



Repression of Labor Protests in Kazakhstan

Briefing Note, October 2011

1. Summary

During the last few months, thousands of oil industry workers have been striking and protesting in the natural resource rich Mangistau region in western Kazakhstan, demanding fair pay and work conditions and an end to restrictions on trade union activities. The Kazakhstani authorities have refrained from mediating in this labor conflict, although most oil companies are partly or fully state-owned and the oil sector is of crucial importance for the country's economy. What is more, the authorities have resorted to repressive measures in an attempt to stifle the protests. The strikes have been declared illegal by court, as a result of which workers have been fired for their involvement in them; peaceful protest meetings held by workers have been forcefully dispersed and participants have been fined and arrested; leading figures in the strike movement have been criminally and administratively charged on what appear to be politically motivated grounds; and strike activists and political opposition members supporting the protesting workers have been intimidated and harassed in different ways. There have also been attempts to obstruct monitoring and reporting on developments related to the labor protests.

2. Short Background Information on the Oil Workers' Strikes

Largely thanks to foreign investments, the oil industry in Kazakhstan has been growing rapidly in recent years, and oil now constitutes an essential source of export revenue. Only in the first seven months of 2011, Kazakhstan exported oil and other energy-related commodities to a value of 37 billion USD.¹ A considerable part of the country's oil output is extracted in the Mangistau region in western Kazakhstan.

In May 2011 labor protests broke out in the oil industry in this region. Protests started at Karazhanbasmunai, an oil extraction company that is based in the city of Aktau and jointly owned by a Chinese state corporation and the Kazakh national oil and gas company KazMunaiGas. They quickly spread to other companies in the region, including Ozenmunaigas, a subsidiary of KazMunaiGas that is based in the city of Zhanaozen, and Ersai Caspian Contractor, a Kazakh-Italian co-owned company that is based in the Kuryk settlement. Workers from a number of other subsidiary companies of KazMunaiGas also joined the strike.

At the peak of the protests, thousands of workers were involved, and more than one thousand continue to strike to date. The protesting workers have, among others, demanded fair pay and work

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conditions, equal rights for Kazakhstani and foreign workers and the right to carry out labor union activities without interference.

In the view of the oil workers, they have not been fairly compensated for their demanding labor, in particular given the profit that the oil production generates. They have, among others, protested the way their employers have applied existing rules for how to determine the level of salaries in the oil industry.² The striking workers also feel largely excluded from the relative prosperity that the oil boom has brought to the country. Living conditions in the Mangistau region remain difficult e.g. because of a lack of infrastructure and basic services, frequent problems with water and electricity supply and high costs for accommodation and food. At the same time, life in the region is challenging because of a harsh and dry climate characterized by hot summers and windy winters.

Another cause of resentment among the striking workers is perceived discrimination of Kazakhstani employees in relation to foreign employees in oil extraction companies operating on foreign capital. This concerns in particular the salary level.

Moreover, the striking workers have been protesting restrictions on trade union activities. In a similar way as workers in a wide range of other industries, oil workers are predominantly represented by trade unions belonging to the Federation of Trade Unions (FTU). FTU is the country's largest labor organization and is based on official Soviet-era trade unions. The FTU-subordinate unions have often been seen as siding with the employers and as not doing enough to protect the rights of workers. The current strikes got started at Karazhanbasmunai when the chairman of the trade union at the company refused to step down although the trade union members had voted to dismiss him due to concerns that he had lobbied the interests of the employer and mismanaged trade union funds.

In a widespread pattern, the activities of trade unions that pursue more independent policies in relation to employers are obstructed.³ Such trade unions have been denied registration on what appear to be arbitrary grounds⁴, state companies have declined to recognize them⁵, and their representatives have been subject to pressure.⁶

3. Overview of the Response to the Labor Protests

In spite of the economic significance of the oil sector and the work carried out there, the Kazakhstani authorities have not made any efforts to mediate in the conflict between the oil workers and their employers. Instead, they have sought to stifle the protests.

