



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Detention of Human Rights Activist, Zinaida Mukhortova, in Kazakhstan

The European Union is deeply concerned about the case of Kazakhstani lawyer and human rights activist Zinaida Mukhortova. Ms Mukhortova has been forcibly detained several times in psychiatric institutions on different occasions since February 2010 after she had made a complaint in 2009 regarding political interference in a court case. She has been confined again to involuntary treatment in a psychiatric hospital since July this year.

The European Union reminds Kazakhstan of its obligations and commitments as an OSCE participating State and member of the UN Human Rights Council, and its responsibilities with respect to human rights promotion and observance.

The European Union notes that Kazakhstan has co-operated constructively with the Human Rights Council following the country's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2010 and has accepted and implemented a number of recommendations, including with regard to the penitentiary system in the country and the possibilities for visits to detained individuals. The EU hopes that Kazakhstan will continue and expand this co-operation during the UPR's second cycle in October and November this year.

The repeated involuntary treatment and detention of Ms Zinaida Mukhortova in a psychiatric institution is, however, completely unacceptable.

We recall that a few months ago a Kazakhstani court restored Ms Mukhortova to freedom, after she appealed her detention in the same Balkhash psychiatric hospital, where she is kept at present. The European Union urges the Kazakh authorities to grant representatives of missions of the European Union in Astana the requested access to visit Ms Mukhortova on humanitarian grounds.

The EU calls for Ms Zinaida Mukhortova's case to be urgently reviewed in a fair and unbiased manner, and that she is released from confinement without further delay.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.