

**Statement by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Nursultan Nazarbayev
Astana, Akorda
December 17, 2011
(Delivered at the end of the session of the Security Council
devoted to the situation in Zhanaozen)**

Dear people of Kazakhstan!

Yesterday, during festivities in the town of Zhanaozen in Mangistau Region, criminal acts committed by a group of individuals led to mass disturbances.

Peaceful citizens who gathered on the central square to commemorate the anniversary of Independence were attacked by a group of hooligans.

The perpetrators attacked the police, destroyed the *yurts* (tents) arranged on the square for the festivities, and set a police bus on fire. They were beating up civilians and smashing cars parked near the square, setting them on fire.

In response to the demands of the police to stop their illegal actions, the group of hooligans attacked police officers seeking to seize their weapons. Yet, the police officers did not allow that to happen.

As a result of the disturbances, the mayor's office and a nearby village's administrative office, a hotel and the "Ozenmunaigaz" company office building were burned down.

Property of physical and juridical persons was also subjected to destruction. Cars were burned down, ATM machines, shops, and banks were looted.

A total of 46 facilities were attacked. In that small town, almost all facilities were attacked, burned or destroyed.

Unfortunately, as a result of disturbances, people died, our citizens.

According to preliminary data, 10 people got killed. There are heavily wounded people, including among police officers.

I would like to note that police officers were being true to their official duties and were strictly following their authorities under law.

Every dead or wounded person has relatives and close ones.

I express my sincere condolences to them.

The families of those who died and got injured will be provided with assistance.

Criminal cases were initiated in relation to all the cases of violations of the law.

Upon my orders, an investigative team led by the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan has been set up.

This commission will take all necessary measures to identify and bring to justice the organizers of the disturbances, and to restore public security in the town.

Currently, the situation there is under the control of law enforcement bodies.

The perpetrators will be brought to justice under the full force of law.

At the same time, I believe the labour dispute of oil workers must not be mixed in with the acts of bandit elements who sought to abuse the situation in their criminal plots. We will find out who has financed that and who is doing that.

In recent years, the state has done a lot to improve the social situation in Zhanaozen. We have raised salaries. We have welcomed to Zhanaozen fellow countrymen who had lived abroad, and we have created all the necessary conditions for them. For that, they should be grateful to the state.

A special commission of the Government and KazMunaiGaz will leave for Zhanaozen to resolve labour disputes and explain to the population what happened and what measures are being taken.

I task the Office of the Prosecutor General, along with other law enforcement agencies, with conducting a thorough investigation of what happened, ensuring maximum openness of information, sharing the results with the people, and, if need be, draw in independent experts.

I should note that these days acts of protests and mass disturbances are taking place in many countries of the world.

To the great extent, these have become the result of a global recession, caused by the global financial and economic crisis.

All of these past years, we have been working to strengthen stability, peace and harmony in our country.

These are our main values, due to which we have reached success.

We will not allow any attempts to upstage peace and harmony in our home, shatter the achievements of our independence.

That is why the people have no reasons for concern. The situation is under control.

The law is the law.

The demands of the law are equal for all.

The law will be applied in order to ensure security and calm of the people of the town.

The state will use the law to the fullest to stop any attempts to violate calm and security of our citizens.

I call on all the people of Kazakhstan to denounce this incident, alien to our country, and to preserve calm.

I call on the people of Zhanaozen to show wisdom and to keep calm.

We will deal with all of these issues.

In order to restore the economy of the town of Zhanaozen, restore the facilities that were burned down, and, most importantly, ensure the security of the citizens I am issuing a Decree on the introduction of emergency situation in the town of Zhanaozen according to the Constitution and the Law on Emergency Situations. It will be in force for 20 days, beginning today. If we are able to resolve all issues before then, and if calm is ensured, it can be rescinded at any time.