



Plenary sitting

B9-0077/2022

18.1.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Kazakhstan
(2022/2505(RSP))

Anna Fotyga, Adam Bielan, Alexandr Vondra, Assita Kanko, Charlie Weimers, Elżbieta Kruk, Eugen Jurzyca, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Raffaele Fitto, Veronika Vrecionová, Witold Jan Waszczykowski
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Kazakhstan
(2022/2505(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 11 February 2021 on the human rights situation in Kazakhstan and its previous resolutions on Kazakhstan, including those of 14 March 2019¹, 18 April 2013², 15 March 2012³, 17 September 2009⁴ and 17 September 2009,
- having regard to the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part, which was signed in Astana on 21 December 2015 and which entered into full force on 1 March 2020 following its ratification by all Member States,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 17 June 2019 on the new EU strategy on Central Asia,
- having regard to the Kazakhstan country report contained in the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2020,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the 18th meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council of 10 May 2021, to the 13th EU-Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue meeting held 2-3 December 2021, and to the 18th meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Committee of 25 September 2020,
- having regard to the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review of Kazakhstan of 12 March 2020,
- having regard to the 18th meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council on 10 May 2021 and to the 13th EU - Kazakhstan Human Rights Dialogue meeting on 2-3 December 2021;
- having regard to the declaration by the High Representative of 10 January 2022 ;
- having regard to the statements by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of

¹ OJ C 23, 21.1.2021, p. 83–87

² OJ C 45, 5.2.2016, p. 85.

³ OJ C 251 E, 31.8.2013, p. 93.

⁴ OJ C 224 E, 19.8.2010, p. 30.

6 January 2022;

- having regard to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to Kazakhstan’s membership of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and its consequent commitments and obligations,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Kazakhstan has witnessed its largest protest movement since the fall of the USSR; whereas peaceful protests started on 2 January 2022 in western Kazakhstan over the spike in price of liquefied petroleum gas; whereas protests rapidly spread to more than 60 cities and localities;
- B. whereas, even though protests were sparked by a sharp rise in gas prices, there were deeper and broader concerns of Kazakh society, including wide dissatisfaction and explosion of general discontent was the deterioration of economic situation caused by endemic corruption, nepotism, authoritarianism, absence of fair elections, political stagnation, human rights violations including limitation of media freedom;
- C. whereas the large number of frustrated young men with nothing to lose is the most likely explanation for how quickly the protests became radicalized and turned violent; whereas the evidence available so far suggests that the armed protesters had no strategic objectives beyond chaos and looting;
- D. whereas in his national address on January 7 and during a CSTO virtual summit on January 10, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev claimed that the actions of “terrorists and thugs” were part of an attempted coup d’etat from within, and that they were backed by hostile foreign forces, though he has not pointed the finger at any countries in particular;
- E. whereas in the Central Asia region there are well grounded fears of radicalisation, growing extremism and terrorist threat, with very high number of former ISIS fighters returning to Central Asia and dire security situation in Afghanistan; whereas this threat was used by the Kazakh authorities as an excuse to invite CSTO forces under Russian lead and legitimize the violent crackdown; whereas despite various statements till now no evidence of “foreign aggression” was given by the government; whereas US press secretary Jen Psaki dismissed statements about "outside forces" as "disinformation strategies; whereas all those raise questions about the legality of triggering Article 4 of the 1992 Collective Security Treaty;
- F. whereas eyewitnesses report that highly organised groups with face masks - likely to be provocateurs linked to the authorities of Kazakhstan - intentionally wreaked havoc to justify the government’s violent repression, following a technique previously used during the so-called Zhanaozen massacre of 2011;

