

Statement

On January 19, 2010 the editor-in-chief of “Haykakan Zhamanak” daily Nikol Pashinyan was sentenced to 7 years in prison, a downright illegal court ruling by the common jurisdiction court in Yerevan’s Kentron and Nork-Marash administrative districts. The charge that Pashinyan organized riots was in no way proven in the course of the trial. Moreover, it is clear the court has singled out Pashinyan for excessive punishment. Of the seven other political prisoners, opposition representatives sentenced before Pashinyan on the same charges, six were given shorter terms and later released under the general amnesty.

The ruling against Nikol Pashinyan was a veiled act of political repression rather than a court decision. Such a miscarriage of justice is a criminal act, and should be recognized as such.

It is the duty of the Armenian government to ensure a fair trial, which requires that it not put the entirety of the blame for the events of March 1, 2008 on Nikol Pashinyan and other political prisoners representing the opposition.

We demand the court cease its political and evidently illegal criminal prosecution against Nikol Pashinyan immediately and that he be set free.

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor Office
Transparency International Anti-corruption Center
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Armenian Committee
Youth for Democracy
Center of Right and Freedom
Lawyers for Human Rights
"Huys" NGO
Zartonk 89
National Citizens' Initiative
Menk plus
"Asparez" Journalists' Club
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