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Kazakhstan: Woman human rights defender Saltanat Tashimova sentenced and released

On 16 June 2022, woman human rights defender and environmental activist **Saltanat Tashimova** was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest. The woman human rights defender was arrested by the Specialised Inter-district Administrative Court of Almaty as per part 6 of article 488 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Kazakhstan for “participation in an illegal meeting” for events that took place on 9 April 2022. On 21 June 2022, the case against the woman human right defender was appealed, and the Almaty City Court reduced her sentence from 15 days to 5 days. Saltanat Tashimova has now been released and she is planning on seeking termination of the case against her.

[Saltanat Tashimova](#) is a woman human rights defender and environmental activist. She is the chairwoman of the public association "Let's Protect Almaty" which actively defends the rights of citizens, advocates for the environment, protects architectural historical heritage from destruction and pollution. The woman human rights defender has been using social media to create environmental social media groups, including “Tengriism” and “Let’s Protect Kok-Zhailau”.

On 16 June 2022, woman human rights defender and environmental activist Saltanat Tashimova was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest by the Specialized Inter-district Administrative Court of Almaty. The woman human rights defender was arrested as per part 6 of article 488 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Kazakhstan for “participation in an illegal meeting” for the events that took place on 9 April 2022. According to the woman human rights defender’s lawyer, the trial had numerous violations. For instance, the trial did not last more than 15 minutes, the judge refused to watch a video clip provided by the defence, and refused to hear testimonies of the residents, witnesses and officials of the Bostandy District Akimat who took part in the meeting. Saltanat Tashimova’s lawyer intends to appeal the case.

On 15 June 2022, around 11.30 am, the police arrived at the woman human rights defender’s apartment with a warrant for her arrest which included an online court case at 12.30 pm that day. The warrant showed that Saltanat Tashimova was charged under Article 790 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It is noted that her trial was scheduled in an hour after the registration of the protocol of administrative violation and the protocol of detention. The woman human rights defender arrived at 12.00 pm to the Bostandyksky District Court, however there was no one there and the offence was not registered.

On 9 April 2022, residents of Bostandyk district of Almaty in Kazakhstan gathered at a meeting against construction taking place on an area of wasteland by the BI Group on which the residents had proposed a park be built. Almaskhan Akhedzhanov, head of the Department of City Planning and Urbanism, Altai Rakhimbetov, akim of the Bostandyk District, and a representative of the Prosecutor's Office were also present at the meeting. Saltanat Tashimova was invited in order to document this meeting and events.

This is not the first instance that the woman human rights defender Saltanat Tashimova experiences retaliation for her work. On 3 January 2020, three unknown individuals broke three windows in the woman human rights defender’s apartment by throwing large stones. Two days later, the woman human rights defender’s apartment was [attacked](#). During the night of 5 January 2020, a Molotov cocktail was thrown through the window of Saltanat Tashimova’s apartment in Bostandyk district. The perpetrator was never identified. The woman human rights defender

attributes these attacks as a retaliation for her activism. Together with other environmental activists, Saltanat Tashimova spoke out against the construction of a ski resort in the Kokzhailau Gorge – this project was stopped in 2021 by President Kassym-Jomart Tokaev.

Front Line Defenders condemns the sentencing of woman human rights defender Saltanat Tashimova and is seriously concerned about the fabricated charges against her, which it believes are in connection with her peaceful and legitimate work defending human rights. Front Line Defenders expresses its grave concern regarding the repressive legislation that is being interpreted and utilised to stop all collective meetings.

Front Line defenders urges the authorities of Kazakhstan to:

1. Immediately release human rights defender Saltanat Tashimova and quash the charge of fraud against her, as Front Line Defenders believes that she has been targeted solely as a result of her legitimate and peaceful human rights work;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of the woman human rights defender;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Kazakhstan are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.