- G. whereas President Tokayev gave law enforcement agencies orders to shoot without warning, despite calls from UN human rights experts condemning the use of deadly force against protesters and the misuse of the label of “terrorism” for the protesters; whereas it was reported that at least 9 900 arrests were made and over 225 people have died, while more than 2,600 people sought treatment at hospitals; whereas among fatalities there are children and harmless passers-by; whereas activists Nuraliya Aitkulova, Aitbay Aliyev and at least 12 were reportedly shot dead by law enforcement officials during protests; whereas peaceful civilians Nurbolat Seitkulov, Altynai Yetayeva and their 15-years-old daughter were shot dead by the military in Taldykorgan on 8 January 2022; whereas among killed there also were 19 Kazakh security officers and military personnel;
- H. whereas the government has called Russian-led foreign troops under a CSTO mission to help "stabilise" the situation; whereas the intervention is led by Russian General Andrey Serdyukov, already head of the operation to annex Crimea in 2014 and the military intervention in Syria in 2019; whereas the CSTO’s mission should be seen rather as a Russian intervention under the cloak of multilateralism than a peacekeeping operation;
- I. whereas there is no example of Russian “peacekeepers” being deployed in the post-Soviet space without geopolitical preconditions, while Vladimir Putin clearly stated that the CSTO troops will not allow any “colour revolutions” to happen and therefore the CSTO intervention should not be treated as a peacekeeping operation and rather reminds Soviet style interventions in Czechoslovakia and Hungary;
- J. whereas when President Tokayev blamed the violence on alleged “terrorists” trained abroad, Chinese President Xi Jinping offered his support for Tokayev’s efforts to put down what both Beijing and Moscow deemed a “colour revolution” in Kazakhstan;
- K. whereas as of 11 January 2022, the authorities reported around 10 thousand detentions across the country and 400 newly opened criminal cases; whereas some of the detainees were allegedly tortured, are held incommunicado with no access to legal and medical aid;
- L. whereas access to the Internet has been severely restrained since 4 January 2022, which made independent, truthful coverage of the events extremely difficult; whereas a number of journalists were detained or harassed by law enforcement officials for covering protests,;
- M. whereas the government of Kazakhstan may seek to exploit current situation as an excuse to extend its persecution of opposition figures inside the country and living abroad;
- N. whereas on 21 December 2015 the European Union and Kazakhstan signed an Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) for a mutual cooperation based on democracy and rule of law; whereas the EPCA entered into full force on 1 March 2020 following its ratification by all Member States;
- O. whereas since the latest EP resolution, the Kazakhstani authorities have not delivered concrete results and changes despite repeated promises to implement recommendations of the European Parliament, with torture, political persecution and censorship continuing as before;
- P. whereas, given the previous failure of the Kazakhstani authorities to investigate the events of the 2011 Zhanaozen massacre despite calls from the European Parliament, the judicial

system and law enforcement have not done so which brings into questions likelihood of bringing to justice and punishment of those responsible for the current bloodshed;

1. Calls on the Government of Kazakhstan to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms as found in Articles 1, 4, 5 and 235 of the *EU - Kazakhstan* EPCA; calls the government of Kazakhstan to immediately cease the shoot-to-kill policy introduced by President Tokayev and calls for a peaceful, rights-respecting resolution to the crisis. Reiterates its position that a peaceful, prosperous, stable, more open and pluralistic Kazakhstan is in the interests of both the people of Kazakhstan and the EU's;
2. calls for the authorities of Kazakhstan to comply with international standards regarding the legal framework for holding elections and to address the recommendations of the ODIHR LEOM concerning constitutionally guaranteed fundamental freedoms, civil society participation, political pluralism, the impartiality of election administration, eligibility to vote and stand for elections, voter registration, the media and publication of election results;
3. Deeply regrets the loss of life and strongly condemns the widespread acts of violence that have erupted following peaceful protests in Kazakhstan; pays its respects to the victims and their families;
4. Condemns the violations on fundamental freedoms and human rights committed by Kazakh authorities against demonstrators, media workers and activists, including the use of lethal force by security forces; condemns all the violence and destruction of property in Kazakhstan,
5. Calls on the Government of Kazakhstan to cease any politically motivated cases against peaceful dissidents and to guarantee the basic freedoms of speech, assembly and belief, both for private, individual citizens and for organised groups; demands the Kazakhstani authorities refrain from further systematic abuse of anti-extremism legislation; welcomes that after complaints about beatings and torture of those detained in the aftermath, Tokayev ordered police to avoid abuse and told prosecutors to be lenient to those who have not committed grave crimes ?
6. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) and the Member States to put pressure on Kazakhstani authorities for an impartial and transparent investigation open to international scrutiny into the recent cases of violence against the peaceful protesters and bringing the responsible to justice; calls on the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan to closely monitor the situation on the ground;
7. Calls for the establishment of an international mission to investigate all the circumstances of the events that have been occurring following the beginning of peaceful protests in Kazakhstan on 2 January 2022, in cooperation with OSCE, the UN and with the approval of the authorities of Kazakhstan;
8. Calls on the Commission and the VP/HR to remind the Kazakhstani authorities on their human rights obligations under the EPCA;;

9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the President, Government and Parliament of Kazakhstan.