

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Montenegro (Serbia and Montenegro): Amnesty International calls on the Montenegrin authorities to ensure justice and reparations for victims of human rights violations

Amnesty International is concerned about the failure of the Montenegrin authorities to ensure reparation, including redress and compensation, to the surviving victims and relatives of human rights violations which took place in 1992.

Specifically, the organization is concerned at the failure of the Montenegrin authorities to bring to justice those suspected of responsibility for the arrest and subsequent “disappearance” of some 83 Bosnian Muslim civilians, apparently “deported “ from Montenegro to the then-Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in 1992.

Amnesty International is also concerned that the initiation of a criminal investigation into the “disappearances” may be being used as a pretext to delay the progress of proceedings in the civil courts for reparations for the victims and their families.

In a letter to the Minister of Justice in the Republic of Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro (SCG), Amnesty International called on the Montenegrin authorities to provide reparations to the victims and their relatives, independently of whether the individuals directly responsible for the “disappearances” have been brought to justice. The organization urged the Minister of Justice to ensure that victims and their families are provided with unrestricted access to pursue civil proceedings for reparations through the national courts.

Amnesty International also called on the Minister of Justice to ensure that criminal proceedings against all those suspected of involvement in, or complicity with, the deportations – including officials at all levels of government – should be conducted promptly, thoroughly and effectively, so that the perpetrators may be brought swiftly to justice.

Background

Between 19 May 1992 and 27 May 1992, some 83 Bosnian Muslim civilians, who had fled the armed conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, were arrested by members of the Herceg Novi police and later transferred into the hands of members of the then de facto authorities in Republika Srpska (RS), including to the Republika Srpska Army (Vojska Republike Srpske, VRS) and to the RS police. Twenty-one of these men were transported from the police station in Herceg-Novi in Montenegro and taken to the “KP Dom” prison camp in Foca in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is believed that the majority of these men were subsequently unlawfully killed at “KP Dom”. The bodies of 23 other men, who were reportedly to be

transferred to the Srebrenica police, were discovered in a river at Sremska Mitrovica, SCG, in 1992 and reburied. The bodies of these men have subsequently been exhumed and examinations concluded that they had been shot. The identities of four of these men were confirmed by DNA analysis in 2005. The fate and whereabouts of over 35 of the remaining deported persons remain unknown.