

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 278/94 (EUR 63/16/94, 19 July 1994) and update of 25 July 1994 - Fear of Ill-Treatment/Fear of Deliberate and Arbitrary Killings

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: Sulejman Skoki_, Kemal Skoki_, Halid Adanali_, Esad Adanali_, Avdo Adanali_ - also (new names) Halid Velagi_, Omer Alibegovi_ and other Muslims in Serb-controlled areas of north-eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina (Janja, Bijeljina and Br_ko).

On 25 July the Belgrade newspaper *Borba* carried a report that some 150 Muslim families had been expelled from Bijeljina. The report stated: "In recent days, particularly during the night hours, the streets of Bijeljina in the area of the grain silo and the Agricultural School have echoed to the cries of Muslim women and children. The police have been forcibly entering their homes, armed and threatening to kill them, and have been taking them away, pushing them into police cars and then sending them off to Tuzla [under Bosnian Government control]".

The report stated that those expelled included Muslims who in the past two years had converted to the (Christian) Orthodox faith (the religion of most Serbs)*, some of whom had male relatives fighting with Bosnian Serb forces, and who therefore risked reprisals in Tuzla. According to the report, this operation had been carried out by police from Pale (headquarters of the Bosnian Serbs), directed by a Bosnian Serb official with the title of "President of the Commission for refugees and the exchange of prisoners". Local police were reportedly not considered "reliable".

The report noted that the expulsion of Muslims had caused deep revulsion amongst many inhabitants of the town and some Serbian families in the neighbourhood had protected and hidden Muslim children in their homes. The report claimed that following the intervention of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the expulsions had apparently stopped, although the author feared that this would be only a temporary respite.

In fact, according to a *Reuter* report, a UNHCR spokesman on 1 August said that the expulsion of Muslims from Bijeljina was continuing. He stated that the previous night 31 Muslims had been expelled across front lines to Tuzla, most of them women but also men and children, bringing the number of those expelled from Bijeljina to 225. "[All] were taken to a location where their baggage and money was taken away. Eventually they were forced to march across the front line to the Tuzla area". Their male relatives had apparently been detained for forced labour on the front lines. The report noted that some 280 other Muslims refugees had crossed frontlines from elsewhere in north Bosnia since mid-July.

Amnesty International has no further information on the men named above.

* There have been a number of reports that since the outbreak of conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, certain Muslim families in Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina have converted to the Orthodox faith and changed their names to Serbian names in the hope of avoiding persecution and expulsion.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing deep concern about reports that since 15 July Bosnian Serb forces have arrested Muslim men from Bijeljina, Br_ko and Janja, including the above-named men from Janja, some of whom have reportedly been mobilized to fight, against their will, Bosnian Government forces, while others have been mobilized to carry out forced labour;
- urging the immediate release of all those who have been detained and forcibly mobilized against their will;
- expressing deep concern about recent allegations that Serb military officials, accompanied by Serb civilians, have raped women in Janja, after arresting adult male members of their households, and urging that these allegations be investigated and any perpetrators brought to justice;
- expressing concern about reports indicating that Muslims have continued to be forcibly expelled from Bijeljina, most recently on 31 July;
- calling for immediate action to ensure an end to all attempts to make non-Serbs leave their homes, whether by force or intimidation.

APPEALS TO:

President of a Bosnian Serb "Commission for refugees and exchange of prisoners"
 Vojkan Djurkovi_
 Predsednik komisije za izbeglice i za razmenu zarobljenika
 76300 Bijeljina
 Republika Srpska, (via) Yugoslavia.

Fax: Pale, near Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: +381 71 783 442*

Salutation: Dear Sir

Commander of Serbian forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina
 General Ratko Mladi_
 c/o Vila "Bosanka"
 Dedinje, Beograd, Yugoslavia.

Fax : Belgrade +381 11 669 867 or +381 11 235 1213

Fax: Pale, near Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina: +381 71 783 442*

Salutation: Dear General Mladi_

(* it may not easy to get a connection)

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The representative of the Bosnian Serbs
 Dr Radovan Karad_i_
 c/o Vila "Bosanka"
 Dedinje, Beograd, Yugoslavia.

Fax: Belgrade - +381 11 669 867

The President of Janja municipal assembly
 Predsednik
 Skupština opštine
 76316 Janja
 Republika Srpska, (via) Yugoslavia.

The President of Bijeljina municipal assembly
 Predsednik
 Skupština opštine
 76300 Bijeljina
 Republika Srpska, (via) 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 13 September 1994.

PLEASE NOTE: Because letters for "Republika Srpska" (Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina) are more likely to reach their destination if mailed via Yugoslavia than if addressed to Bosnia-Herzegovina, we have, for practical reasons, made changes to the addresses given on the original UA and the first update. Apologies.