The strikes have been deemed illegal by local courts in the Mangistau region on the grounds that they were not announced in accordance with the requirements of the Labor Code of Kazakhstan.⁷ The Labor Code places a number of restrictions on the right to strike. Strikes are, among others, only permitted if arbitration has been unsuccessful and the employer has been given 15 days' notice (articles 298-299). What is more, the Labor Code prohibits strikes at "hazardous production facilities" (article 303), to which oil extraction companies are considered to belong. When a strike has been found illegal by court, the employer may impose "disciplinary sanctions" on workers participating in it (article 304). Since the current strikes in the Mangistau region started in May this year, hundreds of workers have been fired for participating in them.

The striking workers have also faced other repressive measures. Numerous protest meetings have been dispersed, sometimes with the use of force, and participants have been brought to court. Kazakhstan's broadly worded Law on Assemblies⁸ enables authorities to interpret any kind of gathering as an "assembly" and to deem it "illegal" if permission has not been obtained for it in advance. When permission is sought for a gathering, authorities have broad powers to prohibit or restrict it. The organizers and participants in unsanctioned assemblies may be warned, fined or sentenced to up to 15 days arrest under the Administrative Code (article 373) or imprisoned for up to one year under the Criminal Code (article 334).⁹ Labor protest participants who have been brought to court have in most cases been fined or sentenced to administrative arrest. Leading figures in the strike movement have also faced harsher penalties on charges of violating the rules for organizing or conducting assemblies and/or other criminal and administrative charges that appear politically motivated. The proceedings in their cases have often been characterized by procedural violations.

Strike activists and political opposition members, who have offered support to the protesting workers, have also faced intimidation and other forms of harassment. In addition, in a number of cases, authorities have tried to obstruct monitoring, documentation and reporting on developments related to the labor protests.

The actions taken by authorities to put down the oil workers' protests give rise to concern in light of international human rights standards, in particular, the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, the right to strike, and the right to form, join and freely carry out trade union activities. These rights are protected by the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, article 19, 21 and 22), the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights (ICESCR, article 8), as well as the ILO Convention concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, all of which have been ratified by Kazakhstan.

In July this year the UN Committee on Civil and Political Rights criticized Kazakhstan, among others, for imposing undue restrictions on the right to freedom of assembly. It called on the government of Kazakhstan to ensure that the exercise of this right is only subjected to restrictions that comply with the strict requirements of article 21 of the ICCPR.¹⁰ The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has previously urged Kazakhstan to revise its legislation on the right to strike to bring it in line with article 8 of the ICESCR and ILO standards on the right to strike.¹¹

The authorities' response to the ongoing oil workers' protests has also reinforced resentment and frustration among the protesting workers. As a result, the protest movement has increasingly assumed a political character. In recent months more than 2000 workers have reportedly left the ruling Nur-Otan party, membership in which is in practice compulsory for employees of state institutions and major companies. Many of those who have given up their membership have instead joined the Popular Front opposition movement, which was established in the summer of 2011 by the unregistered Alga party, the Communist Party and other opposition groups ahead of the parliamentary elections due to be held in 2012.¹² The Popular Front has supported the striking workers in their struggle, as have other opposition movements.

In a tragic turn of events, three deaths have been reported in connection with the protests. A trade union activist was found dead in Zhanaozen on 2 August 2011 following a meeting where he called for a new election to replace the trade union chairman in office, who workers considered to represent

the interests of the employer. The daughter of a trade union activist from Ozenmunaigas was found dead on the outskirts of the same city on 24 August 2011, with her body bearing signs of violence. The investigations into these two deaths have yet to produce results. On 3 October 2011, a striking worker from the company Ozenjenergoneft committed suicide in Zhanaozen by hanging himself. He was survived by his wife and three small children. Many strikers are currently feeling desperate since they have not received any salary for four months.

In developments that have attracted considerable attention in Kazakhstan, there have also been international acts of solidarity in support of the protesting workers. British pop star Sting cancelled a concert that was planned to be held in connection with the Day of the Capital in Astana in July 2011 because of concerns about the treatment of the protesting oil workers. When visiting the protesting workers the same month as part of a delegation from the European United Left/Nordic Green Left group in the European Parliament, Member of European Parliament Paul Murphy also publicly expressed support for the workers.

