

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**UA 371/91**

**Arrest and Disappearance**

**1 November 1991**

**YUGOSLAVIA:**

**Drago Eterovic and others**

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Drago Eterovic (aged 62), and 15 or 16 members of a Roman Catholic church committee in the town of Ba\_ka Palanka in the province of Vojvodina (Serbia) were arrested by local police on 4 October 1991. Their present whereabouts is not known. The available information indicates they are all Croats.

Police have reportedly refused to give the family and the lawyer of Drago Eterovic information about the reasons for his arrest and his place of detention on the grounds that it concerns a "military matter". His wife recently received a note supposedly from him via the Red Cross in Serbia, in which he said he was well, but it appears that it was not written in his handwriting. Officials of the Red Cross apparently later informed her that they were unable to provide any information about his place of detention and the charges against him.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Since the outbreak of armed conflict in Croatia in July 1991, there have been reports of extrajudicial executions and killings in Croatia and in border areas carried out against captured civilians or members of armed forces. There have also been reports of the torture and ill-treatment of people detained in connection with the fighting, and of the taking of hostages. Victims have included Croats, Serbs and other nationalities.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/faxes/and airmail letters:**

- expressing concern about the reported arrest of Drago Eterovic and others on 4 October 1991 in Backa Palanka, stating that you understand that the police authorities have refused to provide information about the place of detention and the grounds for the arrest of Drago Eterovic;

- requesting information about the place of detention and the grounds for the arrest of these men;

- urging that they be granted legal safeguards in accordance with international standards, in particular access to their families and lawyers.

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**APPEALS TO**

Federal Secretary for National Defence  
General Veljko Kadijevic  
Savezni Sekretar za Narodnu odbranu  
Kneza Milosa 35  
Belgrade  
Yugoslavia

**Dear General**

**Telegrams: National Defence Secretary Kadijevic, Belgrade Yugoslavia**

**Faxes: + 38 11 636 775**

Federal Secretary of Justice  
Dr Vlado Kambovski  
Savezni sekretar za pravosudje  
Bulevar Lenjina 2  
11070 Belgrade  
Yugoslavia

**Dear Secretary**

**Telegrams: Justice Secretary Kambovski, Belgrade, Yugoslavia**

**Faxes: + 38 11 636 775**

Minister of Internal Affairs of the  
Republic of Serbia

**Dear Minister**

Sekretar  
Republički sekretarijat za unutrašnje poslove RS  
Kneza Milosa 101  
Belgrade  
Yugoslavia

**Telegrams: Serbia Internal Affairs Minister, Belgrade, Yugoslavia**

**Faxes: + 38 11682 167**

**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 13 December 1991.