



Brussels, 13 October, 2017

MEMBERS OF THE PACE WARN INTERPOL OF PERSISTENT VIOLATIONS

On 11 October, 2017, Members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe¹ (PACE) addressed the Secretary of Interpol, Mr Jürgen Stock, and the Commission for the Control of Interpol's Files (CCF) in a bid to warn against abusive use of the international arrest warrant.

In a letter signed by six MPs from different political groups and countries: **Ms Petra De Sutter** (Belgium; SOC), **Ms Gabriela Heinrich** (Germany; SOC), **Ms Alice-Mary Higgins** (Ireland; SOC), **Mr Andrej Hunko** (Germany; UEL), **Mr Pieter Omtzigt** (Netherlands; EPP/CD) and **Ms Ulla Sandbæk** (Denmark, UEL); Members of the PACE applauded Interpol's structural reforms and welcomed the concerted effort of the Council of Europe and civil society organisations in following such process.

Nevertheless, they underlined how persistent violations of Art. 3 of the Interpol's Constitution still allow authoritarian regimes to pursue political goals. As noted in the letter, there are a number of Interpol alerts issued by certain countries (e.g. Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Moldova) to hunt political fugitives beyond their borders.

The most representative cases are reported in the letter. Abusive Red Notices were issued by Russian authorities against the former head of the Russian Tutaev District, Mr Yan Andreev², because openly opposing the ruling party 'United Russia' and, by Kazakhstan, against former associates of the Kazakh opponent **Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov**, such as: **Mr Anatoliy Pogorelov**. Another case mentioned is the **Khrapunov family's**, who became victims of misuse of Interpol's mechanism after they refused to give false testimonies against Ablyazov.

MPs are also concerned by the potential misuse of Interpol notices against human rights defenders and legitimate activists. In Moldova, individuals which may be placed in Interpol's list include civil activists fighting oligarchy in their country, Mrs Ana Ursachi and Mr Alexandru Machedon³. While in Kazakhstan, exiled relatives of jailed political prisoner Mr Muratkhan Tokmadi⁴, constantly fear to be prosecuted via Interpol. These persons are: **Mr Tokmadi's sons** and his wife **Mrs Dzhamilya Aimbetova-Tokmadi**.

Lastly, it is emphasised the particular situation of victims of abusive warrants who find themselves in unsafe countries with neither the possibility to apply for refugees status nor to leave the state safely, such as **Mr Anatoliy Pogorelov** - currently stopped in the United Arab Emirates. Such appeal would support Interpol's authorities in strengthening the effectiveness and the importance of its mandate, thus preventing further political persecution through Interpol's system.

¹ <http://www.assembly.coe.int/nw/Home-EN.asp>

² <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/8316,the-case-of-yan-andreyev-russia-once-again-misuses-the-interpol-system-in-order-to-prosecute-an-opposition-politician>

³ <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/8188,the-captured-state-politically-motivated-prosecution-in-moldova-and-usurpation-of-power-by-vladimir-plahotniuc>

⁴ <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/8188,the-captured-state-politically-motivated-prosecution-in-moldova-and-usurpation-of-power-by-vladimir-plahotniuc>