



ITUC International Trade Union Confederation
CSI Confédération syndicale internationale
CSI Confederación Sindical Internacional
IGB Internationaler Gewerkschaftsbund

Ayuba Wabba

President
Président
Präsident
Presidente

Sharan Burrow

General Secretary
Secrétaire générale
Generalsekretärin
Secretaria General

Mr Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

**President
Republic of Kazakhstan**

Via Embassy of Kazakhstan in Belgium :

- brussels@mfa.kz

PERC/AL/pw

Brussels, 16 December 2019

Dear President,

On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation, we would like to express our concerns about the continuous persecution of Erlan Baltabay, a former chairperson of Energy and Oil Workers Union “Decent Work”.

Erlan Baltabay was sentenced in June 2019 to seven years in prison on politically motivated charges¹. Later on, by your special pardon decree, the prison sentence was replaced with a fine. However, even if Erlan was freed from custody, his rights were not reinstated, and he has been treated as a convicted criminal by company management. Furthermore, he has not been able to continue his trade union activities. At the same time, he was approached by National Security Committee officers who even offered Baltabay money to pay the fine. Yet, Baltabay refuses to pay the fine, demanding the right to appeal his initial sentence.

On 16 October 2019, the Kazakh authorities jailed him again, giving him a new, five-month sentence for non-payment of the fine². Most recently, on 3 December, his claim for the appeal process was dismissed by the Shymkent court.

We call on you to ensure Baltabay’s right for a fair appeal appeal. In our clear view, the initial sentence was politically motivated and charges against him were not proven in the court. These charges, and related intimidation and persecution, were launched in retaliation for his trade union activism and principled position in support of other leaders of the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Kazakhstan (CITUK) condemned to different limitations on their freedoms. These criminal proceedings, as

¹ <https://www.ituc-csi.org/Kazakhstan-repression-deepens-2019>

² <https://www.ituc-csi.org/kazakhstan-union-leader-erlan>

well as those against CITUK's Larisa Kharkova, Amin Eleusinov and Nurbek Kushakpaev, silence and repress leaders of independent trade unions and prevent others from taking an active role in implementing real freedom of association in the country.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B.', written in a cursive style.

General Secretary