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E-006448/2020

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(1.2.2021)

On 26 November 2020, the EU and Kazakhstan held the twelfth Human Rights Dialogue online. Prior to the dialogue, consultations were held in Brussels and Nur-Sultan with civil society organisations. During the dialogue, the EU called on Kazakhstan to take further steps to conduct prompt, thorough, impartial and independent investigations into all allegations of torture, and bring perpetrators to justice, in line with international human rights law standards. The EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights provide for concrete possibilities of support to human rights defenders at risk and their families.

During the abovementioned Human Rights Dialogue, the case of activist Dulat Agadil who died in custody in February 2020, and the recent death of his 17 year old son, Zhanbolat, were specifically raised. The EU stressed that an impartial investigation of both cases should be carried out by the Kazakh authorities. This message was also passed by the EU Delegation in February 2020 in relation to the death of Dulat Agadil.

The EU has raised the cases of other victims of torture in prison, including the case of Erzhan Elshibaev. The latter had also been raised during the Cooperation Committee between the EU and Kazakhstan in September 2020.

For all of these cases, the EU will follow up with the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Brussels and with the Kazakh authorities in Nur-Sultan.