



**United States Mission to the OSCE**  
**Concern about Sentences against  
Kazakhstani Civil Society Activists Maks  
Bokayev and Talgat Ayan**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Kate M. Byrnes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
January 26, 2017

The United States is concerned about the lack of fairness and transparency in the appeal process that on January 20 upheld the trial court's verdict and 5-year prison sentence against land code protest organizers Maks Bokayev and Talgat Ayan, who were convicted for exercising their rights of peaceful assembly and to freedom of expression in organizing peaceful demonstrations in the spring of 2016. We raised their cases in the Permanent Council in December.

The United States urges Kazakhstani authorities to review the legal process in these cases, and the criminalization of and prosecution for conduct in the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We also urge Kazakhstan to respect the rights of peaceful assembly and to freedom of expression for all persons in Kazakhstan, in accordance with Kazakhstan's OSCE commitments and international obligations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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