and the independent media and stepping up the fight against corruption,
8. Takes the view that the crucial role played by Kazakhstan in providing stability and security in the region and the fight against terrorism cannot be an excuse to escalate the repression of the opposition and democratic forces in the country;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Government and the President of Kazakhstan.