

**Question for written answer E-010478/2012
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 117

Piotr Borys (PPE), Róża Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein (PPE), Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE) and Bogusław Sonik (PPE)

Subject: VP/HR - Kazakhstan: careful monitoring of the fairness and independence of the Appellate Court required in the case of Vladimir Kozlov

On 19 November 2012, the Appellate Court in Aktau will consider the case of Vladimir Kozlov, a leading opposition politician and human rights activist in Kazakhstan who has made many speeches in Europe and met with Members of the European Parliament and the Commission in order to disseminate information about the deteriorating human rights situation in Kazakhstan. He warned of social tensions in Zhanaozen and called for an independent international investigation into the tragic events in Zhanaozen and Shetpe in 2011. Unfortunately, on 23 January 2012 he was arrested immediately after his return from attending those official meetings and events in Europe.

There is some concern as regards the appropriateness of sentencing Kozlov to seven years and six months in prison for his human rights activities, given that the policemen found guilty of causing the death of people during the shooting in Zhanaozen were sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Parliament's resolution of 15 March 2012 condemned the oppression of civil society activists and urged the authorities to immediately release political prisoners, and the Commission called for close monitoring of the situation around human rights in Kazakhstan.

We expect that the Appellate Court will issue a ruling, in the case of the leader of the Kazakh opposition, which takes account of his great contribution to the improvement of the human rights situation in Kazakhstan and that, as a consequence, Vladimir Kozlov will be acquitted and released immediately from the courtroom.

We appeal to the Vice-President/High Representative to provide a detailed report monitoring the fairness and independence of the Appellate Court in the case of Vladimir Kozlov.