

## **LOIPR SUBMISSION TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE - 134th SESSION (Feb-March 2023)**

### **LIST OF ISSUES PRIOR TO REPORTING: KAZAKHSTAN**

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC) is grateful for the opportunity to submit a short list of issues prior to reporting to the UN Human Rights Committee ahead of its review of Kazakhstan.

Since 2011, the NHC has had a permanent presence in Kazakhstan through our Representative Office, based in Almaty. The office carries out monitoring of the human rights situation in the Central Asian region, including our host country, Kazakhstan.

Civil and political rights are a particular area of concern for the NHC in Kazakhstan.

During the reporting period, several serious events took place. We encourage the esteemed Committee members to consider the larger context of respect for human rights and democratic principles in Kazakhstan, and during its review, ensure that particular attention is paid to the following issue:

- Continued impunity for those responsible for the deaths of peaceful protesters in Zhanaozen in December 2011.
- Continued impunity for those responsible for the mistreatment in custody of protesters in Zhanaozen in December 2011.
- Continued bans and hindrances to the full participation of legitimate opposition parties in elections, including those sharply critical of government policies.
- Widespread use of administrative resources in parliamentary and presidential elections in favor of pro-government candidates and/or the incumbent president.
- Lack of a thorough, impartial and independent investigation of the January 2022 events leading to the deaths of numerous protesters.
- Lack of a thorough, impartial and independent investigation of claims of torture and ill-treatment of protesters while in custody during and after the January 2022 events.

- Obfuscation of the causes for the dramatic events in January 2022, attempts at placing blame on «outside forces» originating in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and elsewhere.