4. Cases of Repression Targeting Labor Protest Participants, Leaders and Supporters

This section describes a number of examples of repression and intimidation targeting protesting workers and those assisting, supporting and reporting on their struggle.

a. Dispersal of Protests and Punishment of Participants

Peaceful protests held by protesting workers have been dispersed with the use of force and the participants have been brought to court:

- *On 5 June 2011, some 500 workers from Karazhanbasmunai staged a protest to call for the release of Natalia Sokolova, a trade union lawyer who was arrested and criminally charged after providing legal assistance to workers from this company (for more information about her case, see the following section). They also called for the reinstatement of striking workers who had been fired. After gathering at the bus station in Aktau, the workers set out toward the offices of the state regional administration. On their way there, they were, however, stopped by police, who dispersed the protest, detained participants and reportedly beat some of them. Police also attempted to confiscate photo and video cameras from journalists who were present. About 30 people were brought to court the following day and fined for participating in an unsanctioned assembly (under article 373 of the Administrative Code). Kuanysh Sisenbaev, a strike leader who was accused of organizing the protest, was subsequently criminally charged and convicted (see below).*
- *On 23 June 2011, a gathering of protesting workers at the premises of Ersai Caspian Contractor, a Kazakhstani-Italian co-owned company that is involved in the exploitation of the massive oil deposit Kashagan, was dispersed by police with the use of threats and forceful methods. The following day police dispersed a group of wives and mothers of protesting workers from this company, who had blocked the road to the site of the company in order to demonstrate solidarity with the workers. The women alleged that they were beaten by police. Three women were reportedly sentenced by court to five days' administrative arrest for violating the rules on organizing assemblies (under article 373 of the Administrative Code).*

- *On 8 July 2011, police sought to tear down a tent camp of some 200 protesting and hunger-striking workers at the territory of Ozenmunaigas in Zhanozen. According to information obtained by the Human Rights Bureau, part of the protest participants were detained and brought to a local police station, while others were chased away from the company's territory. Some participants were reportedly beaten by police. The police action was stalled when hunger-strike participants poured gasoline on themselves and threatened to put themselves on fire unless police stepped back. However, during the night of 10 July, police made a new crack-down on the tent camp. Some of the about 30 people who still remained in the camp at that time managed to flee, while others were detained. A number of protesters who were too weak to stand on their feet because they had been hunger striking for a long period of time were forcefully hospitalized under police watch.*

All of those who were detained during the two police operations were later released as the workers' protests intensified and up to 5.000 people gathered at the central square in Zhanaozen. Since this time, workers have been protesting on an ongoing basis at the city square.

In September, a leading representative of the protesting workers, Natalia Azhigalievaja, was charged with resisting police during the crack-down on the tent camp (on this case, see more information below). Roza Tuletaeva, a trade union activist from Ozenmunaigaz who also participated in the protest action, was fined 151.200 Tenge (about 750 EUR) for violating the rules for organizing and conducting an assembly (under article 373 of the Administrative Code).

b. Repression and Intimidation of Strike Movement Leaders and Activists

Leading representatives of the striking workers have been convicted on criminal and administrative charges that appear politically motivated and aimed at stifling their legitimate and peaceful efforts to assist workers to promote their rights:

- *On 8 August 2011, a local court in the city of Aktau convicted lawyer Natalia Sokolova of violating the procedure for organizing and conducting assemblies (under article 334 of the Criminal Code), as well as of "inciting social hatred" (under article 164 of the Criminal Code). She was sentenced to six years in prison and barred from practicing law for three years after her release.*

The charges against Sokolova were brought in June at the initiative of the management of the joint Chinese-Kazakhstani oil company Karazhanbasmunai after she addressed and provided legal advice to workers from this company, among others on the issue of disparities in wages between Kazakh and foreign workers. The court followed the arguments made by company representatives and deemed that Sokolova had incited social hatred by encouraging the workers to struggle for equal rights. According to Sokolova's husband and legal representative, video recordings that could have been used in her support were not admitted as evidence during the trial and her motions to summon witnesses were denied.

An appeal filed by Sokolova was heard by the Mangistau District Court in September. This time the court allowed the defense to call witnesses and to present an expert analysis and video recordings as evidence. Nevertheless, the court failed to uphold Sokolova's fundamental human rights and left the sentence of the first instance court unchanged in its

ruling on 26 September 2011. The defense announced plans to make use of further possible appeal avenues, which include appealing to the Supreme Court and filing a complaint with the UN Human Rights Committee.

Prior to being criminally charged, Sokolova was administratively sanctioned for speaking before protesting workers from Karazhanbasmunai. On 10 May 2011, she was fined 22.680 Tenge (some 100 EUR), and on 24 May 2011 she was sentenced to eight days' administrative arrest for allegedly violating the rules for organizing assemblies (under article 373 of the Administrative Code). Instead of releasing her when the latter sentence expired, the authorities kept her in detention and leveled criminal charges against her. She remained in detention throughout the pre-trial period.

- On 17 August 2011, trade union leader Akzhanat Aminov was convicted of violating the procedure for organizing and conducting assemblies (under Criminal Code article 334) and given a one-year suspended prison sentence with an additional two years' probation period. Aminov has represented protesting workers at Ozenmunaigaz, a subsidiary of the national oil and gas company KazMunaiGaz based in the city of Zhanaozen. The evidence used against him included video recordings of how he handed over water bottles to workers and recordings of calls he had made on his cell phone. The court did not find it necessary to consider whether the tapping of his cell phone had been done with prior authorization. Aminov was arrested on 30 June 2011 and spent almost two months in pre-trial detention. Initially he was charged with "inciting social hatred" (under Criminal Code article 164), but later the charges against him were re-classified.
- On 13 July 2011, Kuanysh Sisenbaev, a leader of striking workers at Karazhanbasmunai, was convicted of violating the procedure for organizing and conducting assemblies (Criminal Code article 334) and sentenced to 200 hours public work.¹³ Sisenbaev was accused of organizing an unsanctioned but peaceful workers' assembly in Aktau on 5 June (see above). In order to protest the dispersion by police of this assembly, he cut himself in the stomach and had to be hospitalized for treatment. Following the protest, he was fined 80 000 Tenge (almost 400 EUR) for violating the rules for organizing and conducting assemblies (under article 373 of the Administrative Code).¹⁴ In other words, he was punished twice for the same "offense".
- On 8 September 2011, Natalya Azhigalieva, a leader of striking workers at Ozenmunaigaz, was arrested in Zhanaozen. The arrest was carried out outside the house of Ajman Ongarbaeva, a worker fired from Ozenmunaigaz during the strike. Police did not present any arrest or search warrant. In connection with the arrest, the 12-year-old son of Ongarbaeva was hit by police when he tried to intervene. He was diagnosed with a brain concussion.

Natalia Azhigalieva was taken to a local police station and the same day she was sentenced by court to 15 days' administrative arrest for allegedly "disobeying the lawful order" by police (under article 335 of the Administrative Code) during a July crack-down on a tent camp organized by striking and hunger-striking workers at the territory of Ozenmunaigaz (see the section above). In order to prevent a dispersal of the tent camp, Azhigalieva and other protesters poured gasoline on themselves and threatened to burn themselves. According to Azhigalieva's colleagues, the trial against her was held behind closed doors and no lawyer

was present. Azhigalieva had previously faced intimidation because of her involvement in the strike movement. In one case, unknown individuals broke the windows in the home of her mother.

Ajman Ongarbaeva filed a complaint with police, asking that the officers responsible for hitting her son be brought to justice. However, instead of investigating this event, police opened a legal case against Ongarbaeva and several close relatives of hers, who were at her home on the day when Natalia Azhigalieva was arrested. They were accused of “disobeying the lawful order” by police (under article 335 of the Administrative Code) in connection with the arrest. According to Ongarbaeva, she and her relatives only tried to insist on their rights when the police officers “failed to show any kind of document, intruded on private property and forcefully took away Natalia (Azhigalieva)”.¹⁵ As of this writing, the investigation in this case is still under way.

In another case, an activist from the strike movement was the target of a shooting:

- In the evening of 8 October 2011, an unknown young man fired with a traumatic weapon at Zhanar Saktaganovu as she and Ajzhangul Amirova, an activist from the oppositional People’s Front movement, were on their way home in Aktau. She was injured in her spine. Saktaganovu filed a complaint with police, but as of this writing, nothing was known about the investigation. The two women believed that the shooting may also have been targeted at Amirova.¹⁶ In that case, it would not have been the first attack on a representative of People’s Front, who has supported the striking workers (see below for information on other cases).

c. Harassment of Opposition Activists Supporting the Protesting Workers

Political opposition activists who have offered support to the protesting oil workers have also faced harassment. These are two cases where activists have been punished with administrative arrests:

- Dmitriy Tihonov, Arman Ozhaubaev and Zhanna Bajtelova, who are members of Kazakhstan’s Socialist Movement¹⁷, held a protest outside the Almaty office of the ruling Nur-Ortan party on 17 August 2011. They protested the conviction of trade union lawyer Natalia Sokolova and unfair treatment of Kazakh oil workers by the joint Kazakh-Chinese venture Karazhanbasmunai, whose workers Sokolova legally assisted. The three activists held posters saying “Freedom for Natalia Sokolova” and “Kazakhstan’s oil workers are not Chinese slaves” and draped themselves in chains to underscore the second message. As they set out to march down along the street, they were detained by police, who were present in a large number. According to the detention protocol, the three activists were detained because they had sought to “express their attitude regarding the actions of the authorities and attract popular attention”, which apparently was considered an offense. The following day Tihonov and Ozhaubaev were sentenced by court to five days’ administrative arrest for holding an unsanctioned assembly (under article 373 of the Administrative Code). Bajtelova’s case was heard at a separate trial on 23 August 2011. She was sentenced to 14 days’ administrative arrest on the same grounds as the two others. The hearing in her case reportedly lasted only ten minutes and was held without the participation of a lawyer.

- *On 16 August 2011, Zhanbolat Mamai, leader of the youth club Ryh pen til (based in Almaty) and member of the opposition movement People's Front, was arrested at the airport in Aktau. He had just arrived by plane from Moscow, where he attended a meeting in support of Kazakhstan's striking oil workers. In Aktau he was planning to meet with strikers. Police initially denied that he had been arrested and later claimed that he was administratively detained because he responded in an "openly aggressive way" to an attempt to check his documents.*

The day after his arrest, Mamai's case was heard in a trial closed to the media and the public. The court sentenced him to 10 days' administrative arrest for allegedly "disobeying the lawful order" by police (under article 335 of the Administrative Code) in connection with his arrest. He was also fined about 75 EUR for violating the rules for organizing and conducting assemblies (under article 373 of the Administrative Code) when addressing a crowd of protesting workers in Zhanaozen on 12 August. The workers in Zhanaozen have been holding an ongoing protest since July this year, with different public activists speaking before them at different times.

- *On 10 October 2011, Nurjash Abdrejmova, head of the branch office of Kazakhstan's Communist Party in the Mangistau region, was found guilty of participating in an unsanctioned assembly (under article 373 of the Administrative Code) and fined 7.560 Tenge (some 35 EUR). According to Abdrejmova, she was sentenced for expressing support for the protesting oil workers during a meeting between striking workers and Almaty representatives of the oppositional People's Front movement outside the facilities of Karazhanbasmunai on 8 August.*

In two other cases, oppositional activists have been physically attacked:

- *Azamat Zhaksygaliev and Marlan Esil'baev, two activists from the People's Front movement, were attacked by unknown perpetrators as they exited the movement's office in Aktau at around 10 pm. on 1 September 2011. The perpetrators used brass knuckles and badly beat the two men. The attack was carried out following a visit by the two men to Zhanaozen, where they addressed a gathering of protesting workers.*

The two men were brought to hospital where they received first aid for their injuries. Zhaksygaliev suffered injuries to his lip, while Esil'baev contracted injuries to his head and hand. Both of them continue to receive treatment.

As of now, there are no results of the investigation into the attack.

