

# Resolution on the case of Yevgeny Zhovtis in Kazakhstan

2009/2678(RSP) - 17/09/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate that took place on the same day, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the case of Yevgeny Zhovtis in Kazakhstan.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S-D, ALDE and Greens/EFA groups.

The Parliament recalls that, on 3 September 2009, Yevgeny Zhovtis, director of the Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law and prominent human rights defender, was convicted of manslaughter for hitting and killing a pedestrian with his car on 26 July 2009 and was sentenced to four years in a penal community. However, at first Yevgeny Zhovtis was named as a witness and not as a suspect and only on 28 July 2009 was his status changed to that of a suspect.

While not questioning the independence of the judicial system, the Parliament expresses great concern about the conduct of the investigation. It therefore calls on the Kazakh authorities to carry out immediately and with full respect for transparency and the rule of law a second full and fair investigation into the circumstances surrounding the accident, and to review Yevgeny Zhovtis's conviction and sentence accordingly. The Parliament also urges the Kazakh authorities to provide official details about the case of Yevgeny Zhovtis and to ensure due process.

Recalling the strong reservations voiced by human rights organisations about the Kazakh Government's real commitment to progress in terms of human rights, the Parliament calls on the Commission to:

- increase EU assistance to and cooperation with Kazakhstan in this area;
- reinforce its projects and programmes in Kazakhstan under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

The Parliament also calls on the Council to take a firm stance in raising this case with the Kazakh authorities and, in particular, to address Yevgeny Zhovtis's case within the framework of the EU-Kazakhstan human rights dialogue, the second round of which is scheduled for 21 October 2009.