

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 435/93 (EUR 11/06/93, 16 December 1993) - LEGAL CONCERN

ALBANIA:Muho ARTUNDA ASLLANI

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On 26 December 1993, the above ten former communist party officials, members of the "politburo", were found guilty by Tirana Court of "violating the equality of citizens" by granting themselves privileges while they were in power. They received sentences of between six and eight years' imprisonment. They were also ordered to make repayments to the state.

At the end of the trial, the president of the court lifted the ban on press reporting of the trial and declared that the media was free to publicize all the sessions of the court.

However, despite the lifting of the ban, it appears that there has been little press reporting of the trial, and so far little information is publicly available about the specific charges against individual defendants and the evidence to support them.

On 29 December the official Albanian news agency, ATA, reported that the defendants had appealed against their convictions, stating that they were innocent and had "inherited" their privileges under decisions of the politburo which had been above the law. The results of their appeal are not yet known to Amnesty International.

Thank you to everyone who sent appeals. No further action is required.