
Current Intelligence Report Circular

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Report Topic: Popular Unrest in Kazakhstan
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Foreigners continue to be detained in Kazakhstan

Following the recent protest over oil prices in Kazakhstan, nearly 6,000 individuals were arrested across the nation. Initially, the government reported that a number of those individuals were foreigners but did not provide an exact figure. As of 10 JAN, there were reports of up to 161 foreigners being detained in Kazakhstan's capital, Nur Sultan. The Kazakh police were instructed to inspect rental apartments, homes, and hostels to find alleged public order violators, and informed the public that these foreigners were being detained until their legal status could be verified. Although most of these foreigners have since been released, as of 22 FEB, 18 of these individuals remain jailed in temporary detention centers. According to the human rights commissioner, fourteen of these foreigners being held in the country are Uzbek citizens, two are Russian, and two are Kyrgyz nationals. The commissioner, Elvira Azimova, noted that these individuals are being held pending trial, alongside the country's former Minister of Defense, Murat Bektanov, who was jailed on 21 FEB. These recent charges come after President Tokayev's initial claim that a significant number of the protestors were foreign terrorist and bandits, who entered the country to stir up chaos. While Tokayev claimed that there were up to 20,000 international terrorists, there is no evidence that any of the foreigners detained during the protests thus far have been tried. END.

CMCD Note

We assess with moderate confidence that the Kazakh government will release the foreign detainees in order to maintain relations with Russia, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. When the investigative results of the violent protests are revealed mid-March, we assess with high confidence that more arrests will be made of citizens and government officials if terrorism is linked to the attacks. As of this moment, there have been no claims by terrorist organizations for the violence that occurred during the protests and demonstrations.

Sources

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<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/01/08/kazakhstan-foreign-protests/>

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