

# Kazakhstan: Dictatorial regime threatens socialist activists

CWI reporters

“Kurmanov to be jailed?” is the headline emblazoned on the front page of Vzglyad, a business newspaper in Kazakhstan. It is becoming clearer by the day that the Kazakhstan authorities are preparing to move against the leaders of the Socialist Movement Kazakhstan - Ainur Kurmanov, Esenbek Ukteshbayev and others. It is an obvious attempt to behead the movement being built in opposition to the increasingly dictatorial regime of president Nursultan Nazarbayev.

The movement’s lawyer was phoned by the police on 14 September. He was told that the investigation into Ainur and Esenbek was nearing a close and that their status had changed from “witnesses” to “suspects”. He was told that the two leaders, along with two other activists - mother and daughter, Kulzhan and Nuosulu Sailybaeva - are to be charged by the end of this month with “samoupravstvo”. This is a term usually used to describe bureaucrats or rulers who take power in their own interests.

The charges arise from the tremendous struggle organised by the Leave People’s Homes Alone (LPHA) campaign. This has actively defended people when banks have tried to evict them from their homes following repayment difficulties.

The latest case was that of the Sailybaeva family. Kulzhan has several children, and when the bailiffs attempted to evict them, locks on the front door were broken. This, the authorities claim, is “samoupravstvo”! The initial charge carries a custodial sentence of up to two years. But it is anticipated that further charges will be added, once the case comes to court. Up to 25 other people may also be accused of similar offences. It is now widely believed that the regime will use these charges to remove activists from the movement and then close down two organisations - LPHA and Talmas, headed by Ainur and Esenbek.

Following the fifth refusal of the authorities to legalise an independent trade union federation launched this year, this will mean that all legal avenues of working to organise opposition to the regime will be shut off. Automatically, any protest actions will be against the law.



Esenbek Ukteshbayev (left) and Ainur Kurmanov face years in jail for opposing Nazerbayev’s regime

There must be an outcry internationally against this threat. Trade unions, members of national and international parliaments, human rights organisations and other bodies concerned with establishing and upholding basic democratic rights will join in a world-wide protest.

### Worried regime

The regime is worried on three fronts. Firstly, it is meeting increasing criticism, even from official and diplomatic circles about the imprisonment of the oil workers’ lawyer Natalia Sokolova, the continuing imprisonment of the human rights activist, Evgeniy Zhovtis, and the blocking of websites in Kazakhstan. Secondly, the regime is concerned that this criticism will continue to grow. At the beginning of October, the OSCE (the post-cold war regional security organisation which includes the USA, Russia and the UK) that holds its annual ‘Human Rights Dimension’ conference in Warsaw, Poland.

Ainur and Esenbek have been invited to attend the conference where they will highlight the issue of the

Kazakhstan government’s shameful record on worker and prisoner rights’ as well as the even further decline in democratic rights in general. For this reason, the regime is attempting to block two opposition leaders leaving the country.

The stepping up of these attacks on the leaders of the Socialist Movement Kazakhstan is a crude attempt by the regime to prevent them heading the colossal social protests that are beckoning in Kazakhstan.

This is the background of the tremendous strike by oil workers in West Kazakhstan, which is entering its fourth month, despite threats, repression, the arrest of its leaders, and the murder of two activists.

The Socialist Movement Kazakhstan will not lower its banner in the face of this wave of repression. It will continue to build support for the oil workers. It will continue its international campaign against the authoritarian regime of the Nazarbayev clique. It will strive to place itself at the head of the developing protest movement in Kazakhstan, to ensure it is armed with a socialist programme.

The Socialist Movement Kaza-

khstan remains steadfast in its tasks of establishing a mass socialist workers’ party in Kazakhstan, capable of leading the struggle against capitalism in the country, to establish a democratic socialist Kazakhstan, as part of a Central Asian and Euro-Asian Federation of democratic socialist states.

