

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 70/30/96

7 October 1996

Further information on EXTRA 153/96 (EUR 70/29/96, 2 October 1996) -
"Disappearance" / Fear of torture

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA Besim Sokol Rama
Avni Smajl Nura
Osman Sokol Rama - ethnic Albanians

On 4 October 1996 the official Yugoslav news agency *Tanjug* reported that Besim Rama and Avni Nura had been arrested on charges of "terrorist acts". They are reportedly accused of belonging to "an organized terrorist group" responsible for a series of attacks which claimed the lives of three police officers and one civilian from 1993 to mid-1996. Police also claim to have found the weapons used in these attacks, as well as other weapons, ammunition and explosives. The official announcement of their arrest comes over two weeks after their arrest (on 17 September 1996). Amnesty International still does not know what the present situation of Osman Rama, brother of Besim Rama, is. He was also arrested on 17 September but was released, after being tortured, on 23 September; he was again arrested on 27 September.

Amnesty International is concerned about the apparently prolonged incommunicado detention of Besim Rama and Avni Nura following arrest. Under Yugoslav law, police custody should not last more than 72 hours; however, in practice the organization knows of instances in which detainees have been held for up to 10 days before being brought before an investigating judge. The available information indicates that detainees are frequently subjected to torture and other ill-treatment during police custody, with the aim of obtaining self-incriminating statements from them.

FURTHER BACKGROUND

There have been a series of attacks on police officers and police stations in Kosovo province this year, in which at least three police officers were shot dead and three others wounded. An organization calling itself the Liberation Army of Kosovo (Albanian - *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës*) about which little is known, has reportedly claimed responsibility for many of these attacks.

In May 1993 two police officers were shot dead and five others wounded on the outskirts of the town of Glogovac. An ethnic Albanian, Ganimet Podvorica, was arrested and accused of these crimes in September 1994, but in November 1995 charges were dropped against him and he was released (see UA 350/94, EUR 70/22/94, 22 September 1994 and updates, EUR 70/15/95, 30 August 1995 and EUR 70/30/95, 17 November 1995). According to his lawyer, Ganimet Podvorica had consistently denied the charges against him during pre-trial investigation, despite having allegedly been subjected to physical torture. Earlier, in July 1994, a Serbian police inspector, Dragan Mladenovi_, alleged in a radio interview that a deputy Minister of the Interior of Serbia had organized the shooting of the police officers in Glogovac, with the aim of provoking conflict between ethnic Albanians and Serbs.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, French, German or Russian or in your own language:
- noting that the authorities have announced that Besim Rama and Avni Nura are detained on charges of terrorist acts;

- noting that they appear to have been arrested on 17 September 1996 and seeking an explanation for their apparently prolonged detention incommunicado in violation of Yugoslav law;
 - seeking information about the present circumstances of Osman Rama, brother of Besim, who was reportedly rearrested on 27 September after having been held from 17 to 23 September and allegedly tortured;
 - seeking assurances that these three men are not being subjected to torture or ill-treatment;
- urging that Besim Rama and Avni Nura (and Osman Rama if he is still detained) be granted full legal safeguards, in conformity with Yugoslavia's international human rights undertakings, including access to their families and their lawyers.

APPEALS TO:

1) Chief of police in Kosovska Mitrovica

Nacelnik SUP-a

Kosovska Mitrovica

AP Kosovo i Metohija

Telegrams: Nacelnik SUP-a, Kosovska Mitrovica, APKM

Salutation: Dear Sir

2) President of the Republic of Serbia

Mr Slobodan Miloševi_

Predsednik Republike Srbije

Andri_ev venac 1

11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Fax: +381 11 682 167

Telegrams: President Milosevic, Beograd, Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear President

3) Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

Mr Zoran Sokolovic

Ministar Unutrasnjih Poslova Republike Srbije

Kneza Milosa 101, 11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Fax: +381 11 683 041 or 685 937

Telegrams: MUP Srbije, Beograd, Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs

Milan Milutinovi_

Ministar za inostrane poslove

Savezno ministarstvo za inostrane poslove

Kneza Miloša 24

11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Fax: + 381 11 682 668

Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms, Pristina

Xhavit Mitrovica 15, 38000 Pristina, Yugoslavia

and to diplomatic representatives of 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 10 November 1996.