

Rome, 9 November 2015

**Mr Linas Antanas Linkevičius**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania  
J.Tumo-Vaižganto Str. 2,  
LT-01511 Vilnius  
minister@urm.lt

Dear Minister Linkevičius,

I am addressing you in my capacity of a Member of the Italian Senate, with regard to the case of Mr Syrym Shalabayev, brother of Mrs Alma Shalabayeva, whose case of detention under dubious circumstances and subsequent almost immediate expulsion to Kazakhstan, we followed very closely in Italy in 2013.

The case of Mr Syrym Shalabayev has been brought to my attention by representatives of the international civil society. As results from the reports, it would seem that he had been initially granted a temporary international protection and was, subsequently, detained in Lithuania in July 2015, following an issuance of a Red Notice to the INTERPOL system by the Kazakh and the Ukrainian authorities. Both countries have since presented requests for Mr Shalabayev's extradition.

Confident in the work of the Lithuanian authorities in this regard, I aim with this letter to share my experience, stemming from the case of Mr Shalabayev's sister, Mrs Alma Shalabayeva in Italy, and to draw your attention to the political context of this case, which seems to be clearly interlinked with Mr Shalabayev's one in Lithuania.

In fact, as would result from numerous reports by a number of international NGOs, in recent years, authoritarian governments have been increasingly more often resorting to the INTERPOL system and misusing it instrumentally in order to persecute political opponents, seeking shelter in Europe. As a member of the Italian delegation to OSCE PA, I note that the problem has also been mentioned in the Final Declarations, following the last few OSCE PA's annual sessions.

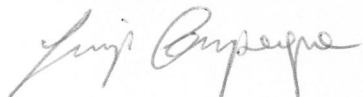
Following the case of Alma Shalabayeva in Italy, there have been a number of related cases in other EU Member States, all linked to the figure of Mr Mukhtar Ablyazov, who appears to be the main political opponent to the current Kazakh president, Mr Nursultan Nazarbayev. I, therefore, see both the case of Alma Shalabayeva in Italy, as well as that of her brother, currently taking place in Lithuania, as related and a clear examples of a broader campaign of silencing of the Kazakh political opposition and critical voices both in the country and abroad.

Having in mind the reality of the justice systems not only in Kazakhstan but also in Ukraine, whose involvement in the case I believe is a sad legacy of the previous regime and a sign that, indeed, proper anti-corruption reforms must still be undertaken to eliminate the political motivation in

judicial proceedings, I would ask you to consider the political background of the case and risks that Mr Shalabayev could encounter if extradited to one of the two requesting countries.

I thank you in advance for keeping me informed on the developments in the case.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Luigi Berlinguer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.