

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 341/94 Ill-treatment

16 September 1994

YUGOSLAVIA - Kosovo province

Metë Zekaj, Bejtullah Ismaili, Mulla Ajni Ramadani, Harun Shabanaj, Zeqë Hasaj, Rrustem Latifaj, Sali Ahmetaj, Xhavit Shala, Deli Haklaj, Isa Ahmetgjekaj, Rexhep Ahmetaj, Xhemail Bajraktari, Valon Islamaj and Abdyl Shala

The above 14 men, ethnic Albanians from Kosovo province in the Republic of Serbia, were reportedly arrested and beaten by police at De_ani police station on 14 September 1994. They were among some 40 to 50 ethnic Albanians who were arrested that day in Isni_ village. This was after police interrupted a concert being held to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the adoption by ethnic Albanian deputies of a constitution proclaiming Kosovo province a republic. Those arrested were reportedly released later the same day, but 35 of them were ordered to report to police the following day.

Several of the above men were reportedly severely injured by police who beat them. In particular, Metë Zekaj from Rauši_ village, was allegedly beaten with a rubber truncheon all over his body and has since sought medical care.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In July 1990 the Serbian parliament suspended the Kosovo parliament and government after ethnic Albanian deputies of the Kosovo parliament declared Kosovo independent of the Republic of Serbia. In September 1990 the ethnic Albanian deputies met clandestinely and adopted a constitution proclaiming Kosovo a republic within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Serbian authorities do not recognize this constitution and have on a number of occasions sent police in to break up such celebrations on the grounds that they are public meetings which have been held without official permission.

Police violence has escalated in the predominantly Albanian-populated province of Kosovo since the beginning of 1994. Amnesty International daily learns of cases in which officers of the largely Serbian police force have beaten ethnic Albanians in police stations or while carrying out arms searches in their homes. For further information, please see Amnesty International's report: Yugoslavia: Police violence against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province (AI Index: EUR 70/06/94).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English, French or German, or in your own language:

- expressing deep concern about reports that the above men were beaten by police officers at De_ane police station on 14 September 1994 and that several have allegedly been severely injured, among them Metë Zekaj, who has required medical treatment;

- urging the authorities to initiate a prompt, independent and impartial inquiry into the allegations of ill-treatment made in these cases and in many other recent cases involving ethnic Albanians;

- noting that torture and other ill-treatment are prohibited both under Yugoslav national law and under international law;

- urging, therefore, that any persons found to be responsible for ill-treatment be brought to justice;

- urging that police officers be informed of, and required to uphold, international standards for law enforcement.

APPEALS TO

Chief of police, De_ane

Na_elnik

Sekretarijat Unutrašnjih Poslova

De_ane, AP Kosovo i Metohija

Yugoslavia

Telegrams: Nacelnik SUP-a, De_ane, APKM, Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear Chief of Police

Prefect of Pe_ district

Na_elnik Pe_kog okruga

Jovo Popovi_

38300 Pe_, AP Kosovo i Metohija, Yugoslavia

Telegrams: Popovi_, Nacelnik Okruga, Pe_, APKM, Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear Mr Popovi_

Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

Zoran Sokolovi_

Ministar Unutrašnjih Poslova Republike Srbije

Kneza Miloša 101

11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Faxes: +381 11 683 041

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Committee for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms, Priština:

Xhavit Mitrovica 15

38000 Priština, Yugoslavia.

The district public prosecutor of Pe_

Okru_ni javni tu_ilac

38300 Pe_, AP Kosovo i Metohija, Yugoslavia

and to diplomatic representatives of Yugoslavia accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 October 1994.