

**Question for written answer E-006324/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Marek Henryk Migalski (ECR) and Piotr Borys (PPE)

Subject: Situation in Kazakhstan

The Commission is no doubt aware of the worsening situation in Kazakhstan and the increasingly brutal repression of opposition leaders by the authorities.

On 4 June 2012, court rulings were handed down in the case of 37 people arrested following the tragedy of 16 December last year, when police brutality claimed the lives of a dozen or so workers in the town of Zhanaozen. Paradoxically, the workers' most ardent defenders were given the harshest sentences. Among them was Talgat Saktaganov, an inspector for the European institutions and participant at the OSCE conference in 2011.

Furthermore, over the last month the authorities have stepped up their actions against opposition activists. Those arrested include Bolat Atabayev, a prominent theatre director, winner of the Goethe prize (which he was due to have collected in Germany in August 2012) and activist for the opposition 'Halyk Maidana' movement, and Zhanbolat Mamai, leader of the 'Rukh Pen Til' youth movement.

At the same time strikes have intensified and there are fears of a repeat of last year's tragic events, given the lack of dialogue between management and employees.

1. Does the Commission intend to respond to the increasing repression of the opposition in Kazakhstan?
2. What impact will these events have on the Commission's relations with Kazakhstan going forward?