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Whereabouts Unknown: The Madjura Brothers

Amnesty International is concerned that Radislav and Vladimir Madjura, two Bosnian Croat brothers, have been "missing" since 11 September 1992 when they were abducted from their home by members of Bosnian Serb paramilitaries. Both brothers were living together at that time in a house in Ilidža, Bosnia-Herzegovina, after their wives had left the Sarajevo suburb and fled to Croatia. Radislav Madjura was born in 1954 and Vladimir Madjura was born in 1953.

On 11 September 1992, Vladimir had been taken away by soldiers of the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) for questioning, after which he was allowed to return home. However, later that day, uniformed and armed men suspected by eyewitnesses of belonging to nationalist armed groups known as the *Arkanovci* and *Šešeljevci*¹ came to their house. In addition to Radislav and Vladimir Madjura, reportedly they were also looking for a third brother who had since left the suburb. Radislav Madjura reportedly suffered head injuries as a result of being beaten during the abduction. The soldiers also reportedly demanded 10,000 German marks from him in return for his freedom, but after he had handed over what money he had, they immediately divided it among themselves and refused to release him. The paramilitaries then forced Radislav and Vladimir Madjura into a car and took them away.

The Madjura brothers were prominent in the local community; all three had successful careers and had been involved in social and political life in the suburb before and during the outbreak of armed conflict. Although their relatives and Amnesty International have appealed to the Bosnian

¹ Paramilitary forces named after their respective leaders: Željko Ražnatović, also known by his *nom de guerre* Arkan, and Vojislav Šešelj, leader of the Serbian Radical Party (Srpska Radikalna Stranka). Both paramilitary groups are reported to be responsible for numerous grave human rights abuses committed during the war.

Serb authorities about the fates of the two men, and asked for assistance in resolving the case to International Committee of the Red Cross, the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and the authorities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, there has been no news of Radislav and Vladimir Madjura.

Vladimir Madjura's young son still expects his father to return. He believes that his father is the prisoner of some cruel men, and that world will ultimately force them to release his father, along with the other "missing" and "disappeared".

Background Information

Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, was surrounded and attacked by the Yugoslav National Army and then the BSA from the beginning of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in April 1992 until the cease-fire in October 1995. Early in the conflict, Bosnian Serb forces took control of parts of the city where the majority of inhabitants were Bosnian Serbs, in particular the western suburbs of Vogošća, Ilidža and Lukavica, and the central quarter of Grbavica. The Madjura brothers lived in the Stup neighbourhood, which was held by the Bosnian Government forces together with the HVO. Stup was on the front line of Serb-held Ilidža and consequently subject to frequent attacks and raids by Bosnian Serb soldiers. In September 1992, large groups of men of Croat and Bosniac nationality were rounded up by Bosnian Serb armed forces in Stup. Most were subsequently released.

The majority of non-Serbs who had been living in these parts of the city left or were expelled by Bosnian Serb forces. Members of minorities who remained behind were subject to human rights abuses including deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture including rape, arbitrary detention, and forced labour.

The Sarajevo suburbs were transferred from Bosnian Serb control to the authority of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina between January and February 1996. Before the transfer, most of the Bosnian Serb population left the city for other parts of Bosnian Serb territory or for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; many of their homes are currently occupied by displaced persons from other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.