

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Media Briefing

AI Index: EUR 25/025/2002 (Public)
News Service No: 167
24 September 2002

Embargo Date: 24 September 2002 10:00 GMT

Greece: Quotes from victims of human rights violations

This document contains extracts of quotations from a number of individuals who have alleged that they were victims of human rights violations and whose cases are presented in the report "Greece: *In the shadow of impunity - Ill-treatment and the misuse of firearms*".

"[One officer] took an iron bar from under his desk... and held it to my throat saying he would choke me if I did not tell the truth... [A police officer] told me: 'Pull your trousers down. If you don't pull your trousers down for me to fuck you, you'll die here. I said I wouldn't... He pulled at the button and undid it. I buttoned it back up and then [they] beat me..." Lazaros Bekos, 17, Rom.

"I begged him to be careful of my arm because of an earlier operation for a double fracture, but he kicked me in the stomach and then the left arm, resulting in a further fracture. When I realized [what had happened] I told him: 'You've broken my arm, please call a doctor'. While I was writhing in pain, he tried to kick my genitals and bending to avoid the blow I received the kick in my right ribs. Then I thought my end had come..." Ilias Hatzidiakos, 40, Greek.

"After arresting me, the officers dragged me to the police patrol van, where they pulled me over the bonnet and began to beat me. I think they also used truncheons. Their blows made me fall to the ground and then they began to kick me. At one point they put me in the van, where they again began to beat me. For some reason they took me out of the van, beat me again, and then put me back into the van, where I was once again beaten. In the meantime my children had come to the door, and when they saw the officers beat me they began to cry." Andreas Kalamiotis, 21, Rom.

"At about 6.30pm, I crossed over a stream which runs along the border and began to climb the mountainside ... When I reached the top I took a path through the forest. I had not gone more than 300 metres when I heard a dog; the dog sprang at me and caught me by the sleeve of my jacket. Then I heard soldiers shout: 'Halt!' I answered: 'Yes!'... The soldiers called to me from a distance and I replied that I was alone. They came and searched me, called off the dog, and took away everything I had on me ... They [then] told me to lie face down on the ground. When I did this, they began to kick me and beat me with their rifle-butts on my side, back and shoulders. I said: 'Please, I'm an old man, please don't hit me'. They yelled: 'Don't say a word unless we ask you questions'. After they had well and truly beaten me, two soldiers (there was a third soldier who stood at a distance of some 12 to 15 metres and did not approach) told me to get up. With difficulty I got to my feet. The two soldiers who had beaten me withdrew some five metres and said something to each other in a low voice. I did not understand or hear what they were saying. But after this conversation, one of them approached me from behind with a pistol in his hand and said: 'Walk on ahead', and as I raised my right foot to take the first step, he shot me with the pistol, and

again told me to walk on. But I told him to shoot me in the head and finish me off. Then that soldier said to me: 'Why did you go back? -- although I had only taken one step forward. As I lay wounded on the ground, they said to me: 'Now run off to Albania' ... After about an hour a military doctor came. He tried to staunch the bleeding; he tore off a piece of my shirt and placed it on the right side of my stomach where the bullet had come out and told me to press it [against the wound]. He took two belts from the soldiers, and fastened them tightly around the wounds where the bullet had entered and come out.' Ferhat Ceka, 67, Albanian.

"At the frontier, men of the Greek border forces came towards us. They ordered us to lie down; three of my friends ran away, but they caught me and began to kick me and beat me with rifle butts about my head and body. Afterwards they took me to the barracks, and took the money I had on me ... they held me for about an hour. At 1am on 14 June 2001 they brought me to the Albanian customs post and we immediately went to the [Albanian] police and told them what had happened. The police took the necessary measures and brought me to hospital." Kastriot Rapi, Albanian.

"[Police officers at Hellenikon New Holding Centre] grabbed me and started to kick me, pulling me and beating me with a large black rectangular object that had two extensions like claws. Every time they touched me it was as if electricity was piercing my body." Joseph Emeka Okeke, Nigerian immigrant detained pending deportation.

"Despite the fact that I was alone, unarmed and that my back was turned towards them, the police officers ... attacked me violently without any reason. They surrounded me and started to kick me and beat me with truncheons all over my body until I collapsed on the pavement. Even then they did not stop -- on the contrary, [the plainclothes officer] continued with even greater violence to kick my head and face despite the fact that I was completely defenceless and overpowered." Melpo Koronaïou, Greek.

**The full report and other information for journalists is available on
<http://news.amnesty.org/greece2002>**

Public Document

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