C/2024/1186

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The case of Zarema Musaeva in Chechnya

European Parliament resolution of 5 October 2023 on the case of Zarema Musaeva in Chechnya (2023/2882(RSP))

(C/2024/1186)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to its previous resolutions on the Russian Federation and, particularly, on Chechnya,

— having regard to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the human rights situation remains catastrophic owing to the abuses perpetrated by the Russian-installed Kadyrov regime against human rights defenders and vulnerable groups;

B. whereas in January 2022, under the pretext of requiring her testimony in a criminal case, Zarema Musaeva was unlawfully abducted from elsewhere in Russia and placed in pre-trial detention in Chechnya;

C. whereas after having been denied proper legal defence, she was sentenced to five years in prison on charges of fraud and assaulting the authorities; whereas her health has deteriorated since her detention;

D. whereas Ms Musaeva is the wife of former Chechen Supreme Court judge Saidi Yangulbaev and mother of human rights defender Abubakar and opposition bloggers Ibrahim and Baysangur Yangulbaev;

E. whereas her three sons are vocal critics of the Head of the Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, and his autocratic rule; whereas Kadyrov has publicly threatened to 'eliminate' the Yangulbaev family members; whereas the EU and the United States have placed Kadyrov and his closest associates on the sanctions list for serious human rights violations;

F. whereas on the day of Ms Musaeva's verdict, *Novaya Gazeta* journalist Elena Milashina and human rights lawyer Aleksandr Nemov were attacked and brutally beaten on their way to court;

1. Strongly condemns the kidnapping and politically motivated detention of Zarema Musaeva and regards these as acts of retaliation for her sons' legitimate human rights work and political views;

2. Urges the Chechen authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Ms Musaeva, to provide her with proper medical care and to put an immediate end to all harassment of civil society and the opposition;

3. Expresses its concern that throughout the pre-trial and trial proceedings against Musaeva, human rights lawyers working on the case, Aleksandr Nemov, Aleksandr Savin, Natalia Dobronravova and Alexandr Karavaev, were targeted with surveillance as a form of intimidation;

4. Strongly condemns the brutal attack on 4 July 2023 against lawyer Aleksandr Nemov and journalist Elena Milashina and the brutal repression of human rights defenders and independent media, including the cases of lawyers Natalia Dobronravova, Sergey Babinets and Oleg Khabibrakhmanov; urges the competent authorities to conduct a transparent and thorough investigation into these attacks and to hold those responsible accountable;

5. Calls on the international community, the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States to react to the alarming human rights situation in Russia and, in particular, in Chechnya, increase assistance to Chechen political prisoners, dissidents, Chechens opposing the brutal regime, oppressed women and LGBTIQ+ people, as well as their families, to grant humanitarian visas to Chechen human rights defenders at risk and to keep cooperating with human rights organisations;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the VP/HR, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Russian authorities, and the Head of the Chechen Republic.