

TAKE ACTION NOW

Send your letters to:

Prime Minister
Mr Kostas Simitis
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
Megaron Maximou,
19 Herodou Atticou Avenue
106 74 Athens

Minister of Public Order
Mr Michalis Chrysochoidis
Minister of Public Order
Ministry of Public Order
1 Katehaki Street
101 77 Athens

Minister of Justice
Mr Philippos Petsalnikos
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
96 Messogion Avenue
115 27 Athens

Please send copies of your letter to:

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr Giorgos Papandreou
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1 Akadimias,
106 71 Athens

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for human rights. Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote respect for all human rights.

For more information about Amnesty International and our work on increasing awareness of human rights violations and racism, contact Amnesty International in your country:

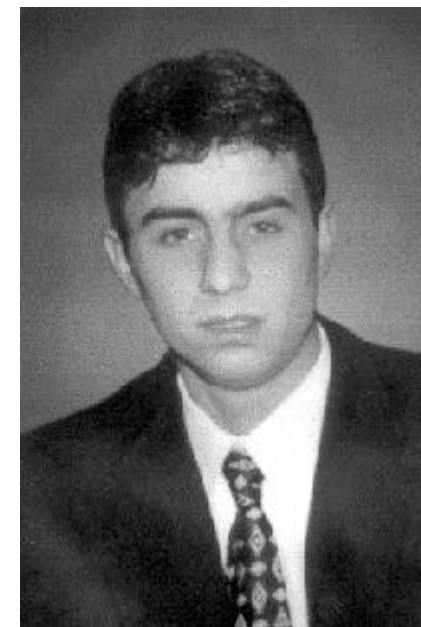
or write to: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK
www.amnesty.org

AI Index: EUR 25/013/2002

G R E E C E

Torture and ill treatment
and unlawful use of fire-arms

Marinos Christopoulos



Marinos Christopoulos ©Private

***Lethal and reckless use of
firearms by greek police***



Amnesty
International

On 24 October **Marinos Christopoulos**, an unarmed Rom aged 21, died in Zefyri, Attica after being shot in the head by a police officer when he failed to stop at a police checkpoint. The police officer reportedly told the investigating judge that Marinos Christopoulos had attempted to run him down and that while trying to avoid the vehicle he had stumbled, causing his gun to discharge accidentally. According to an autopsy report Marinos Christopoulos was killed by a bullet which entered the back of his head.

The officer was charged with “reckless homicide” and released on bail. He was not suspended from duty pending investigation. However, an internal police inquiry in March 2002 concluded that the officer had fired a shot at the car to halt it, while being aware of, and accepting, the possibility that this action might cause the death of the driver, and recommended his dismissal from service. The judicial investigation of this case has been concluded but by July 2002 no decision had been taken as to whether the police officer should be referred for trial.

In November 2001, a month after the death of Marinos Christopoulos, an Albanian citizen died after being shot by a police officer in central Athens. In April 2002 an appeal court confirmed a 27-month suspended prison sentence imposed on a police officer who in 1998 shot and killed an unarmed 17-year old Serbian high-school student in Thessaloniki. Also in April 2001 another police officer, who was reportedly inadequately trained in the use of weapons, was convicted of the manslaughter of an unarmed Rom in 1996; he received a suspended two-year prison sentence. In all three cases the Greek police officers stated that their guns had fired accidentally. For further information see

Greece: In the Shadow of Impunity – Ill-treatment and the Misuse of Firearms (AI Index:EUR 25/022/2002).

Please send appeals to the Prime Minister, Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Order and a copy of appeals to the Minister of Foreign Affairs using the addresses at the back of this leaflet

- **expressing** Amnesty International’s concern that the police officer responsible for the death of Marinos Christopoulos may have resorted to the use of firearms recklessly and unlawfully, in violation of international standards which limit the use of firearms to situations of threat of death or serious injury, and when less extreme measures are insufficient;
- **noting** that there have been other similar incidents, urge that all police officers receive appropriate training and be required to abide by international standards governing the use of firearms by law enforcement officials; further, urge that following the introduction of any new legislation in this field, its implementation be carefully monitored;
- **urging** that all such incidents be promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated and that sentences imposed on any police officers convicted of causing death by the unlawful use of firearms reflect the gravity of the offence.

