

Question for written answer E-003103/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - Kazakhstan: the case of Aron Atabek

In 2006, the Kazakh poet, journalist and opposition activist Aron Atabek was sentenced to 16 years in prison on trumped-up charges. The authorities accused him of orchestrating a protest by people whose houses had been slated for demolition. Action to protect the houses led to clashes with the police in which one police officer died. Aron Atabek – along with three other people – was named as one of the organisers of the demonstration and found guilty of the officer's death. The ruling was based on the testimonies of two witnesses who later withdrew their earlier testimonies in court, pointing out that they had been given under duress.

Is the High Representative aware of the situation as regards Aron Atabek and the other individuals falsely convicted of leading a protest to protect people's homes? Will the EU be taking steps to secure their release?