

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: EUR 48/13/90
Distr: UA/SC

PLEASE ORGANIZE UP TO 10 APPEALS PER SECTION

UA 345/90

Legal Concern

30 August 1990

YUGOSLAVIA: Hajrullah GORANI

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On 23 August, Hajrullah Gorani, President of the "Union of Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo" was arrested and sentenced to 60 days' imprisonment after a summary trial for "disturbing public peace and order". The day before, via a press conference, he had called upon the ethnic Albanian population of Kosovo province to join in a general strike which is scheduled to start on 3 September 1990.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The autonomous province of Kosovo, in the south of Yugoslavia, is a constituent part of the Republic of Serbia. Since 1981 there have been repeated demands by ethnic Albanians, who account for some 85% of the population, for Kosovo to cease to be part of Serbia and to be granted republic status. Several thousands of ethnic Albanians have been sentenced to long prison terms for non-violent political activity in support of this demand. In 1989 the province's autonomy was severely reduced under pressure from the Republic of Serbia, seeking to obtain greater powers over the whole of the republic's territory. In June-July 1990 the province's autonomy was virtually ended by Serbia. The Kosovo parliament and government were dissolved by the Serbian Assembly and Serbian officials were sent into the province to take over. On 2 July, ethnic Albanian members of the already defunct Kosovo Assembly adopted a proclamation declaring Kosovo to be an "equal member within the Yugoslav Federation". Albanian-language media have been banned by the Serbian authorities, and many ethnic Albanian workers have been suspended or dismissed from their jobs. The Kosovo Communist Party and its affiliated trade union, youth organization, etc, have suffered in recent times from a massive loss of members and the ethnic Albanian population has increasingly joined so-called "alternative" organizations instead, among them the Union of Independent Trade Unions which was founded in July. The general strike scheduled to begin on 3 September is intended as a manifestation of passive resistance by the ethnic Albanian population against Serbia's control over public life in the province. The strike is to last 24 hours or a week, depending "on the further development of the situation".

Amnesty International is concerned that Hajrullah Gorani has been arrested, tried and imprisoned on account of his non-violent political activity, in violation of Article 19 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by Yugoslavia in 1971, which state that everyone should have the right to freedom of expression and freedom of association.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters:

- urging the immediate and unconditional release of Hajrullah Gorani on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience.

Note to Coordinators: Please organize appeals from trade unionists

APPEALS TO:

President of the SFRJ Presidency:
His Excellency Dr. Borisav Jovic
Predsednik Predsednistva SFRJ
Bulevar Lenjina 2
11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Telegrams: SFRJ President, Beograd, Yugoslavia
Telexes: 11062 SIV YU

Federal Secretary of Justice:
Dr. Vlado Kambovski
Sekretar
Savezni sekretarijat za pravosudje
Bulevar Lenjina 2
11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Telegrams: SFRJ Justice Secretary, Beograd, Yugoslavia
Telexes: 11062 SIV YU

President of Serbian Presidency:
Slobodan Milosevic
Predsednik
Predsednistvo SR Srbije
Marsala Tita 14
11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Serbian Secretary of Justice:
Sreten Vladislavljevic
Sekretar
Republički sekretarijat za pravosudje i opstu upravu
Nemanjina 26
11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Yugoslavia in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 October 1990.