



**STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE CIVIC SOLIDARITY PLATFORM REGARDING THREATS
AGAINST KYRGYZ HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS TOLEKAN ISMAILOVA AND AZIZA
ABDURASULOVA**

23 September 2016

We, members of the Civic Solidarity Platform (CSP) and other human rights NGOs and defenders are seriously concerned about threats received by leading Kyrgyz human rights defenders Tolekan ISMAILOVA and Aziza ABDURASULOVA in relation to their participation in the 2016 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) and call for immediate and effective measures to ensure their safety.

On 20 September 2016, Chair of the Board of the Human Rights Movement "Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan" Tolekan ISMAILOVA spoke at the working session on "The international covenants on human rights and their importance to the human dimension" at the OSCE HDIM in Warsaw. She highlighted the human rights situation in the Kyrgyz Republic, referring to the narrowing political space in the country, and the failure of its government to implement recommendations of United Nations treaty bodies. She focused in particular on the situation of women and children of both internal and external migrants and made recommendations to the governments of Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Kazakhstan. During her speech, another Kyrgyz human rights activist, Head of the Human Rights Center "Kylym Shamy" Aziza ABDURASULOVA helped her to show pictures of women and girls from Kyrgyzstan, who were burnt alive in a recent print shop fire in the Russian capital.

During Ms. ISMAILOVA'S speech, another HDIM participant, Kadyrzhan BATYROV was sitting next to her. Mr. BATYROV is an ethnic Uzbek from Kyrgyzstan who currently has refugee status in Sweden. He was formally registered as a meeting participant since the Kyrgyz government's request for him to be included on the Interpol wanted list and extradited was rejected as politically motivated. The statement made by Mr. BATYROV at the HDIM working session resulted in a strong reaction by the delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic, which criticized organizers of the meeting for Mr. BATYROV's participation in the HDIM 2016.

Following this, threats against Ms. ISMAILOVA and Ms. ABDURASULOVA began surfacing in Kyrgyzstan simply because Ms. ISMAILOVA had been sitting next to Mr. BATYROV at the HDIM session and, in the view of her opponents, did not react "correctly" to his statement. Ms. ABDURASULOVA was targeted for being present together with Ms.

ISMAILOVA at the session.

According to media reports, the press service of the Interior Ministry of Kyrgyzstan has confirmed that this department has already begun "operational" work aimed at bringing to justice those "citizens of Kyrgyzstan" who were sitting next to Mr. BATYROV when he was speaking at the OSCE event in Warsaw on 20 September. These efforts were initiated on the basis of a complaint by Members of the Kyrgyz Parliament Maksat SABIROV and Ruslan KAZAKBAEV, who requested that the human rights defenders be held criminally responsible, although a representative of the Interior Ministry rejected this scenario.

At the same time, a defamation campaign against the two human rights defenders has begun on social media in the Kyrgyz Republic and young Kyrgyz "patriots" have threatened to meet them at the airport upon their return "to bring them to their senses".

We categorically protest all threats against human rights defenders in the Kyrgyz Republic and demand that their rights be respected and their safety protected in accordance with international human rights standards. We call on the official delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic to make a statement assuring that the safety of Toleskan ISMAILOVA and Aziza ABDURASULOVA will be ensured. We also encourage the delegations of other OSCE participating States to speak up on the threats directed against the two Kyrgyz human rights defenders and urge the leadership of the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the German OSCE Presidency to take adequate measures to ensure their safety – while they are in Warsaw and upon return to their country.

This statement is open for signature by CSP members, as well as other human rights organizations and individual human rights defenders.

Signed by:

Yevgeniy Zhovtis, Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law (Kazakhstan)

Avetik Iskhanyan, Helsinki Committee of Armenia (Armenia)

Zhemis Turmagambetova, Charter for Human Rights (Kazakhstan)

Konstantin Baranov, International Youth Human Rights Movement (Russia)

Amangheldy Shormanbayev, International Legal Initiative (Kazakhstan)

Anara Ibrayeva, Kadir Kassiyet (Kazakhstan)

Brigitte Dufour, International Partnership for Human Rights (Belgium)

Pepijn Gerrits, The Netherlands Helsinki Committee (Netherlands)

Vadym Pyvovarov, Association of Ukrainian Human Rights Monitors on Law Enforcement (Ukraine)

Artur Sakunts, Helsinki Citizen's Assembly – Vanadzor (Armenia)
Oleksandra Matviychuk, Center of Civil Liberties (Ukraine)
Natalia Taubina, Public Verdict (Russia)
Ivar Dale, The Norwegian Helsinki Committee (Norway)
Alexandra Delemenchuk, Analytical Center for Interethnic Cooperation and Consultations and Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (Ukraine)
Mariya Yasenovska, KRF Public Alternative (Ukraine)
Danuta Przywara, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Poland)
Leila Alieva, Regional Center for Strategic Studies (Georgia/Azerbaijan)
Alex Postica, Promo LEX (Moldova)
Antanina Maslyka, Barys Zvozkau Belarusian Human Rights House (Lithuania)
Yuri Dzibladze, Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights (Russia)
Rasul Jafarov, Human Rights Club (Azerbaijan)
Alexander Verkhovsky, SOVA Center for Information and Analysis (Russia)
Daniil Meshcheryakov, Moscow Helsinki Group (Russia)
Nigina Bakhrieva, Notabene (Tajikistan)
Neil Clarke, Minority Rights Group Europe
Izabela Kisic, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia (Serbia)
Jūratė Guzevičiūtė, Human Rights Monitoring Institute (Lithuania)
Sardar Bagishbekov, Voice of Freedom (Kyrgyzstan)
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