



**DELEGATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN TO THE OSCE**

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**Statement  
by H.E. Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov,  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the OSCE  
at the 895<sup>th</sup> (special) meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
on the situation in the Mangistau Region (west Kazakhstan)  
22 December 2011**

Excellencies,  
Dear colleagues,

On 16 December, Kazakhstan celebrated the 20th anniversary of its independence. Millions of our people joined in festivities around the country to commemorate the many accomplishments that have brought stability and progress to Kazakhstan.

Unfortunately, the Independence Day celebrations were ruined by criminal acts committed by a group of individuals which led to mass disturbances in the town of Zhanaozen and the village of Shetpe in the Mangistau Region.

The perpetrators attacked the police, destroyed the yurts (tents) set up on the square for the festivities, and set a police bus on fire. They beat up civilians and wrecked cars parked near the square, setting them on fire as well.

In response to the demands of the police to cease their illegal actions, the group of hooligans attacked police officers, seeking to seize their weapons. The police officers did not allow that to happen.

As a result of the disturbances, the mayor's office and many other objects were burned down. Property of physical and juridical persons was also destroyed. Cars were burned; ATM machines, shops, and banks were looted.

A total of 46 facilities were attacked. The damage to sites destroyed during the riots in the town of Zhanaozen is estimated at KZT 1.9 billion. (USD 120 million).

On Saturday, a group of people in Shetpe village, about 100 kilometres (60 miles) from the regional centre Aktau, stopped a train with more than 360 passengers aboard in a show of "support" for the protesters in Zhanaozen. Some 50 people ignored calls

by the police to disperse, set the train on fire and proceeded to vandalize the village. The police once more had no choice but to protect the citizens and to restore order.

Unfortunately, as a result of the disturbances, Kazakh citizens died. In the riots in the Mangistau Region, 15 people died, 14 of them in Zhanaozen and one in Shetpe village. The number of people injured was 110; 73 of them are in out-patient treatment. Administrative penalties have been imposed on 41.

The hooligans were endangering the lives of hard-working Kazakhs and, therefore, had to be restrained.

In order to ensure the safety of the people of the town of Zhanaozen in Mangistau Region, and in accordance with Article 44, paragraph 16, of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On States of Emergency”, the President of Kazakhstan declared a state of emergency in the town of Zhanaozen, Mangistau Region. The full text of the decree on the state of emergency was circulated through the documents distribution on 17 December.

During his statement at the session of the Security Council on 17 December, President Nursultan Nazarbayev noted that he believes that the oil workers’ labour dispute must not be confused with the acts of bandit elements who sought to take advantage of the situation for purposes of their criminal plots. The full text of the statement was circulated on the same day in the system as well.

On the orders of the Head of State, an investigative team led by the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kalmukhambet Kassymov, was flown to Zhanaozen to take all the necessary measures to prevent criminal acts, to identify and bring to justice the organizers of the disturbances, and to restore public security and stability in the town.

This team is taking all the measures required to identify and bring to justice the organizers of the disturbances, and to restore public security in the town.

Moreover, the President tasked the Office of the Prosecutor-General, along with other law enforcement agencies, with conducting a thorough investigation of what happened, ensuring maximum openness of information, sharing the results with the people, and, if need be, calling in independent experts.

As a result, the Prosecutor-General’s Office has initiated an investigation into the incident. From 16 December to the present, penalties have been imposed on 38 persons for various administrative offences (disorderly conduct, disobeying the lawful demands of police officers) in Zhanaozen. In addition, ten people have been detained on suspicion of committing crimes (organization of and participation in mass disorders, looting), eight of them arrested by court order. Additionally, on 20

December, the law enforcement agencies arrested 19 people who incited the residents of Zhanaozen town to continue with illegal acts. The detainees are implicated in crimes in Zhanaozen.

According to the Prosecutor-General's Office, the investigation has obtained video evidence. The results of the investigation will be reported through the media on a regular basis.

At the same time, the Kazakh Prosecutor-General's Office does not exclude the possibility of involvement of external forces in the riots in Zhanaozen town. The investigation will determine whether external forces have participated in these riots.

Currently, the situation is under the control of the law enforcement agencies. Over the past few days, no crime has been registered in Zhanaozen town and Shetpe village.

The Kazakh Prosecutor-General's Office has published a list of persons killed in the riots in the town of Zhanaozen, and has posted the photo and video materials relating to the incidents that occurred in Zhanaozen and Shetpe station of Mangistau Region on its official website [www.prokuror.kz.null](http://www.prokuror.kz.null).

