

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 11/15/96

8 August 1996

Further information on EXTRA 74/96 (EUR 11/12/96, 21 MAY 1996) and follow-up (EUR 11/113/96 of 29 May 1996) - Arbitrary detention / Ill-treatment

**ALBANI** **Blendi Gonxhe, Arben Imami, Gramoz Pashko, Sërvet Pëllumbi, Namik Dokle, Arta Deda (f), Musa Ulqini, Ali Lelaj, Luan Hajdaraga, Gaço Apostolli, Paskal Milo, Maço Lakrori, Shpresa Sula (f), Neritan Çeka, Skënder Gjinushi and other leaders, activists and supporters of opposition parties, and journalists**

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Following considerable international criticism of official intimidation, violence and polling irregularities in connection with national elections on 26 May 1996 and the suppression of a protest by the opposition in Tirana on 28 May, the authorities announced that seven senior police officers had been dismissed for "incompetence".

In addition, an investigation has been started in connection with the demonstration of 28 May. A number of leading members of the opposition have been called to the Prosecutor's office in Tirana to give statements, although it is not clear whether the main aim of the investigation is to determine who organized the demonstration (for which the authorities had refused permission) and to bring charges against them, or to determine which police officers were responsible for beating and otherwise ill-treating demonstrators that day. Meanwhile, on 16 July a Tirana court found four men guilty of taking part in the banned demonstration on 28 May and sentenced them to fines. Six others were acquitted.

On 1 July the new parliament convened; the ruling Democratic Party has 122 out of 140 seats and three smaller parties a total of eight seats. The main opposition party, the Socialist Party, which pulled out of the elections alleging vote-rigging (it won 10 seats), is boycotting the parliament. The parliament has set up a commission to investigate allegations of fraud and violence during elections, but the Socialist Party has expressed its lack of confidence in the commission's ability to conduct an impartial investigation into this matter.

On 1 August parliament ratified the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express/airmail letters in Italian, English, French or in your own language:**

- welcoming measures reportedly taken by the authorities to investigate the beating and ill-treatment of opposition demonstrators on 28 May 1996 in Tirana by police officers;
- noting, however, that while four demonstrators have reportedly been convicted and fined for taking part in the demonstration, it appears that no charges have yet been filed against police officers responsible for ill-treatment although seven are reported to have been dismissed from service;
- urging that any investigation of these events be carried out promptly and impartially and that its methods and its findings be made public;
- urging that police officers responsible for ill-treatment be brought to justice;
- welcoming Albania's recent ratification of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Convention

for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and urging that the human rights guaranteed in these instruments be fully implemented.

**APPEALS TO:**

**President of Albania**

Dr Sali Berisha  
Presidenti i Republikës së Shqipërisë  
Tirana, Republic of Albania  
**Faxes: +355 42 33761 or 355 42 28 420**  
**Salutation: Dear President**

**Minister of Public Order**

Mr Halit Shamata  
Minister i Rendit Publik, Tirana, Albania  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Mr Tritan Shehu  
Minister i Punëve të Jashtme, Tirana, Albania

**The Albanian Helsinki Committee**

Komiteti Shqiptar i Helsinkit  
Qendra Nderkombetare e kultures, Dhoma no.35  
Bulevardi "Deshmoret e kombit"  
Tirana, Albania

and to diplomatic representatives of Albania accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 September 1996.