

EXTERNAL

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## **GERMANY: ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF NASREDDINE BELHADEFS**

The following information comes from a written statement made by Nasreddine Belhadebs, a complaint of ill-treatment lodged by him with the Erfurt Public Procurator's office and from medical and press reports.

During the afternoon of 29 September 1993 Nasreddine Belhadebs - a 33-year-old Algerian asylum-seeker - was on his way home in the eastern German town of Erfurt when he was suddenly set upon by three men in civilian clothing. They forced him to the ground, then proceeded to hit and kick him as he lay on his stomach. As they wrenched his arms backwards one of the men knelt on his shoulder, causing it to fracture. Bleeding from his nose, Nasreddine Belhadebs cried out for help but the men continued to hit him and ordered him to be quiet. Passers-by ran to his aid and asked the men why they were hitting him. It was only when they replied that they were police officers that Nasreddine Belhadebs realised for the first time who they were.

Nasreddine Belhadebs was handcuffed and taken to **Andreasstraße police station**. He was brought to a room where other foreigners were also being held and ordered to undress. After being searched, he put on his clothes and was handcuffed to a radiator and left in a room with the other detainees for about one hour. He was then finger-printed and photographed. When he complained to a police officer about his ill-treatment he was told that his arrest had followed normal procedure.

Only later when he was interviewed by a plainclothes officer did he discover that the foreigners had all been arrested on suspicion of selling drugs. The officer did not say that Nasreddine Belhadebs himself was a suspect. He was then allowed to leave as no charges were to be brought against him. At this point Nasreddine Belhadebs refused to leave until his shoulder - which was very painful - had been examined by a doctor. An ambulance was called which took him to Erfurt Hospital where a fracture to his right shoulder was diagnosed. Nasreddine Belhadebs had to undergo an operation to the injury on 6 October. The police agreed to pay for his hospital treatment.

On 5 October Nasreddine Belhadebs lodged a complaint about his ill-treatment with the Erfurt Public Procurator's office (Staatsanwaltschaft Erfurt). In his statement he reiterated that the police officers had neither spoken to him nor told him to stop before attacking him on the street. Nine days later the police issued a counter-complaint against Nasreddine Belhadebs for resisting police authority (Widerstand gegen Vollstreckungsbeamte).

Amnesty International is seeking information from the authorities in Thüringia about the outcome of the complaint of ill-treatment lodged by Nasreddine Belhadebs and the counter-complaint issued by the police.