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Legal Concern

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YUGOSLAVIA: Zenun CELAJ

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Amnesty International has learned of the arrest on 27 September of Zenun Celaj, an ethnic Albanian journalist and human rights activist. He is at present detained in Pristina and is under investigation on charges under Articles 136 and 114 of the Criminal Code of the SFRJ. It appears that he is charged with having been present at the meeting on 7 September at which ethnic Albanian members of the dissolved Kosovo Assembly adopted a constitution designating Kosovo a republic within the Yugoslav federation, and with having written a report about this meeting which was published in the press on 14 September. Members of the Assembly have also been arrested (see UA 388/90, EUR 48/14/90, 25 September, and follow-up EUR 48/15/90, 28 September).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Kosovo province, where over 85 per cent of the population are ethnic Albanians, lies in the south of the republic of Serbia, of which it is a constituent part. In 1989 there were wide-spread demonstrations after constitutional changes limited the province's autonomy and gave greater powers to Serbia. Since then over 60 ethnic Albanians have died in violent incidents with security forces brought into Kosovo to quell protest against Serbian policies in the province.

On 2 July ethnic Albanian members of the Kosovo Assembly declared Kosovo an independent unit within the Yugoslav federation. On 5 July Serbia responded by suspending the Kosovo parliament and government and taking over full control of the province. Since then thousands of ethnic Albanians have been dismissed from their jobs and Kosovo's one daily newspaper in Albanian and almost all television broadcasts in Albanian have been banned. Independent trade union officials who declared a strike to protest against these measures have been jailed for up to 60 days. On 7 September ethnic Albanian members of the dissolved Kosovo Assembly met clandestinely and adopted a constitution designating Kosovo a republic within the Yugoslav federation.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/airmail letters:

- urging the immediate and unconditional release of Zenun Celaj on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience.

Please organize appeals from journalists.

APPEALS TO:**President of the SFRJ Presidency:**

His Excellency Dr Borisav Jovic
Predsednik Predsednistva SFRJ
Bulevar Lenjina 2
11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Telegrams: SFRJ President, Beograd, Yugoslavia
Telexes: 11062 SIV YU
Faxes: + 38 11 63 6775

Federal Secretary of Justice:

Dr Vlado Kambovski
Savezni sekretar za pravosudje
Bulevar Lenjina 2
11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Telegrams SFRJ Justice Secretary, Beograd, Yugoslavia
Telexes: 11062 SIV YU

President of the Serbian Presidency:

Slobodan Milosevic
Predsednik
Predsednistva SR Srbije
Marsala Tita 14
11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Serbian Secretary of Justice:

Sreten Vladisavljevic
Republicki sekretar za pravosudje
Nemanjina 26
11000 Beograde, Yugoslavia

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Yugoslavia in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 November 1990.