Resolution on Kazakhstan

2006/2543(RSP) - 16/03/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 85 votes to 0 with 2 abstentions a resolution on Kazakhstan.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by EPP-ED, PES, Greens/ALE, GUE/NGL, UEN and ALDE groups.

It condemns the murder of Mr Altynbek Sarsenbayev, a prominent politician and the co-chairman of the True Ak Zhol opposition party, brutally murdered on 13 February 2006, together with his bodyguard and driver.

It notes that on 12 November 2005, another opposition leader, Nurkadilov Zamanbek, was found shot dead in unexplained circumstances after he had accused the government of corruption, and the official investigation concluded that he had committed suicide. Parliament expresses its great concern at the fact that over a period of three months two prominent opposition politicians were killed. It calls on the Kazakhstan authorities to carry out the ongoing investigation into the circumstances of the death of Mr Altynbek Sarsenbayev and the two persons who accompanied him in a full, independent and transparent manner. Members welcome President Nazarbayev's statement of 21 February 2006 condemning the murders and promising severe punishment for those involved.

Further noting that 12 opposition activists, as well as a number of journalists, were jailed for five to fifteen days or fined for holding a peaceful rally on 26 February 2006 in memory of the slain opposition leader, Altynbek Sarsenbayev, Parliament condemns this jailing of opposition activists and journalists.

Members go on to stress that respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law is a fundamental element of the EU-Kazakhstan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, upon which the development of future relations will be based. They urge the Kazakhstan government to honour its commitments under the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, in particular to respect democracy, the principles of international law and human rights and move towards democratisation, the provision of guarantees of greater freedom for citizens and liberalisation. Parliament reiterates the importance it places on cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU in the economic, political and cultural fields.

It calls on the Council and Commission to place the issue of respect for human rights at the core of the next Cooperation Council meeting, linking progress in this field to the further implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and to strengthen the TACIS democracy programmes for Kazakhstan, aiming, in particular, at strengthening and developing democratic institutions, independent media and the fight against corruption. Members want these topics to be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, which is due to take place on 29 and 30 May 2006. They stress that respect for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, as clearly laid down in the PCA, is a prerequisite if Kazakhstan is to fulfil its intention to chair the OSCE from 2009.