Resolution on the human rights situation in Kyrgyzstan, in particular the case of Temirlan Sultanbekov

2024/2993(RSP) - 19/12/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 492 votes to 28, with 41 abstentions, a resolution on the human rights situation in Kyrgyzstan, in particular the case of Temirlan Sultanbekov.

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

The resolution expressed concern about the arrest and detention of Temirlan Sultanbekov, leader of the Kyrgyzstan Social Democrats party (SDK), and other party officials, who were charged with vote-buying ahead of the November 2024 municipal elections. The only evidence presented was an audiotape of unclear origin. The SDK stressed that their campaign payments were transparent. Sultanbekov went on a hunger strike, and his health has deteriorated. Additionally, the Bishkek Election Commission disqualified the party's candidates.

Moreover, the resolution highlighted the broader decline of democratic standards and human rights in Kyrgyzstan, including repression of independent media, journalists, and bloggers, as well as growing political persecution.

Parliament is concerned by the dubious reasons for the detention of Temirlan Sultanbekov and other pro-democracy activists in Kyrgyzstan and the possible political motivation behind the criminal case against them. It urged Kyrgyzstan to:

- release Mr Sultanbekov and other party officials and adopt alternative measures to detention;

- halt its campaign of intimidation and legal persecution against opposition parties, independent media outlets and journalists. Members are concerned by the adoption of the Russian-style 'foreign agents' law;

- drop all charges against human rights defenders, including Makhabat Tazhibek Kyzy, Azamat Ishenbekov, Aktilek Kaparov and Ayke Beishekeeva, journalists from the Temirov Live and Ait Ait Dese channels;

- respect human rights and uphold democratic standards and fundamental freedoms as part of the EU-Kyrgyzstan Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP +).