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On July 12, 2012 The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay declared during a press conference in Astana, that the tragic events in Zhanaozen in December 2011 had undermined the reputation of Kazakhstan and revealed a number of human rights violations. She called on allow the independent international investigation of the circumstances of the tragedy.

Civil society activists and human rights defenders in Kazakhstan claim that the trial in the case of "the riots in Zhanaozen" is the main link in the "evidence base" for the case against the political leaders for "incitement to social discord in Zhanaozen in 2011", in which the defendants are, in particular, Vladimir Kozlov, Serik Sapargali and Akzhanat Aminov. The world-renowned theatre director Bolat Atabayev, who had been arrested earlier in the case of 'incitement of social hatred' and released under pressure from the international community, also participated in the hearing of the Appellate Court. Even before the announcement of the decision, he argued that the court was not going to acquit the convicted oil workers, as this would ruin the public prosecution in the case of 'incitement to social hatred': 'If oil workers are going to be acquitted now, then it's not going to be possible to judge Kozlov, Sapargali and Aminov, as their case is going to fall apart. Therefore, in order to convict them, oil workers need to be convicted as well'¹.

The oil workers trials ended

On the 2nd of August, 2012, the Appellate court for criminal cases of the Mangistau Province Court in an accelerated procedure, considered the appeals of 13 convicted oil workers², whom on the 4th of June, 2012, the court of first instance convicted for organising and participating in mass riots in Zhanaozen in December 2011.

The hearing of the Appellate Court was ongoing, but the video and audio recording in the courtroom was only allowed for 5 minutes after the commencement of proceedings.

The term of imprisonment was reduced only in the case of Roza Tuletayeva, a former activist of the strike movement - from 7 to 5 years' imprisonment³. According to her daughter⁴, Aliya Tuletayeva, her mother and family members are on the verge of suicide. Aliya appeals to the international civil society with a request for support and help for them: Rosa Tuletayeva still receives threats - only this time the threats do not refer to her torture, but that of her children. During the trial of 'incitement of social hatred' Roza Tuletayeva will be a witness and she will testify against the accused Vladimir Kozlov, Serik Sapargali and Akzhanat Aminov. The investigating authorities are threatening that if she retracts her previous testimony, her children may have problems. Moreover, the activist is being harassed by the same NSC employee, by the name of Erzhan, who tortured her during the investigation in the Zhanaozen case. The daughter of the activist of the strike movement has confirmed that Roza Tuletayeva was forced by threats, to sign a testimony against the politician Vladimir Kozlov, and the authorities are now afraid that she will retract them in court. In the context of the foregoing, the decision of the Appellate Court to reduce the sentence of imprisonment for Roza Tuletayeva can be viewed as blackmail on the eve of the trial on 'incitement to social discord'.

Trials of former Akims of Zhanaozen and policemen ended

On the 19th of July, 2012, the Mangistau Appellate considered the complaints of convicts in the 'Shetpe case', as well as appeals of five police officers involved in the illegal shooting during the dispersal of demonstration in Zhanaozen in December 2011. The court upheld the verdict for 5 Shetpe inhabitants (4

¹ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24383/>

² http://odfoundation.eu/ru/urgents/846/kazakhstan_zavershenie_suda_po_delu_besporyadkah_zhanaozene

³ <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/zhanaozen-unrest-trial-appel-verdict/24668318.html>

⁴ <http://www.respublika-kz.info/news/politics/24450/>

people received prison terms ranging from 4 to 7 years, one received a two years suspended sentence⁵), but slightly reduced the punishment for the police officers- the confiscation of property was abolished⁶.

The most scandalous court cases, taking into account the final result, are probably the trials of former Akims of Zhanaozen: Orak Sarbopeyev and Zhalgas Babakhanov. Unlike the convicted oil workers and inhabitants of the Shetpe village, former akims, who are directly responsible for the emergence of a tense social situation in the town, sustained only a minor penalty. On the 22th of June, 2012, Orak Sarbopeyev was acquitted and on the 20th of July, 2012, Zhalgas Babakhanov received two years' probation. This caused a wave of discontent among the public of Kazakhstan. In order to prevent the potential participation of the inhabitants of Zhanaozen in protest action, additional troops of internal forces were deployed to the town. On the 24th of July, 2012, the Prosecutor's Office of the Mangistau Province appealed against the acquittal with respect to O. Sarbopeyev, and as a result, he was taken into custody again.⁷

Trial of Vladimir Kozlov or 'incitement of social hatred' commenced

On the 16th of August, 2012, at 10:00 am, in the Mangistau Regional Court in Aktau, the trial of Vladimir Kozlov, the head of the unregistered opposition party 'Alga!', Serik Sapargali, a social activist of the 'Khalyk Maidany' ('The People's Front') and Akzhanat Aminov, the leader of the strike movement, began.

