



Turkey helped Nazarbayev to kidnap political refugee Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov

On 21 January, 2017 Turkish special services along with Kazakhstan special services took Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov, colleague of Kazakh opposition politician Mukhtar Ablyazov, out from Turkey to an unknown destination. Zharimbetov was granted refugee status in Great Britain. His whereabouts remain unknown.

On 21 January, 2017 Akmaral Zharimbetova, Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov's wife, addressed Open Dialog Foundation. She informed that on 17 January, 2017 Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov was detained in Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen airport. Turkish authorities did not provide any documents which were the base for detention. Lawyers have never once been allowed to visit Zharimbetov.

According to Zharimbetov's wife, Turkish authorities just informed that there are criminal charges against him, in particular of forgery of a passport. Earlier, Kazakhstan has already accused Alma Shalabayeva (Ablyazov's wife) and Muratbek Ketebayev (Ablyazov's associate) of forgery of a passport. But Italy and Poland called these accusations groundless.

On 21 January, 2017 Kazakhstan special services took Zharimbetov out from Turkey by chartered plane. It is still unknown where he is. According to his wife, Zharimbetov only managed to make a phone call and said: "I am in a third country".

The second time Kazakhstan authorities resorted to kidnapping of Ablyazov's associates in order to force them to give testimonies against him. In May 2013 Ablyazov's wife Alma Shalabayeva, along with her 6-year-old daughter, were kidnapped in Italy. It was only due to the efforts of human rights organisations, the European Parliament and the UN that the family was able to return to Europe from Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan accuses oppositional politician [Mukhtar Ablyazov](#) and his associates of '[embezzlement of funds](#)'. The EU Member States granted asylum or subsidiary protection to Ablyazov's associates and denied their extradition. International human rights organizations came out in defense of Ablyazov and people close to him.

On 9 December, 2016, French State Council recognised the case of Ablyazov as politically motivated and [refused to extradite](#) him. It is likely that after this decision Kazakhstan authorities became more active for the purpose of revenge to Ablyazov and his associates. As long as Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov stays in hands of Kazakhstan authorities he is under threat of tortures and death.

On 23 January, 2017 negotiations on the settlement of the Syrian conflict with the participation of Russian and Turkish authorities will take place in Astana. Positioning itself as a peacemaker Kazakhstan actually violates basic agreements in the field of human rights.

We appeal to European Parliament, PACE, the United Nations, and also to the government of Great Britain with call to react to the glaring case of kidnapping of a political refugee and to urgently take the following measures:

- **To figure out whereabouts of Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov.**
- **Strongly condemn Turkish and Kazakhstan authorities for contempt for international agreements on human rights and to demand the immediate return of Zharimbetov to the EU.**
- **Get proper explanation from Turkish authorities which without trial had given Zharimbetov to Kazakhstan, in respect of which Zharimbetov has received refugee status.**

All those willing to support our demands are requested to address the following persons and institutions:

- European Parliament President Antonio Tajani - 1047 Brussels, Belgium, Bât. Paul-Henri Spaak 09B011, Rue Wiertz / Wiertzstraat 60, tel: +32(0)2 28 45503 (Brussels), +33(0)3 88 1 75503 (Strasbourg);
- PACE President Pedro Agramunt — e-mail: pedro.agramunt@senado.es, tel: +33 88 41 23 41;
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi - Case Postale 2500 CH-1211 Genève 2 Dépôt, Switzerland, тел: +41 22 739 8111;
- Theresa May, Prime-Minister of the UK – 10 Downing Street, London, SW1A 2AA. Tel. +44 20 7925 0918, e-mail: <https://email.number10.gov.uk>;
- Amber Rudd, Home Secretary of the UK – 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF; 020 7035 4848. E-mail: public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk;
- House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, tel: +44 0800 112 4272, e-mail: hcenquiries@parliament.uk.

For more detailed information, please address:

Lyudmyla Kozlovska – lyudmylakozlovska@odfoundation.eu

Igor Savchenko – igor.savchenko@odfoundation.eu

In response to [the dramatic letter](#), written by Akmaral Zharimbetova who addressed the Open Dialog Foundation for assistance on the case of her husband Zhaksylyk, President of the Foundation, [Lyudmyla Kozlovska](#) sent a [written inquiry](#) to the Turkish authorities, in which she requested that legal basis for the prosecution of the Kazakhstani citizen in Turkey be given.

On 21 January, in a letter to the Foundation, Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov's wife emphasised that neither the relatives nor counsels have been presented a document explaining the grounds for her husband's arrest. She merely got the information that on the night of 21 January, 2017, Zhaksylyk Zharimbetov would be transferred from Turkey to Kazakhstan on a chartered plane without any court trial, investigation and despite the status of political asylum, which Zharimbetov had been granted in Great Britain due to political persecution in Kazakhstan.

In light of the above, the President of the Open Dialog Foundation, [Lyudmyla Kozlovska](#) addressed the President of Turkey, Recep Erdogan, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu with a request for explanation of the decision, issued by the Turkish authorities regarding the arrest of the Kazakhstani citizen.

- Download Akmaral Zharimbetova's letter ([the original](#) and [the translation into English](#)), sent to the Open Dialog Foundation
- [Download Lyudmyla Kozlovska's letter to President Erdoğan, Prime Minister Yildirim and the Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu](#)