- *On 13 September 2011, Inga Imanbaeva, a member of the Ryh pen til youth club and the People's Front movement, as well as a colleague of Zhanbolat Mamai (whose case was described above) was attacked in the street in Almaty. An unknown perpetrator approached her from behind and poured a bucket containing a liquid that appeared to be paint over her. Muratbek Oraz, another Ryh pen til member who was with Imanbaeva at the time of the attack, tried to get hold of the perpetrator. However, at that moment, another three unknown individuals appeared, knocked him down and thereafter fled. Ryh pen til considers the attack to have been aimed at intimidating its representatives, who have carried out a number of actions in support of the striking oil workers.¹⁸*

d. Obstruction of Monitoring and Reporting on the Labor Protests

According to eyewitnesses, law enforcement authorities have reportedly sought to confiscate photo and video cameras from journalists covering protest meetings organized by workers, as well as from workers documenting such events.

Representatives of law enforcement authorities in the Mangistau region have on several occasions tried to obstruct the work of the independent video portal stan.tv, which has actively covered the labor protests, unlike other media. For example, on 12 June 2011 two stan.tv staff members were detained for several hours by police when preparing a story about the strike among workers at Ozenmunaigaz in Zhanaozen.¹⁹ In addition, local authorities in Almaty, where stan.tv's main office is located, have sought to impede the work of the portal through court, using different pretexts:

- *Local authorities carried out two unscheduled checks in stan.tv's main office in Almaty in August-September 2011. Initially authorities claimed to be responding to complaints that the satellite antennas used by the video portal are dangerous to the health of the residents of the house where its office is located. Later stan.tv was accused, among others, of using computer equipment that emits radiation over established norms, and allowing office temperatures to rise above the acceptable level. According to stan.tv employees, the official representatives who established these violations prevented them from seeing what their measurement devices showed. An independent measurement organized by stan.tv did not establish any violations.*

In spite of this, on 27 September 2011, the Specialized Inter-district Economic Court of Almaty granted a suit brought by the Sanitary-epidemiological Service (SES) of the Almaty region against stan.tv on the basis of the alleged violations. The court suspended the activities of Stan production (which owns stan.tv), as well as the use of its reception-broadcasting equipment until the violations have been dealt with.²⁰ As a result of this ruling, stan.tv's editorial office currently cannot use internet, which has a detrimental impact on its work.

Already on 23 September 2011, the same court granted a suit brought by the Department of Emergency Situations (DES) of the city of Almaty and suspended the activities of the information agency Namistan, from which stan.tv sublets its office.²¹ The formal reason for this decision was that Namistan does not have any separate entrance to its office premises, but uses the same entrance as the residents of private apartments located in the same building. The court did not pay attention to the fact that Namistan does not have the right to carry out the reconstruction that would be needed to build a separate entrance since it does not own the apartment where its office premises are located.

As of this writing, another three suits brought by SES and DES against sta.tv were pending in court.

In some cases, journalists and NGO representatives have been denied access to monitor trials related to the labor protests. For example, a representative of the Bureau was not allowed to monitor the first instance trial against trade union lawyer Natalia Sokolova.

5. Recommendations

On the basis of the cases detailed in this briefing paper, we would like to make the following recommendations to the authorities of Kazakhstan:

- Refrain from taking any measure in response to the ongoing labor protests in western Kazakhstan that violates the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly, the right to strike, and the right to form, join and freely carry out trade union activities, as protected by international human rights treaties to which Kazakhstan is a party;
- Ensure that no one who is involved in the labor protests, or who assists or support to the protesting workers is punished through fines, administrative arrests, criminal charges or in other ways for the legitimate and peaceful exercise of the above mentioned rights;
- Promptly reconsider the cases against leading representatives of the strike movement who have been convicted on criminal charges for their efforts to help promote the rights of protesting workers. Immediately and unconditionally release trade union lawyer Natalia Sokolova;
- Promptly and thoroughly investigate all allegations of disproportionate, arbitrary and unlawful action by law enforcement authorities in connection with the labor protests, as well as all reported cases of intimidation and violent attacks targeting protesting workers, their relatives and supporters. Bring those responsible to justice;
- Do not obstruct independent monitoring and reporting on developments related to the labor protests and ensure that stan.tv and its partner Namistan can carry out their work without further harassment.

This briefing note is based on information obtained by Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law through monitoring on the ground; individual contacts with participants in events, eye witnesses and victims of violations; analysis of official documents; reviews of information from other NGOs and social and political movements; a well as media monitoring. International Partnership for Human Rights assisted in compiling the document.

