

**Question for written answer E-007937/2017
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)

Subject: VP/HR - Torture and politically motivated detention of Mr Iskander Yerimbetov in the Republic of Kazakhstan

In Kazakhstan, persecution, including fabricated criminal proceedings, long-term imprisonment and the use of torture, is used not only against political opponents, independent journalists and critical activists but also those even loosely associated with them, as in the case of Kazakh businessman Iskander Yerimbetov, who was arrested on 15 November 2017 on trumped-up charges of fraud. Since then, he has been kept in the detention centre of the National Security Committee, where he has been ill-treated and subjected to torture with the use of psychotropic or other drugs in order to extract forced confessions. Yerimbetov's arrest is motivated by his links to the criminal prosecution of his sister, Botagoz Jardemalie, a political refugee in Belgium. According to the information available, Yerimbetov is in a grave physical condition on account of severe torture and constant stress.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of Mr Yerimbetov's case, and how do the VP/HR and the EEAS intend to intervene in this regard?
2. Does the VP/HR intend to take action to ensure that the EEAS delegation in Kazakhstan collect evidence of Mr Yerimbetov's specific situation and state of health?
3. How does the VP/HR intend to react to the deteriorating human rights situation in Kazakhstan?