

# **The NSC threatens the children of ‘Respublika’ journalists**

**Author: Irina PETRUSHOVA**

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**"The National Security Committee is threatening the families of journalists and workers of ‘the one media outlet ‘Respublika’’. The threats include the physical abuse of children. Only in the last three months, have I become aware of seven such incidents, "- the editor-in-chief of the media group ‘Respublika’, Irina Petrushova, wrote in an open letter to the international community.**

To the European Parliament  
U.S. Department of State  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the EU Member States  
International human rights organisations  
International media organisations  
Embassies of the EU and the U.S. in the Republic of Kazakhstan  
OSCE  
All those interested in the existence of independent media in Kazakhstan

## **Special services are threatening families and children of the ‘one media outlet ‘Respublika’ journalists**

The closure of the ‘Golos Respubliki’ newspaper for ‘extremism’ has become the personification of political tyranny and violence, currently present in Kazakhstan . The court has not only grossly violated applicable laws by joining several print and online sources into the ‘one media outlet ‘Respublika’; it has not only convicted and sentenced to liability inanimate objects – newspapers for the first time in the history of the domestic proceedings; it has not only unfoundedly accused the editorial staff of all possible sins, only based on the statement of the prosecutor's office, without giving the accused a chance to defend themselves, but it has also effectively banned the profession of journalism for the ‘Respublika’ journalists.

However, the arbitrariness of the authorities was not limited to the actions listed above.

Today, we are faced with the fact that the Kazakh special services are exerting pressure on journalists and workers of the closed ‘one media outlet ‘Respublika’’, by threatening their family members: wives, husbands, and even children - with the use of physical violence. They demand that people ‘give testimony’ against the key journalists of the publication and "leave" the office, and mandatorily find another job. Only in the last three months, have I become aware of seven such incidents.

It is not for the first time that the ‘Respublika’ journalists have been threatened: the majority of our employees take it philosophically and do not intend to change their position, either civic or journalistic. However, at this time we are talking about unprecedented threats: physical abuse of a child. So I have decided to give publicity to these incidents; in such a situation one cannot remain silent!

Unfortunately, there have been cases in our country when similar threats were actually carried out, and the story of Oksana Nikitina testifies to this. And since people in Kazakhstan are completely defenseless, they cannot seek assistance from law enforcement authorities or ensure their safety or that of their loved ones, I am compelled to seek support from human

rights defenders, journalistic organisations, politicians and diplomats of Kazakhstan's partner countries.

I hereby address you with the request to help put an end to the tyranny of the Kazakh special services and to prevent physical harm to our journalists, their families and friends.

Yours sincerely,  
Irina Petrushova,  
Editor-in-chief of the media group 'Respublika'

10 April, 2013

**Source:** <http://respublika-kaz.info/news/politics/29758/>