

Published on 25 November 2020, during the session no. 277

BONINO - Written question to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Considering the following:

On 8 November 2019, Italy ratified the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part;

this Agreement puts a strong emphasis on the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including cooperation with civil society, democracy and the rule of law in the country;

on October 14, 2020, the Court of Perugia sentenced to prison all the defendants in the trial for the abduction of Mrs Alma Shalabayeva and her daughter Alua, respectively the wife and the daughter of a well-known Kazakh political dissident and founder of the peaceful opposition movement "Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan";

this case brought to light the repressive modus operandi of the government of Kazakhstan against political opponents and critics of the regime through the abuse of judicial cooperation instruments outside its borders and systematic persecution within the country;

these persecutions have intensified against thousands of human rights activists and defenders, users of social media platforms, most of whom risk long prison sentences for "extremism" for participating in demonstrations or expressing support for the opposition movements "Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan" and "Koshe Partiyasy", whose peaceful nature was reiterated by the European Parliament in its urgent resolution of 14 March 2019;

according to various sources of journalists, in addition to [the European Parliament Resolution of 14 March 2019](#) at least 74 criminal proceedings have already been brought against this category of people; at least 23 political prisoners are held in prison centres where the use of torture is widespread and anti-COVID-19 measures are almost non-existent;

this year 5 human rights activists Serik Orazov, Amanbike Meirkhanova, Garifulla Embergenov, Dulat Agadil and Zhanbolat Agadil died as a result of the actions of internal state bodies;

the political murder of Zhanbolat Agadil, the son of Dulat Agadil - a Kazakh blogger and activist who died while in police custody as a consequence of torture and lack of medical assistance in February 2020 - and a key witness to the arbitrary arrest of his father shortly before his death, is equally shocking;

Dulat Agadil's relatives are under close surveillance and there are at least 55 criminal proceedings brought against those activists who participated in actions of solidarity or fundraising initiatives for Dulat Agadil's family;

The following is asked:

what steps the Government intends to take to urge the respect for human rights in their country, publicly condemn the above-mentioned facts and call on the government of Kazakhstan to comply with its obligations under the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan; whether the government intends to support the proposed law "Provisions to combat international human rights violations" submitted in the Senate on 6 March 2019 (DDL S. 1126), aimed at introducing the possibility of individual sanctions for those responsible for serious human rights violations or acts of systemic corruption which are already in force in several EU Member States and other established democracies, and in the process of adoption at EU level.