



United States Mission to the OSCE
**Concern about Conviction of Kazakhstani
Civil Society Activists
Maks Bokayev and Talgat Ayan**

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
December 1, 2016

The United States is concerned about the fairness of the legal process that resulted in the recent decision of the Kazakhstani regional court in Atyrau to convict and sentence Maks Bokayev and Talgat Ayan to five years in prison each for their alleged roles in organizing peaceful demonstrations in the spring of 2016.

The United States shares the concerns UN Special Rapporteur Maina Kiai has raised on these cases. The United States urges authorities to review the legal process in these cases to ensure consistency with the provisions of the Kazakh Constitution, as well as Kazakhstan's international obligations and commitments related to fair trial guarantees. We also urge Kazakhstan to respect the legal rights of Kazakhstani citizens to express themselves freely and peacefully, and in accordance with Kazakhstan's OSCE commitments and its international obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on the freedoms of expression and association and the right of peaceful assembly.

As a friend and strategic partner, the United States supports and encourages the aspirations of the people and government of Kazakhstan to build a stable and democratic country.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.