¹ Kazakhstan's Statistical Agency, "Statistics on export-import for major groups of commodities for January-July 2011" (in Russian), at http://www.stat.kz/digital/vnesh_torg/Pages/default.aspx

² This controversy has, in particular, concerned the implementation of government degree establishing coefficients to be used when determining salary levels in the oil and other industries where labor is considered particularly challenging.

³ Materials and comments by Kazakhstani NGOs for the review of the first periodic report submitted by Kazakhstan under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2010), par. 22. This document is available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/cescrs44.htm>

⁴ For example, in August 2011, the trade union Zhanartu was denied registration because its statutes allegedly did not explain how changes or additions could be made, although the statutes in fact covered this point. It was the fifth time a registration application filed by the organization was turned down.

⁵ "Kazakhstan: Labor Unrest Denting Astana's Economic Image", 22 August 2011, at <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64077>

⁶ See "заявление общественных объединений и независимых профсоюзов по факту давления на активистов рабочего движения в разных регионах Казахстана", 18.8.2010, at <http://www.socialismkz.info/news/2010-08-18-752-987->

⁷ «Из-за забастовки рабочих приостановлено производство на объектах Каражанбасмунай», 19.5.2011, at

<http://www.newskaz.ru/economy/20110519/1480461.html>

⁸ Law on the Procedure for Organizing and Holding Peaceful Meetings, Rallies, Processions, Pickets and Demonstrations in the Republic of Kazakhstan of 17 March 1995.

⁹ For more information on this issue, see contribution by Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, International Partnership for Human Rights and the Netherlands Helsinki Committee to the UN Human Rights Committee for its review of Kazakhstan under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) at its 102nd session in July 2011, at <http://www.iphonline.org/news.html?60>

¹⁰ UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations: Kazakhstan, par.26, 102nd session, 11-29 July 2011. Available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/hracs102.htm>

¹¹ UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations: Kazakhstan, par. 22, 44th session, 3-21 May 2010. Available at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G10/428/62/PDF/G1042862.pdf?OpenElement>

¹² Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, «Часть оппозиции создает очередной «Народный фронт»», 29.6.2011, http://rus.azattyq.org/content/opposition_parliament_election_/24249814.html

¹³ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, «Осужден лидер бастующих нефтяников «Каражанбасмуная»», 13.7.2011, at <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/news/24264464.html>

¹⁴ Internet portal *Respublika*, «В деле появится «нужный» свидетель?», 8.7.2011 г., на <http://respublika-kaz.livejournal.com/1384675.html>

¹⁵ «Главное – полиция, а мальчик подождет», 14.9.2011, <http://comment-respublika.info/comment/showtopic/11312/>

¹⁶ See Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, «Поступила жалоба о нападении на активистку бастующих нефтяников», 10.10.2011, at http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kazakh_oil_workers_strike_zhanaozen_zhanar_saktyganova/24354974.html; internet portal *Respublika*, «в нефтяников уже стреляют», 10.10.2011, at <http://www.respublika-kz.info/news/society/17884/>

¹⁷ The Socialist Movement of Kazakhstan is umbrella organization for representatives of socialist movements and trade unions from different parts of the country. See

¹⁸ See statement by the youth club from 14.9.2011 at http://www.bureau.kz/data.php?page=0&n_id=3509&l=

¹⁹ Adil Soz, «Полицейские в Жанаозене задержали съемочную группу видеопортала «Stan.kz»», 14.6.2011, at <http://www.adilsoz.kz/news/policejskie-v-zhanaozene-zaderzhali-semochnyuyu-gruppu-videoportala-stan-kz/>

²⁰ Adil Soz, «Деятельность видеопортала Stan.kz приостановлена по решению суда до устранения нарушений», 27.9.2011, at <http://www.adilsoz.kz/news/deyatelnost-videoportala-stan-kz-priostanovlena-po-resheniyu-suda-do-ustraneniya-narushenij/>

²¹ Adil Soz, «Суд решил приостановить деятельность ТОО «Намыстан» за отсутствие отдельного входа», 23.9.2011, at <http://www.adilsoz.kz/news/sud-reshil-priostanovit-deyatelnost-too-namystan-za-otsutstvie-otdelnogo-vxoda/>