

Brussels, **23 MARS 2015**
A(2015)905100-1033229

Ms Ana Gomes MEP
Ms Marju Lauristin MEP
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
1047 Brussels

Dear Ana, dear Marju,

Thank you for your letter of 2 March 2015 about the extradition requests for certain citizens of Kazakhstan residing in the European Union.

I am well aware of developments in the cases of Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov and Mr Muratbek Ketebayev. We have also responded to questions by Members of the European Parliament on this issue, underlining that extradition is a competence of Member States and is carried out in accordance with national law and international treaties. In this respect Member States are bound by the principles on the independence of the judiciary.

The European Union continues to closely monitor the human rights situation in Kazakhstan, and all opportunities are used to encourage Kazakhstan to respect its international obligations. The EU is committed to address human rights issues, including individual cases, in its political dialogue with Kazakhstan. Those issues are raised consistently and at all levels, notably in the framework of the annual Human Rights Dialogue, which was held last time in Brussels on 12 November 2014. They were also addressed, inter alia, in the EU – Kazakhstan Cooperation Council meeting in March 2015 and in the November meeting of the Sub-Committee on Justice and Home Affairs.

The EU strongly encourages Kazakhstan to respect its international human rights obligations, including its commitments as a party to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol, and its OSCE Human Dimension commitments. The EU is carefully following and supporting the implementation of the Law on National Preventive Mechanism against Torture, which Kazakhstan adopted with the aim to improve the situation in its penitentiary system.

The Member States are consulted on, and kept fully informed of, the positions taken by the EEAS in relation to human rights issues in Kazakhstan. Moreover, Heads of Mission of EU Member States are directly involved and do actively participate in the periodic assessment of the human rights situation in the country.

I would welcome further dialogue on these issues with the European Parliament, for instance, in advance of the EU-Kazakhstan-Parliamentary Cooperation Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'FM', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Federica Mogherini