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HIGH REPRESENTATIVE
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To all MEPs signatory to the letter concerning the alarming sentencing of a parliamentarian in Russia

Dear Honourable Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter of 20 July, expressing your concern regarding the relentless oppression and prosecution by Russian authorities of dissenting political voices, and calling for continued attention to be drawn to the cases of the opposition politicians and activists : Vladimir Kara-Murza, Ilya Yashin, and Andrei Pivovarov, as well as that of Alexei Gorinov, councillor of the Krasnoselsky district in Moscow. All these cases provide a stark example of the widespread systematic crackdown on Russian civil society; non-systemic political opposition; independent media; and individual journalists. Their situation has dramatically deteriorated since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine as of 24 February 2022.

The EU has closely monitored these developments and raised its voice in support of the victims of the internal repression conducted by the Russian authorities. We have also condemned Russia's violations of its international obligations to guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms of its own citizens, including the fundamental right to freedom of expression.

The EU has publicly condemned the criminal cases against the opposition politicians Vladimir Kara-Murza and Ilya Yashin for using their right to speak out against Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the politically motivated sentencing of Andrei Pivovarov, the former leader of "Open Russia", to four years in prison under the law of so-called "undesirable organisations". Moreover, the EU has deplored the sentence of Alexei Gorinov to seven years in prison for criticising Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

We will continue to closely monitor the developments around their situation and to call on Russian authorities to reverse their abusive decisions. We will also continue to pay particular attention to the situation of Russian civil society; the independent media; and the democratic opposition¹.

Yours faithfully,



Josep Borrell Fontelles

¹ Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the 10th anniversary of the introduction of the Law on Foreign Agents, available at <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/07/20/russia-declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-10th-anniversary-of-the-introduction-of-the-law-on-foreign-agents/>