Resolution on the crackdown on the media and freedom of expression in Kyrgyzstan

2023/2782(RSP) - 13/07/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 391 votes to 41, with 30 abstentions, a resolution on the crackdown on the media and freedom of expression in Kyrgyzstan.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR groups and Members.

Once regarded as the most democratic of the Central Asian nations, democratic standards and human rights in Kyrgyzstan have deteriorated alarmingly in recent years with a number of laws being used to crackdown on independent media and free expression.

Parliament called on the Kyrgyz authorities to:

- respect and uphold fundamental freedoms, in particular media freedom and freedom of expression, in line with the EU-Kyrgyzstan Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement;

- stop putting Radio Azattyk and other media outlets under unprecedented pressure and ensure a safe working environment for civil society organisations, journalists and media workers;

- immediately release all arbitrarily detained human rights defenders, media workers and journalists;

- drop all charges against human rights defenders, including Gulnara Dzhurabayeva, Klara Sooronkulova, Rita Karasartova and Asya Sasykbayeva who have called for transparency on the government’s decision to transfer the Kempir-Abad reservoir to Uzbekistan;

- withdraw and review a number of laws that are inconsistent with the country’s international commitments including the controversial law on ‘false information’ and the draft laws on ‘foreign representatives’, ‘mass media’ and ‘protecting children from harmful information’, the so-called ‘LGBTI propaganda law’;

- refrain from circumventing the sanctions that the EU has imposed on Russia for its war of aggression against Ukraine.