

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on EXTRA 21/94 (EUR 70/07/94, 12 April 1994) and follow-up (EUR 70/14/94, 3 August) - Torture and ill-treatment / trial concern

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA: Fehmi LESTRANI

Shkëlzen BAJRAMI

Nexhmedin SADRIU

Luan HETA

Beqir MULECI

Hysni FRANCA (note correct spelling)

Bajram GALLOPENI

The above seven ethnic Albanians from Kosovo province were convicted on 8 August 1994 by the district court of Priština on charges of having undertaken military training in neighbouring Albania. Fehmi Lestrani and Nexhmedin Sadriu were sentenced to four years' imprisonment; Shkëlzen Bajrami, Luan Heta and Beqir Muleci to three years' imprisonment and Hysni Franca and Bajram Gallopeni to two years' imprisonment.

Throughout the trial the accused denied the charges against them and claimed that they had gone to Albania in order to travel on to Italy or Greece to find work as well as to avoid conscription into the Yugoslav Army. They denied that the camp at Labinot in Albania where they had spent some time was a military camp and insisted it was a camp for refugees from Kosovo and from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Several of them told the court that they had health problems which they said would have in any case made them ineligible for recruitment for military training: Fehmi Lestrani has very poor eyesight, Luan Heta suffers from a heart complaint and Beqir Muleci, an orphan, has a history of psychiatric illness.

The seven also alleged that the statements which they had given during investigation proceedings were false and had been obtained from them by torture and ill-treatment. It appears from the information so far available to Amnesty International that their conviction was based largely on these statements. The defendants are appealing against their conviction.

Amnesty International is seeking further information about the evidence presented at the trial in order to establish whether the accused are prisoners of conscience.

(Amnesty International has no further information at present about Ismet Mahmuti, Faik Ajeti, Shemsi Veseli, Salih Mustafa, Ismet Veliqi, Avdi Behrami, and Ilaz Gashi (note corrected name).)

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams, faxes and airmail letters:

- expressing concern about allegations that the above persons were tortured or otherwise ill-treated during investigation;
- expressing concern that the court apparently accepted statements given by the accused during investigation proceedings without seeking to verify the defendants' allegations that the statements were false and obtained from them by means of torture and other ill-treatment;
- urging that these allegations be thoroughly and impartially investigated and that any police officer found to be responsible be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:**Minister of Justice of the Republic of Serbia**

Mr Arandjel Marki_evi_

Ministar pravde

Republičko Ministarstvo za pravosuđe i opštu upravu

Nemanjina 26, 11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Faxes: +381 11 683 041**Telegrams: Ministar Pravde Srbije, Belgrade, Yugoslavia.****Salutation: Dear Minister****Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia**

Mr Zoran Sokolovi_

Ministar unutrašnjih poslova Republike Srbije

Kneza Miloša 101, 11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Faxes: +381 11 683 041**Telegrams: Ministar Unutrašnjih Poslova Srbije, Belgrade, Yugoslavia****Salutation: Dear Minister****Public Prosecutor of Serbia**

Mr Dragan Petkovi_

Republički Javni Tu_ilac

Javno Tu_ilaštvo Republike Srbije

Nemanjina 26, 11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Telegrams: Republi_ki Javni Tu_ilac, Belgrade, Yugoslavia**Salutation: Dear Sir****COPIES OF APPEALS TO:****President of the Republic of Serbia**

Mr Slobodan Miloševi_

Predsednik Republike Srbije

Andri_ev Venac 1

11000 Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Faxes: +381 11 636 775**Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms**

Xhavit Mitrovica 15

38000 Priština, Yugoslavia

and to diplomatic representatives of the FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA
accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 September 1994.**