We call on supporters across the world to step up their campaign in protest at the actions of the Kazakhstan Authorities.

**Send urgent protests to:**  
**1: Head of the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan - Alina Bulatovna Rakhimbekova**  
**Email: Rahimbekova@supcourt.kz with copies to: Kulumbetova@supcourt.kz; pressa@supcourt.kz or Tel ++7 7172 747570**  
**2: Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Kazakhstan**  
**Email: mid@mid.kz**  
**3: The Head of the President’s Administration**  
**Tel: ++7 (7172) 74 55 24**  
**4: The Embassy of Kazakhstan in your own country.**  
**Please send copies of all protests to KazakhstanSolidarity@gmail.com**

## Floods devastate Sindh: Crisis worsens, hundreds killed

Hameed Channa

Progressive Workers Federation Pakistan (PWFP) and Socialist Movement Pakistan (CWI Pakistan) in Sindh

Floods in Sindh, Pakistan, have killed more than 500 people, destroyed or damaged 1.5 million houses and swamped five million acres since late last month. And the situation is getting worse by the day.

More than 7,000 people are being treated for snake bites. The floods have also had a devastating impact on livestock - about one million cattle have died or disappeared.

“We have lost everything,” a woman in Jamal Shah in rural Sindh province told us. “Our houses, our valuables and all our fields are under water, and the government hasn’t given us anything. No one

has come here to help us.”

The crisis is getting worse by the hour but the government has totally failed to rescue people from affected areas. Anger with the government is running high. 80 men blocked the main road to Hyderabad, the biggest city near the flooded areas, on Wednesday, demanding help from the authorities.

### Disease risk

“Our houses and farms are submerged under water” said Darya Khan, taking shelter at the PWFP camp along with his eight children.

“The government shifted us to a school which is also full of water. Many of us got infected with diarrhoea, malaria and skin diseases,” he added.

Aid groups have said that victims of Pakistan’s floods are at growing

risk of potentially fatal diseases.

There is an urgent need to provide immediate and life saving relief to the millions affected. It hasn’t stopped raining in Sindh for the last ten days. Large swathes of land are underwater and people are desperately awaiting relief.

The Sindh health department has called for the international community to “expedite its response to ensure that millions affected get the help they need as soon as possible.”

113 camps have been established in Mirpur Khas District, mostly by the affected peoples forming spontaneous settlements besides main roads and relatively safe areas of the district.

The Progressive Workers Federation of Pakistan and Trade Union Rights Campaign - Pakistan have set up two camps in Mirpur Khas District. Here more than 200 of our

trade union workers and also our comrades have been moved with their families.

We have provided them with medicines, food and accommodation for the last three weeks, but now we need the solidarity from our international trade union friends and comrades to meet the disaster and secure the lives of our friends and comrades.

**Send messages of support to: turc.pakistan@gmail.com**

**Trade union solidarity donations to: TURCP at the following bank account:**  
**Bank – LloydsTSB**  
**Account number: 00574699**  
**Sort code: 30-95-03**  
**BIG: Loydgb21500**  
**IBAN: GB70LOYD30950300574699**

### The Committee for a Workers’ International

The Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI) is the socialist international organisation to which the Socialist Party is affiliated. The CWI is organised in 45 countries and works to unite the working class and oppressed peoples against global capitalism and to fight for a socialist world. For more details including CWI publications write to: CWI, PO Box 3688, London E11 1YE. email cwi@worldsoc.co.uk

### www.socialistworld.net

The CWI website contains news, reports and analysis from around the world. Recent articles include:

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Labour Party gains less than predicted.

Trond Sverre and Elise Kolltveit, (CWI Norway)

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40th anniversary of Attica Prison uprising.

Eijeer Hawkins, Socialist Alternative, Harlem, New York

image not available

### Denmark: Right-wing government loses power after ten years

Red-Green Alliance trebles its vote.

Mattias Bernhardsson, Rattvisepartiet Socialisterna (CWI Sweden)