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JOURNALIST ZHANBOLAT MAMAY WAS BEATEN IN KAZAKHSTANI DETENTION CENTRE

Zhanbolat Mamay refused to give ‘self-incriminating testimony’ on the case of BTA Bank. After that he was beaten in detention centre and was threatened with reprisal. Zhanbolat Mamay has become yet another victim of the criminal case against the opposition politician Mukhtar Ablyazov.

On 21 February, 2017, arrested journalist Zhanbolat Mamay gave to his lawyer a statement and a note. „I was beaten in a prison cell. I am afraid for my life. I was concretely told that they will reach (me – Ed.) in any cell of the jail. I am not going to commit suicide. Everything which happen with me will be killing,” – informed Zhanbolat Mamay. He asked to be urgently transferred to secure place, for example, to solitary cell.¹

Chief editor of the opposition newspaper ‘Tribuna’, Zhanbolat Mamay, was accused in connection with the criminal proceedings against Mukhtar Ablyazov in the BTA Bank case.² On 11 February, 2017, Mamay was arrested. He is kept in SIZO-18 (detention centre 18) in Almaty.³ The charges against Mamay are based on the testimony of the refugee Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov, kidnapped from Turkey one month ago by Kazakhstani intelligence officers. After being detained in a pre-trial detention facility for 10 days, Zharimbetov began to testify against Ablyazov. In December, 2016, France recognised the case of Mukhtar Ablyazov as politically motivated.⁴

Over the past few days Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, Committee to Protect Journalists, Freedom House, and a few deputies of the European Parliament appealed in defense of Zhanbolat Mamay⁵.

We call on the international community to react to this incident without delay and save the journalist, who is threatened with killing in Kazakhstani detention centre. EU states and USA should warn Kazakhstani authorities of the use of oppressive measures in attempts to get “needed” testimonies on the case of BTA Bank. Journalist Zhanbolat Mamay should be immediately released.

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¹ <https://www.facebook.com/inga.imanbay/posts/1221842207869108>

² <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/8101,journalist-zhanbolat-mamay-arrested-in-connection-with-the-criminal-proceedings-against-mukhtar-ablyazov-in-the-bta-bank-case>

³ https://bureau.kz/novosti/sobstvennaya_informaciya/jurnalist_ostavlen_pod_arestom_i_pomeshen_v_press-khatu/

⁴ <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/8092,report-kazakhstan-pursues-former-top-managers-of-bta-bank-in-order-to-obtain-their-testimonies-against-mukhtar-ablyazov>

⁵ <https://amnesty.center/2017-02-15-kazakhstan/> ; <https://rsf.org/en/news/kazakh-editors-arrest-aims-silence-opposition-paper> ; <https://cpi.org/2017/02/editor-arrested-in-kazakhstan.php> ; <https://freedomhouse.org/article/kazakhstan-authorities-arrest-editor-last-independent-newspaper> ; <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/8103,the-odf-discussed-human-rights-in-kazakhstan-at-the-ep-coe>