The charges against the Vladimir Kozlov and Akzhanat Aminov are based on three articles of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan (hereinafter referred to as the 'CC of the RK'), namely:

1. Article 164, paragraph 3 ('incitement of social hatred'),
2. Article 170, paragraph 2 ("calling for the overthrow of the constitutional order"),
3. Article 235, paragraph 1 ("the establishment and management of an organised group with a view to committing one or more offenses as well as participation in it").

Serik Sapargali received charges under two articles of the CC of the RK, namely:

1. Article 164, paragraph 3 ('incitement of social hatred'),
2. Article 170, paragraph 2 ("calling for the overthrow of the constitutional order").

The investigators accuse the oppositionists of pushing oil workers to carry out "mass riots" with their actions which had serious consequences⁸.

- Vladimir Kozlov fully denied the allegations.
- Akhanat Aminov pleaded guilty.
- Serik Sapargali pleaded partial guilt, stating, that he regrets that his actions led to blood being shed.

It can be assumed that A. Aminov and S. Sapargali, both suffering from diabetes, are hoping to regain their freedom just like Bolat Atabayev and Zhanbolat Mamay, who in July, wrote a statement of repentance, and were exempt from prosecution following their active confession.

According to the prosecution, Vladimir Kozlov headed an organised criminal group (hereinafter referred to as 'OCG'), in which he joined forces with the opposition politician Muratbek Ketebayev, currently residing outside of Kazakhstan, as instructed by the banker Mukhtar Ablyazov who is currently on the run, and from whom he allegedly received funds on a regular basis to finance the OCP.

Notably, many passages from the speech of the prosecutor caused laughter in the court room: "... the trespasser Ablyazov, having made sure that the increase in the welfare of the nation does not give him an opportunity to realise his political ambitions, chose the path of political extremism", "... radicalised media under the brands: 'Golos Respubliki' ('The Voice of the Republic'), 'K plus', 'Vzglyad' ('The Viewpoint') of the media holding company owned by the trespasser Ablyazov" and so on.

⁵ http://odfoundation.eu/ru/projects/878/sudi_aktai_svidetelstva_podsudimih_pitkah_vo_vremya_provedeniya_sledstviya

⁶ http://odfoundation.eu/ru/urgents/941/apellyatsionniy_sud_smyagchil_nakazanie_politseyskim_prichastnim_rasstrelyu_neftyanikov_zhanaozena

⁷ http://odfoundation.eu/ru/urgents/951/monitoring_obschestvenno_politicheskoy_situatsii_kazahstane

⁸ <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kozlov-trial-mukhtar-ablyazov-as-a-sponsor-of-alga-and-dvk/24689539.html>

According to the prosecutor, the OCG, in which also Serik Sapargali and Akzhanat Aminov participated, was operating with the intent of inciting social hatred and calling for the violent overthrow of constitutional order. The prosecutor also mentioned a Skype conference, which was held, as he stated, by the leaders of the OCG for criminal purposes.

According to the prosecution, Vladimir Kozlov managed to direct the labour dispute of oil workers into a political track - at a meeting with the striking oil workers in Zhanaozen, opposition politicians deliberately pointed to the inequality in income between top managers of oil companies and general workers. As a result, according to the prosecutor, it became impossible to conduct meaningful negotiations between striking workers and the managers of oil companies. Also, for this reason, says the prosecutor, it was impossible to stop the months-long strike. As a result, the prosecution concluded that all these factors led to the mass unrest.

The prosecutor qualifies the distribution of leaflets with the inscription: "Lift up your head, the Kazakh man!", "Take off the yoke from your neck!", which were spread among oil workers, as a means of calling for the violent overthrow of the constitutional order.