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Mr Philippos Petsalnikos
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
96 Messogion Avenue
115 27 Athens

Minister of Defence
Mr Yannis Papandoniου
Minister of Defence
Ministry of National Defence
Stratopedo Papagou
1020 STG
15 500 Holargos (Pentagono)
Athens

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Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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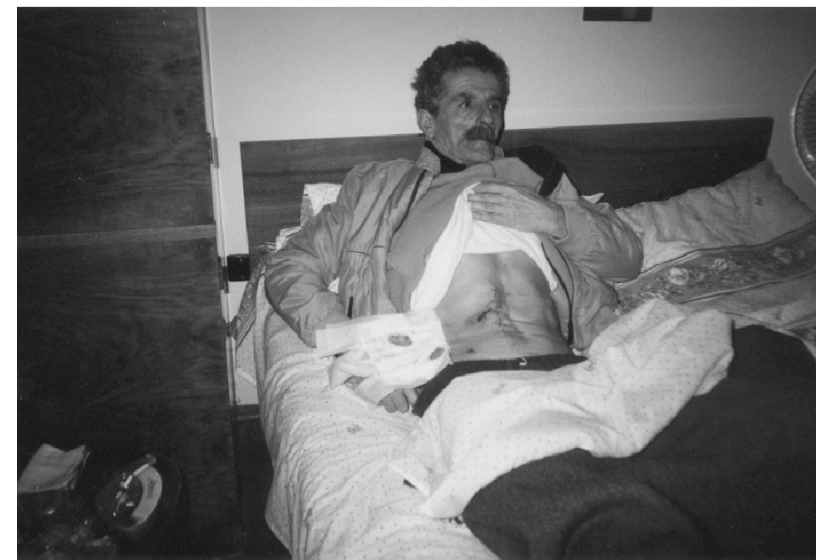
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AI Index: EUR 25/013/2002

G R E E C E

Torture and ill treatment
and unlawful use of fire-arms

Ferhat Çeka



Ferhat Çeka © ARCT

***Shot and wounded on
the greek border***



Amnesty
International

Over the past decade there have been a number of reports that Albanians who have illegally crossed the border into Greece have been shot, sometimes fatally, by Greek police border guards or soldiers on border duty. Clandestine border-crossers include dangerous criminals, but the majority are men driven by poverty to seek work on farms and building sites in Greece. While in some instances Greek law enforcement officials have used firearms in legitimate self-defence, in others it appears that they may have fired shots simply to intimidate and deter border-crossers, or to punish them.

Since 1991 Ferhat Çeka, aged 67, has supplemented his meagre pension and supported his family in Tirana by spending several months almost every year in Greece working during the harvest season on farms, or more recently as a shepherd. In March 2002 he set out once again. According to his account, on the evening of 8 March 2002 he crossed clandestinely into Greece. He was alone and unarmed. Just after he crossed the border he was apprehended by three soldiers.

“They told me to lie face down on the ground. When I did this, they began to kick me and beat me with their rifle-butts on my side and back and shoulders. I said: ‘Please, I’m an old man, please don’t hit me’. They yelled: “Don’t say a word unless we ask you questions”. After they had well and truly beaten me, two soldiers (there was a third soldier who stood at a distance of some 12 to 15 metres and did not approach) told me to stand up. With difficulty I got to my feet. The two soldiers who had beaten me withdrew some five metres and said something to each other in a low voice. I did not understand or hear what they were saying. But after this conversation, one of them approached me from behind with a pistol in his hand and said: “Walk on ahead”, and as I raised my right foot to take the first step, he shot me with the pistol, and again told me to walk on. But I told him to shoot me in the head and finish me off. Then that soldier said to me: “Why did you go back?” - although I had only taken one step forward. As I was lay wounded on the ground, they said to me: “Now run off to Albania”.

After about an hour a military doctor came and he was taken to the hospital in Kastoria.

Ferhat Çeka was discharged from Kastoria Hospital on 21 March 2002, and returned to Albania. A medical report issued by the hospital that day states that he was admitted with a bullet wound which entered the right side of the kidney and exited from the right abdomen. The report stated that he underwent an operation in which his right kidney was removed as well as part of the right lobe of the liver.

On his return to Albania, Ferhat Çeka sought further medical treatment. A medical report dated 28 March, issued by a doctor at the Albanian Centre for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims in Tirana, confirmed the above injuries and noted that he was suffering from anxiety and depression. *“He recalls these events in detail...he has nightmares...and cries out in his sleep”*. An internal inquiry was initiated in March by the Greek military authorities. By mid-July the Military Prosecutor of Thessaloniki had not yet decided whether to start criminal proceedings.

In an earlier incident in June 2001, Greek border guards or soldiers shot and wounded a 15-year old Albanian youth, leaving him permanently paralysed from the waist down. In the latter case, too, it is alleged that law enforcement officials used firearms recklessly and unlawfully, in violation of international standards which limit their use to situations of threat of death or serious injury, and when less extreme measures are insufficient. For further information see *Greece: In the Shadow of Impunity – Ill-treatment and the Misuse of Firearms* (AI Index: EUR 25/022/2002).

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- **expressing** Amnesty International’s concern that on 8 March 2002 a Greek soldier on border duty allegedly beat and then shot and critically wounded Ferhat Çeka, an Albanian citizen aged 67, whom he had already apprehended.
- **urging** the authorities to ensure a thorough and impartial investigation into the incident and any other similar incidents, and to bring to justice any law enforcement official responsible for the unlawful use of firearms;
- **urging** a review of regulations and instructions relating to the use of firearms by police and military on border duties, so as to ensure that these are consistent with international standards which limit the use of firearms to situations of threat of death or serious injury, and when less extreme measures are insufficient.