

President of Kyrgyzstan
Sadyr Japarov
Toktonaliev Street 96
Bishkek 720044
KIRGISISTAN
E-Mail: portal@tunduk.gov.kg

Berlin

Makhabat Tazhibek-kyzy, Aike Beishekeeva und Aktilek Kaparov

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to express my concern about the case of Makhabat Tazhibek-kyzy, Aike Beishekeeva und Aktilek Kaparov, who work as journalists for the independent media outlet *Temirov Live* and its offshoot *Ayt Ayt Dese* and have been unjustly prosecuted.

On 16 January 2024, authorities detained the journalists as part of a large-scale police operation. On 10 October they were found guilty of "calls for active disobedience [...] and for mass riots, as well as calls for violence against citizens" in connection with a YouTube video which revealed alleged official misconduct. Makhabat Tazhibek kyzy was sentenced to six years in prison and journalists Aike Beishekeeva and Aktilek Kaparov received three years of probation.

They were denied access to legal counsel and are being punished solely because they have criticised the authorities. I urge you to ensure that Makhabat Tazhibek-kyzy is immediately released and that she as well as Aike Beishekeeva und Aktilek Kaparov are acquitted, as the charges against them appear to be politically motivated. Please ensure that press freedom in Kyrgyzstan is protected.

Yours sincerely,