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Kazakhstan

# Stop police violence against strikers

- News from around the world -

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**On Friday 16 December, the security forces violently attacked oil workers demanding better living standards in Zhanaozen, Kazakhstan. Ten people were shot dead, more than 70 wounded, and 70 arrested, according to the government. Opposition activists and Russian media say that the number of victims could be much higher.**

In spite of the massacre, the protests continued on 18 November. There were further clashes in nearby Aktau and Shetpe, and a 20-day state of emergency has been declared.

The Zhanaozen protests are part of a campaign for better pay and conditions by workers in the western Kazakhstan oilfield that started in May, grew in a strike of about 16,000 people in June, and continued through the year. (The Kazakh elite has become rich, thanks to oil – but in Mangistau, the largest oil-producing province, one third of the population are below the poverty line.)

Just like anti-capitalist protesters in Wall Street, the City of London and elsewhere, the Kazakh oil field workers established a “tent city”, in Zhanaozen’s main square, in June. When police tried to break it up in July, 60 of them covered themselves with petrol and threatened to set themselves on fire. Friday’s massacre took place in the same square.

Kazakh oil workers’ communities – we are with you!

Kazakhstan, oil and the City of London:

– The companies where most of the protesting oil workers work are partly owned by Kazmunaigaz Exploration and Production, which is listed on the London stock exchange and has often raised loans from London-based institutions.

– The UK is the third largest direct investor in Kazakhstan (after the USA and China).

– Tony Blair, the former prime minister, is being paid millions of pounds to lobby in the Kazakh government’s interests. Many other British businessmen and politicians help, too. Richard Evans, the former chairman of British Aerospace, is chairman of Samruk-Kazyna, a state-owned holding company that controls a big chunk of the Kazakh economy.

– The oil produced in Kazakhstan is traded in the offices of big oil trading companies and international oil companies in their London offices.

A protest will take place in London on Wednesday, 21st of December 2011 at 12 noon at the Kazakh-British Chamber of Commerce at 62 South Audley Street, Mayfair.

From [Protest police killings of striking Kazakh oil workers](#) on the Chtodelat News site.