

Question for written answer

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 130

Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Torture and politically motivated detention of Mr Iskander Yerimbetov in the Republic of Kazakhstan

In Kazakhstan, persecutions including fabricated criminal proceedings, long-term imprisonment and the use of torture apply not only to political opponents, independent journalists and critical activists but to those even loosely associated with them. This is the case of a Kazakh businessman, Iskander Yerimbetov, arrested on trumped-up charges of fraud on 15 November 2017. 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 provide 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 available information, Yerimbetov is in grave physical condition because of severe torture and constant pressure.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of Yerimbetov's case and how do the VP/HR and EEAS intend to intervene in this regard?
2. Does the VP/HR intend to take action that the EEAS delegation in Kazakhstan is taking proof about the concrete situation and the health conditions of Mr. Yerimbetov?
3. How does the VP/HR intend to react to the deteriorating human rights situation in Kazakhstan?