

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's address to the people of Kazakhstan

Dear compatriots,

The anti-terrorist operation continues in our country. The police, the national guard and the army are carrying out large-scale and well-coordinated efforts to restore law and order in accordance with the Constitution.

Yesterday, the situation in the cities of Almaty, Aktobe, and Almaty region were stabilized. The implementation of the state of emergency is ensuring results. Constitutional legitimacy is being restored across the country.

However, terrorists continue to cause damage to public and private property, and use weapons against citizens.

I have given orders to law enforcement agencies and the army to, where necessary, to open fire without warning.

There are some calls abroad for the parties to hold talks to resolve problems peacefully. This is nonsense! What kind of negotiations can take place with criminals and murderers?

We have had to deal with armed and trained bandits, both local and foreign. They must be eliminated, and this will be done soon.

Law enforcement forces are morally and technically ready to perform this task.

As you know, based on the main provisions of the CSTO charter documents, Kazakhstan appealed to the heads of the participating states with a request to introduce a joint peacekeeping contingent to assist in restoring constitutional order.

This contingent has arrived in our country for a short period of time to perform supporting functions.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Prime Minister of Armenia, who chairs the CSTO, as well as to the Presidents of Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

I would like to express my special gratitude to Russian President Vladimir Putin. He responded very quickly and, most importantly, warmly to my appeal in a friendly manner.

I also express my gratitude to the President of China, the Presidents of Uzbekistan, Turkey, the heads of the UN and other international organizations for their words of support.

The tragic events in our country highlight the problems of democracy and human rights in a new way.

Democracy does not mean permissiveness nor, moreover, incitement, including in the blogosphere, to illegal actions.

In my speech on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Independence, I said that law and order are the main guarantee of our country's well-being.

And not only for Kazakhstan, but all civilized states.

This does not mean an attack on civil liberties and human rights. On the contrary, as the tragedy of Almaty and other cities of Kazakhstan has shown, it is precisely non-compliance with laws, permissiveness, and anarchy that lead to human rights violations.

In Almaty, administrative buildings, but also the personal property of local residents, were damaged by terrorist bandits. Not to mention the health and lives of hundreds of civilians and military personnel.

I extend my sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims.

Let me remind you that the law on peaceful assemblies of citizens was adopted at my suggestion in May 2020.

This law is a big step forward in promoting democracy in our country, because it provides for the notification of meetings and gatherings, including in the central districts of all cities of the country.

But some "human rights defenders" and "activists" put themselves above the law and believe that they have the right to gather where they want and say what they want.

Because of the irresponsible actions of these would-be activists, the police are distracted from their main duties of law enforcement. They are often subjected to violence and abuse.

Because of these activists, the Internet is narrowing, as a result of which the interests of millions of citizens and domestic businesses suffer. In other words, internal economic, social and political stability is greatly damaged.

The mass media and "foreign" figures, who are not aligned with the fundamental interests of our multinational people, play an accessory role and, in some cases, an inciting role in violations of law and order.

It is no exaggeration to say that these irresponsible demagogues have become complicit in unleashing this tragedy in Kazakhstan. We will respond harshly to all acts of illegal vandalism.

There is no doubt that we will quickly overcome this black mark in our history. The main thing is to prevent such events from happening again in the future.

I have created a special interagency group that will search for and detain bandits and terrorists.

I promise our citizens that all these individuals will be held to the strictest criminal responsibility.

I ask all Kazakhstanis to be careful and vigilant. Report any suspicious activity or suspicious individuals to law enforcement agencies and hotlines.

There will be a debriefing in connection with the actions of law enforcement agencies and the army, as well as their interdepartmental coordination.

It is also clear that we lacked the right special forces and special equipment. We will address these issues as a matter of urgency.

It is critically important to understand why the state was not alert to the underground preparation of terrorist attacks by sleeper cells and militants. Almost 20 thousand bandits attacked Almaty.

Their actions showed a clear plan of attacks on military, administrative and social facilities in almost all areas, coordination of actions, high combat readiness and brutal cruelty.

In addition to the militants, there were specialists trained in ideological sabotage, skillfully using disinformation or "fakes" and capable of manipulating people's moods.

It seems that their training and leadership were handled by a single command post. The National Security Committee and Prosecutor General's Office have begun to deal with this.

Now for the good news.

Due to the stabilization of the situation, Internet communication has been restored in certain regions of the country for specific time intervals. I know that this decision will have a positive impact on the life of our citizens.

However, free access to the Internet does not mean free publication of fabrications, slander, insults, and inflammatory appeals.

If such materials appear, we will take measures to detect and punish their authors.

The counterterrorism operation continues. The militants have not laid down their weapons, and they continue to commit crimes or prepare for them. The fight against them must be brought to an end. Those who do not surrender will be eliminated.

There is a lot of work ahead to learn the lessons of the tragedy we have experienced, including from a socio-economic point of view.

The Government will have to make specific decisions, which I will discuss in the Mazhilis on January 11.

Now I want to tell you, dear compatriots, that I am proud of you.

I would like to express my gratitude to those citizens of Kazakhstan who have remained calm in recent days and made efforts to ensure stability and public order.

Despite provocations and destructive calls, you have remained loyal to the law and your country.

I thank students of large cities, members of labor collectives, and industrial and agricultural workers for their civic consciousness.

I thank the residents of the regions who held peaceful protests.

All the demands expressed in peaceful terms were heard. As a result of the dialogue, a compromise was reached, and solutions to acute socio-economic problems are being developed.

Therefore, we will gradually lift the state of emergency in the regions where the situation is stable.

I am absolutely sure that our sacred motherland-Kazakhstan will become a strong state on the world map, our economy will develop dynamically, and the social situation of our citizens will improve. To achieve these goals, I will propose a reform plan and concrete measures to implement them.

I wish you all good health and prosperity!