

Statement of the Open Dialogue Foundation on the working SESSION II: Collection and Use of Personal Data

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am representing Open Dialogue Foundation, a non-governmental organization which conducts research and advocacy on human rights and the rule of law within the OSCE area. Today I will focus your attention on the situation in Kazakhstan, which is called by Kazakh society nothing but “electronic concentration camp”.

As for today Kazakhstani authorities hold 21 political prisoners, 48 people convicted in politically motivated criminal cases, and other 86 people are prosecuted for political reasons. The authoritarian regime of Kazakhstan systematically uses digital technologies to increase these numbers.

The Kazakhstani government makes attempts to isolate Kazakhstanis from the free access to the Internet and social networks. In order to complicate communication between people, prevent the expression of their views online or organisation of peaceful protests the authorities of Kazakhstan require citizens to install so-called “security certificates”, which were already criticized by Google, Apple and Mozilla.

I would like to underline the key role of the Committee of National Security of Kazakhstan and it’s chairman Karim Massimov in illegal surveillance, intimidation and fabrication of criminal cases against civil society representatives in Kazakhstan. The NSC officers illegally collect citizens’ personal data in order to fabricate criminal cases and imprison them. The NSC cooperates closely with Chinese experts on the installation and the development of the “iron wall” to emulate China’s “electronic concentration camps”.

The real function of the NSC is to fight against critics and political opponents of the authorities. Both from the institutional point of view and from the point of view of actual practice, the Chairman of the NSC is responsible for systematic violations by the NSC and must be punished by the international community.

The Open Dialogue Foundation calles on the OSCE member states to impose personal sanctions against Karim Massimov and his family members for systematic violation of human rights. Kazakhstani society really needs your help in their fight with dictatorship. We welcome the latest decision of the European Parliament to adopt a resolution on sanctions against corrupt officials. The next step must be inclusion of Kazakhstani corruptionists to the sanction list.

Thank you for your attention,

Maksym Sytnikov