Thus, according to the prosecutor, the unregistered opposition party 'Alga!', headed by Vladimir Kozlov and Muratbek Ketebayev, is an extremist organisation. During the accusatory speech of the prosecutor, Vladimir Kozlov presented the audience with a piece of paper on which it was written: "1937". Previously, he drew parallels between today's political developments in Kazakhstan and the Stalinist oppression which achieved its peak in 1937⁹.

Judge Berdybek Myrzabekov who was appointed to lead the case, previously led the trial on 'the riots in the village of Shetpe'¹⁰.

The trial is open, and at the same time, journalists are prohibited from using any kind of technology, including dictaphones. Only handwritten notes are allowed. The only exception was at the beginning of the trial on the 16th of August, 2012, when the judge allowed reporters to take photos and shoot video for 10 minutes.

Observers, including representatives of international organisations and the media, noted that the beginning of the process was accompanied by numerous gross violations of international standards of fair trial. Here are some examples:

- **Limitation of the allotted time period for familiarisation of the defendants with the materials of the case, inducing the consideration of the case within the shortest possible time by the NSC investigative group, the prosecutor's office and the court.**

On the 9th of August, 2012, within one day, employees of the Prosecutor's Office of the Mangistau Province "became familiarised" with the materials of the criminal case of the oppositionist Vladimir Kozlov. The files comprise 62 volumes (approx. 11 000 pages), and on the same day they signed and 'studied' the bill of indictment which was more than 1300 pages long which was issued against Kozlov, Sapargali and Aminov. Kozlov was given only 12 days to become familiarised with the case, although the investigation commenced on the 23rd of January, 2012, from the moment of the arrest of Ayzhangul Amirova, an activist of the social movement 'Khalyk Maidany' ('The People's Front') until the 13th of July, 2012¹¹, i.e. for the period of almost seven months, and the investigative process was undertaken by 67(!) people.

According to the human rights defender Yevgeniy Zhovtis¹², by this action, Article 14 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is being violated. According to this Article, "every person, during consideration of any criminal charge filed against this person, shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality: ... b) to have a sufficient amount of time and opportunity to prepare his defence and to communicate with his chosen counsel...».

⁹ <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/vladimir-kozlov-alga-zhanaozen-sud/24679639.html>

¹⁰ http://www.odfoundation.eu/ru/urgents/829/monitoring_sobitiy_na_sudebniy_protsessakh_aktau_01_05_2012_18_05_2012

¹¹ <http://www.respublika-kz.info/news/politics/24625/>

¹² <http://www.respublika-kz.info/news/politics/24617/>

The human rights activist Yevgeniy Zhovtis was outraged with the fact that Judge Myrzabekov violated Article 336 of the Code of Criminal Procedure by failing to pass the indictment to the defendant in due time, and the judge dismissed the request of the defence to postpone the trial and to give Vladimir Kozlov the opportunity to become familiarised with the indictment within 3 days. *"This is a gross violation of the standards of the Code of Criminal Procedure,"* - said Zhovtis.

- ***Lack of professional translation from Kazakh to Russian language of the investigation materials and of the trial, resulting in considerable variations in meaning and the misrepresentation of facts both by the prosecution and the defence.***

The trial is conducted in the Kazakh language, but the translation into Russian, according to comments made by the defence and by the observers of the process is carried out with significant difference in meaning.

- ***Ignoring complaints and petitions filed by defendants and their counsels, failing to give motivated answers to them.***

On the 16th of August, 2012, the court heard and rejected all petitions, filed by Vladimir Kozlov and his counsels, including the motion for recusal of the judge Berdybek Myrzabekov. After lunch, on the same day, the indictment was read out to the defendant. During the reading, it transpired that the presented indictment does not correspond in full with the text of the indictment, a copy of which was in the possession of the counsel of Vladimir Kozlov. The attorney Venera Sarsenbina, who is defending the opposition leader, filed a motion regarding this issue, but the judge did not interrupt the speech of the prosecutor.

As of the 18th of August, 2012, the questioning of witnesses began. The velocity of the judicial consideration in the case of the oppositionists exceeds the expectations of even the most pessimistic observers of civil society in Kazakhstan.

Testimony of former activists of the strike movement. The prosecution called in witnesses who in the past had been convicted in the case of "incitement of social discord" and later released from custody after making "active confessions." Today, these same people are testifying against their former associates. Journalists and human rights activists who have been present at the trial, have suggested that *the words of these witnesses had been prepared beforehand and that the statements were made under pressure*¹³.