The Office has also posted on its website information on the sequence of events in Mangistau Region.

Also, at the order of the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Umirzak Shukeyev, was appointed as the head of the governmental commission on Zhanaozen. The commission consists of seven sub-commissions. The first one deals with the emergency issues, the second with restoration of the sites, the third – a manufacturing group – with provision of primary production and auxiliary plants, the fourth with the issues of social security, the fifth with the issues of public awareness and communications, the sixth with food security, and the seventh with law enforcement.

On 21 December, Mr. Umirzak Shukeyev met with representatives of the Aktau oil workers who had been dismissed from oil and gas enterprises in the region and who had gathered in the centre of Aktau. He reminded them that the Head of State had urged him to understand the causes of the existing problems, to offer the strikers all possible solutions and to provide the oil workers with employment.

At present, many service companies of the Region, as well as 20 enterprises in other regions of the country, are ready to hire the strikers who so desire, on agreed terms. The oil workers informed Mr. Shukeyev and other members of the governmental commission about their problems and requirements. They emphasized that they are ready to consider the proposals of the commission.

Also, the First Deputy Prime Minister has announced that the telecommunication networks and electricity supply which had been damaged as a result of the events in Zhanaozen have been restored. Today, there are no food shortages or rise in prices in Zhanaozen.

Moreover, on 20 December, the Government of Kazakhstan adopted a decision on allocation of about KZT 1.25 billion (USD 90 million) to cover essential needs in Zhanaozen, and also adopted the action plan on liquidation of the consequences connected with the events in Zhanaozen.

It should be mentioned that the Commandant of the Zhanaozen town informed 30 journalists from different media that the rumors spread by some media on that 55 people killed in Zhanaozen are false. Also he confirmed that the communications system is restored, also restored are electricity and Internet, community facilities are put into effect in full. Apothecaries, markets and shops are open. Public transport is functioning in a normal mode.

Also, the Department of Inherent Security of the Minister of Interior of Kazakhstan investigates the case and circumstances of the use of weapons by the police officers.

The investigation and other steps by the Kazakhstan authorities are taken in full transparency and with the full respect for OSCE commitments on human rights, including the treatment of detainees. Everyone has had an opportunity to witness it from the very beginning. This is the fact which nobody has officially casted doubts on.

Any fair observer who has followed the events knows that the strike and protests of oil workers had been calm and peaceful for several months and until 16 December. Authorities had treated protesters as well as their freedoms for peaceful assembly and expressions with full respect. This is still the case, if you follow various reports on peaceful gatherings in Aktau city these days. And this will continue to be the case for those who conduct peaceful meetings.

Excellencies,

Let me reiterate that the Kazakh authorities have been acting straightforwardly and have no intention of hindering the work of journalists and international observers. From the outset, we have been maintaining full transparency with regard to the situation in Zhanaozen. A large group of local and foreign journalists representing Reuters, AP, RIA Novosti and others is staying there. They file reports and are following the situation. Moreover, Prime Minister Karim Massimov has urged the Minister of Communications and Information to provide open and transparent coverage of the events that occurred in Mangistau Region.

In connection with some inaccurate published accounts that are being distributed by certain media outlets abroad, I would like to call special attention to the following. At present, none of the foreign journalists in Mangistau Region has been detained. The local authorities are rendering all necessary assistance: accompaniment, security and transport. The people of Kazakhstan are interested in open and transparent investigative actions.

Today, the Prosecutor-General met Mr.Armen Harutyunyan, the Regional Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Central Asia and confirmed the transparency and openness of the Prosecutor's office and invited the UN experts to take part in the investigation cases.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We welcome the well-balanced statements by the Spokesperson of the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and by the Spokesperson of the US Department of State on the events in the Zhanaozen district of Kazakhstan.

We also took note of the concern at the clashes in Zhanaozen in Aktau Region expressed by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

It is the job of a CiO to react to such events, even though that was not the case in every instance throughout the year in the OSCE area. That fact weakens the OSCE's capacity to correctly assess this type of development.

I would also like to emphasize a few more things:

First, the conflict is local in nature and does not affect other regions of Kazakhstan.

Second, the overwhelming majority of the population in my country condemns and rejects violent methods of resolving social and trade-unions disputes.

Third, every media representative enjoys openness and transparency while covering events.

Fourth, the Kazakh law-enforcement authorities are considering the possibility to invite relevant experts from foreign countries with an experience of investigating of similar cases of mass disorder

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.