

Prague, 29 April 2016

**Manuel Valls**  
**Prime Minister of the Republic of France**

Hôtel de Matignon  
57, rue de Varenne  
75700 Paris, France

Dear Mr Prime Minister,

I am addressing you in my capacity of a member of the Czech parliament, a Vice-Chair of the Czech parliament's Committee for European Affairs and a member of the Czech delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in order to express my highest concern over the case of Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov and to draw your attention to the similar case we are currently following closely in the Czech Republic.

As appears from numerous statements of the international civil society and media, Mr Ablyazov, who represents the Kazakh political opposition in exile, is currently awaiting final decisions on his potential extradition from France to Russia. As I had a chance to find out, you issued an extradition decree last year, allowing for Mr Ablyazov's extradition to Russia. Currently, the decision is being considered by the Council of State, to which Mr Ablyazov has appealed.

In my country, on the other hand, I am also monitoring with great concern a case of one of Mr Ablyazov's former associates, Mrs Tatiana Paraskevich, who in 2014, following a 2-year-long legal battle, was granted subsidiary protection in the Czech Republic and who now may again risk an extradition to Russia. In February 2014, the Czech authorities decided it was not safe for Mrs Paraskevich to be sent back to Russia as the extradition request was politically motivated, due to the general persecution campaign against Mr Ablyazov and his associates, as well as because of the very poor state of human rights respect in Russia and serious concerns over potential ill-treatment and torture in detention.

It appears that just as in the case of Mr Ablyazov in France, also in the case of Mrs Paraskevich in the Czech Republic and in a number of other related cases around Europe, Kazakhstan – at times through law firms and lobbyists hired by the now state-controlled BTA Bank – has been trying to exert pressure on European law enforcement and judicial authorities in order to prompt extraditions of Mr Ablyazov and his former associates either to Kazakhstan or to Russia or Ukraine. I have also found out, as transpires from numerous media articles that cite information leaked in the *KazakhLeaks* scandal, that Kazakhstan has apparently been orchestrating the criminal cases and extradition procedures in Russia and Ukraine, often using bribes and making shady deals with local investigative bodies. All this with the aim of obtaining the issuance of the Interpol Red

Notices that would facilitate the European reaction and lead to the detention and prompt extradition of Mr Ablyazov and his former associates or in some cases, family members.

Finally, as I am a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that our assembly is currently working on a report focusing on the misuse of Interpol by non-democratic states, with the aim of persecution of political critics, journalists and activists seeking refuge abroad. The report is closely looking into cases of individuals that have been detained based on the Interpol Red Notice issued by countries with poor human rights records, lack of independent judiciary and long-standing allegations of ill-treatment in detention. Russia, sadly, results to be one of such countries.

Taking all of this information into account, I would like to express my grave concern over the faith of Mr Ablyazov should he be extradited to Russia and I call on you to reconsider the extradition decree. Given the recent developments in Russia, including with regard to the illegally detained Ukrainian citizens, as well as Russian own political opposition representatives that are being poisoned, detained or killed, it seems evident that Mr Ablyazov faces serious risks of ill-treatment should he be sent to Russia, and could not hope for a fair and independent trial. Furthermore, there would be a high probability of his subsequent transfer to Kazakhstan, where he could face torture or even death. Amnesty International reported, already a few years ago, on a common practice of illegal rendition of prisoners from Russia to the Central Asian states. In the view of the current events, one can only imagine the situation would get even worse.

I thank you in advance for your consideration and for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned to the right of the text 'Sincerely yours,'.

Ing. Kristýna Zelenková  
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Chamber of Deputies  
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