- On the 28th of August, 2012, the oil workers, convicted in the past for the unrest in Zhanaozen, testified, and *some of their testimonies are contrary to what they had stated previously*. For example, a participant of the strikes, Estay Karashayev, could not recall his words, documented in the protocol, which were that Sapargali, Mamay, Atabayev are the people of Mukhtar Ablyazov. Another former organiser of strikes, Natalia Azhigaliyeva, during the questioning of the prosecutor and counsels constantly gave inconsistent statements and referred to the opinions of third parties.
- Natalia Sokolova, an accountant and lawyer of the striking oil workers union, during the examination held on the 20th of August, 2012, stated that she had incorrectly calculated the salaries of oil workers, which prompted them to carry out an industrial action. But human rights activist Yevgeny Zhovtis says that Sokolova made accurate calculations and so she had every reason to promulgate such calculations.¹⁴ It should be noted that in 2011, Sokolova was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for inciting social discord. But soon afterwards, on the 8th of March, 2012, she was released from prison. It can be assumed that the reason for this decision was not only sincere repentance, but also a tacit consent to testify in the Zhanaozen case conveniently for the prosecution.
- Ayzhangul Amirova, a former ally of Serik Sapargali, during her testimony against Vladimir Kozlov said that Kozlov's counsel threatened her and exerted pressure upon her. Conversely, the counsel, Venera Sarsembina, has fully denied these allegations.¹⁵
- Former Director of the "OzenMunayGaz" JSC K. Eshmanov *withdrawn his earlier testimony*. On the 17th of August, 2012, he stated that at the instructions of the Akimat, 200 police officers were ready to disperse

¹³ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24985/>

¹⁴ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24789/>

¹⁵ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24953/>

the strikers from the square. Two days later, K. Eshmanov renounced the given statement. Human rights activist E. Zhovtis believes that the authorities forced the witness to change his testimony.¹⁶

- Certain witnesses base their testimony not on facts but on their personal assessments, immediately placing the blame on the defendants. Representatives of the authorities see no causation of the Zhanaozen tragedy in their inaction, instead, they are accusing the opposition, activists and independent media. Vice-Minister of Labour B. Nurymbetov and former first deputy akim of the Mangistau region, A. Aitkulov, are of the same opinion.
- Another witness, examined on the 20th of August, 2012, the honorable retiree Asylbek Aidarov said that *he personally did not see or hear what the opposition politicians told oil-workers, but he blames V. Kozlov, B. Atabayev, S. Sapargali and Z. Mamay for the tragedy*. The testimony of Deputy Director of the "OzenMunayGaz" Taras Kuntuzov was similar in content. *He accused Vladimir Kozlov and the TV channel "K-plus" of distorting the facts and inciting protest, although, as he said, he does not know himself whether Kozlov gave speeches to oil-workers or not.*¹⁷

Bias and offensive expert testimony. *Testimonies of experts, invited to the trial on the 20th of August, 2012, cast doubt over their competence and impartiality.*

- Nagima Abisheva, chief specialist of the forensic centre in Almaty, said that in the statements of Serik Sapargali there are calls for the violent overthrow of constitutional order, despite the fact that S. Sapargali gave speeches in Almaty on the 17th of December, 2011, while the tragic events occurred in Zhanaozen on the 16th of December, 2011.
- Roza Akbarova, an expert and political scientist, called Mukhtar Ablyazov the main sponsor of the 'Alga!' opposition party and recognised the party to be an extremist organisation. According to Aleksey Plugov, Vladimir Kozlov's counsel, some documents, which were subject to analysis by Akbarova, were absent from the case file. Other examined experts criticised the independent media, accusing them of inciting social hatred, at the same time citing the titles of articles published *after* the events in Zhanaozen in Shepte.¹⁸
- Examination of three experts who had conducted psycholinguistic analysis of telephone conversations of the defendants showed that the experts' conclusions were based on materials that had not been provided to them in full. The experts were not sent the full transcript, but just some of the phrases used, which were taken out of context.

Hindrance of the work of the defence. *The oppositionists' colleagues report that they were physically obstructed from attending the trial.*

- On the 16th of August, the son of one of the leaders of the "Alga!" party Marat Zhanuzakov was taken by the police and held at the police station for several hours. M. Zhanuzakov called the event an attempt to prevent his journey to Aktau required to participate in the trial of Vladimir Kozlov.¹⁹
- On the 20th of August, 2012 in Aktau, Fatima Kasenova, an activist of the "Alga" unregistered party, was arrested. She was handing out leaflets relating to the course and nature of the trial of the oppositionists. According to the Aktau prosecutors, such actions are considered an interference to the activity of the court. After drawing up the protocol, F. Kasenova was released.²⁰
- Vladimir Kozlov does not exclude acts of provocation in his address. According to Vladimir Kozlov, in a cell next door unknown people remain. They do not give their names, behave rudely, constantly check the politician's cell in his absence, and give him packages which have already been opened and bear traces of mechanical manipulation. The defendant fears for his life and is prepared to go on hunger strike until such time that the court deals with these regulation breaches.²¹

¹⁶ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24784/>

¹⁷ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24784/>

¹⁸ <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kozlov-trial-mukhtar-ablyazov-as-a-sponsor-of-alga-and-dvk/24689539.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24747/>

²⁰ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24785/>

²¹ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24986/>

- Unequal opportunity for coverage of the process was also apparent: in contrast to bloggers, independent media representatives are not permitted to use mobile phones. Court bailiffs have tried to search the counsels and confiscate their mobile phones, while the Kazakh law prohibits such actions, according to the *Freedom House* organisation.²²

Political nature of the case. *Observers reported that the trial of three oppositionists is politically motivated, and the process itself is similar to an open confrontation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev with his personal enemy Mukhtar Ablyazov*²³.

1. Vladimir Kozlov was accused due to his purported membership in "Ablyazov's extremist gang". One can assume that with this trial the government wishes to negatively affect the image of Mukhtar Ablyazov who resides outside the country. Further proof supporting this notion is that the striking oil workers were also supported by representatives of the parties 'Azat' and the National Social-Democratic Party, but they are absent from defendant's bench today.
2. During the trial, prosecutors openly violate the principle of presumption of innocence, calling Mukhtar Ablyazov a "trespasser", despite the fact that in 2003 the European Community acquitted the oppositionist and recognised him as a political prisoner.
3. Any criticism of the government, expressed by oppositionists, is referred to by the prosecutors as "false", "criminal", "provocative", "undermining the constitutional basis of the state".²⁴ For example, the opposition is accused of "questioning the legitimacy of the legally elected President of Kazakhstan by creating a belief among citizens that he allegedly lied to them". Opposition members are also accused of creating a positive political image of Ablyazov²⁵, which casts doubt on the possibility of free political competition in Kazakhstan.
4. Investigators label the strike of the Zhanaozen oil workers illegal and condemn political defiance. This sets a precedent, when the defence of labour rights by citizens becomes illegal, and the expression of political dissent against the authorities - a deed subject to criminal prosecution.

"There is no cause-and-effect relationship between the assistance provided to oil workers by the politicians, and the event that took place in Zhanaozen on the 16th of December" - declared the renowned human rights activist Yevgeniy Zhovtis.²⁶ These facts suggest that the prosecution does not hold sufficient evidence against the opposition, but merely questionable expert evidence and witness evidence.

Kozlov intends to go on a hunger strike. According to Alia Turusbekova, Vladimir Kozlov's wife, the oppositionist intends to go on hunger strike if the judge does not consider his complaint about unauthorised persons entering his prison cell. According to Kozlov, he saw people inside his cell during his absence. However, when asked "Who are you?", the strangers did not identify themselves – they very often behave rudely and they constantly check the politician's cell and intercept his packages. Therefore, Kozlov fears for his life²⁷. Kozlov sent a letter of complaint from the detention facility, but the judge did not receive it. Observers of the "Open Dialog Foundation" assume that, most likely, *the prison authorities intercepted the letter, and, therefore, denied the defendant the right to complain to the authorities*²⁸. Despite the fact that Kozlov publicly declared his complaint many times at the court sessions orally, the judge refused to consider it, requiring a written application.

Interrogation of witnesses of the prosecution ended in the Mangistau Court last week.

- Importantly, Polish MEP, Piotr Borys, will have the opportunity to speak in the court as a witness. Previously, Borys invited Kozlov to a conference on the tragedy in Zhanaozen, which took place on 17-18.01.2012 in the European Parliament. **Piotr Borys said that the oil workers were intent on solving the labour dispute by peaceful means, and that there was nothing unlawful about the support that**

²² <http://www.freedomhouse.org/article/first-monitoring-report-documents-violations-kozlov-trial>

²³ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24703/>

²⁴ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24742/>

²⁵ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24742/>

²⁶ <http://www.respublika-kz.info/pda/politics/24789/>

²⁷ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/24986/>

²⁸ http://odfoundation.eu/ru/urgents/987/na_protseste_po_delu_liderov_demokraticeskoy_oppozitsii_kazahstana_dominiruet_prokuratura_ukrainski_e_pravozashchitniki

the defendants: oppositionists have shown for the oil-workers. As a member of a European Parliament working group for Central Asia, Piotr Borys visited Kazakhstan at the beginning of 2012 in connection with the Zhanaozen investigation to keep track of the human rights situation. According to him, *in 2011, representatives of the striking oil workers, as well as Vladimir Kozlov himself, visited the European Parliament.* The oil-workers reported on their severe working conditions and the necessity to stop the dismissal of workers. Furthermore, Kozlov emphasised the importance of an impartial investigation into the Zhanaozen tragedy and the necessity of the international community paying due attention to this matter²⁹. Piotr Borys stated that *for any party in each EU country, working with people in order to address any labour or social conflicts is a common practise.*

- **At the same time judge Berdybek Myrzabekov refused permission for Markus Loening, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Government of Germany, to meet with the accused: Vladimir Kozlov.** Markus Loening asked for a 15-minute meeting with the defendant in the presence of court enforcement officers and attorneys. On 05.09.2012 Kozlov's attorney, Venera Sarsenbina, filed this request with the judge, but the judge did not accede to it³⁰.
- **The testimony of a famous theatre director and oppositionist, Bolat Atabayev, staying in Germany, was read out in the court in a distorted form.** On 03.09.2012 B. Atabayev wrote to the Mangistau Court about the inconsistency of the testimony published on his behalf. According to him, it was incorrectly translated into Russian and significantly distorted. *Statements against Kozlov were entered into the minutes of the court session.* The director requested the investigator to remove the statements that he did not make from the minutes, but the request was ignored. Therefore, Bolat Atabayev decided to immediately terminate his stay in Germany and return to Kazakhstan to deny the testimony. However, after this statement the director was unable to fly out of Germany – his documents had been stolen. Bolat Atabayev is visiting Germany in connection with a ceremony during which he was awarded the Goethe Medal³¹. It was he who informed Markus Loening and the members of the Bundestag of the details of the oppositionists' trial.

On 04.09.2012 the court commenced the cross-examination of members of the opposition party "Alga!" led by Vladimir Kozlov. Heads of the departments in the party, Fatima Kasenova and Marat Zhanuzakov, were asked questions about the political structure of the party and its oppositionist activities. *The prosecution tried to prove that the criticism of the government by the opposition led to incitement of social hatred.*

According to witnesses Akhmen Erkin and Bakhyt Tumenova, *dissatisfaction of the oil workers had serious grounding, and the activities of the opposition politicians did not pose any risk to society.* The Head of a non-governmental organization "Aman-Saulyk", Bakhyt Tumenova, said that according to the results of her study, 42 per cent of the striking oil workers were the sole breadwinners in their families, and 43 per cent did not own their homes. Activist Akhmen Erkin said that Serik Sapargali, as a person respected by the oil workers, wanted to help them solve their problems and never spoke of the need to arm³².

MEP Marek Migalski called on the Kazakh authorities to *stop the judicial investigation of Vladimir Kozlov, which, according to him, is politically motivated*³³.

Observers of the trial, Irina Virtosu and Alena Luneva, as well as a prominent human rights activist Yevgeny Zhovtis, state: *"The nature of the charges and evidence against the defendants shows that they are being sued for opposition activities, which are considered absolutely normal in European countries"*³⁴.

²⁹ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/25094/>

³⁰ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/25093/>

³¹ <http://www.respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/25034/>

³² <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kozlov-trial-mukhtar-ablyazov/24697448.html>

³³ <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kozlov-trial-witnesses-testimony-complaints/24696524.html>

³⁴ <http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kozlov-trial-witnesses-testimony-complaints/24696524.html>