

**JUSTICE FOR  
THE QERKEZI  
FAMILY**

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



**KOSOVO 2009  
A DECADE  
OF IMPUNITY**

# JUSTICE FOR THE QERKEZI FAMILY

Eleven men of the Qerkezi family disappeared at the hands of the Serbian police forces in 1999. They were Halim Qerkezi, his four sons Artan Qerkezi, Edmond Qerkezi, Armend Qerkezi and Ardian Qerkezi, Halim's nephew Vegim Qerkezi, and Halim's cousins Shpejtim Ymeraga, Skënder Dylhasi, Myrtezan Dylhasi, Fatos Jetishi and Shpend Jetishi.

During the internationalized conflict in Kosovo the Qerkezi family stayed in their house in Gjakovë (Đjakovica). On 27 April 1999 the Serbian police visited the Qerkezi house. Other masked men, also believed to be Serbian police officers arrived shortly afterwards. These masked men ordered the 11 men outside, while the women and children were ordered to stay in the basement. The 11 Qerkezi men were loaded onto an unmarked lorry and driven away. They were never seen alive again.

Their relatives remained in Gjakovë and made intensive but fruitless efforts to discover from the local Serbian police what had happened to them.

In September 1999, Artan Qerkezi's identification card was found near Lake Shkozë (Škoza), more than 30 km away



from Gjakovë. Halim Qerkezi's brother, Kasim Qerkezi, went to the lake and recognized the bodies of four men – Myrtezan Dylhasi and his three nephews – Artan, Armend and Ardian Qerkezi. According to Kasim Qerkezi, the bodies were half in and half out of the lake. He told KFOR (the NATO-led force in Kosovo) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) what he saw at the lake. He went to the site with the ICTY investigator, who promised the bodies would be recovered and returned to the families.

The bodies of Artan Qerkezi and Edmond Qerkezi were exhumed by the ICTY in 2000 from two different locations in Kosovo. The families were not given any reason why the bodies had been moved, and did not receive the bodies until 15 December 2005.

The fate and whereabouts of Halim Qerkezi, Armend Qerkezi, Ardian Qerkezi, Vegim Qerkezi, Myrtezan Dylhasi, Skënder Dylhasi, Shpejtim Ymeraga, Fatos Jetishi, and Shpend Jetishi, who were detained and disappeared at the same time, have never been disclosed to their families. Although an investigation was opened by the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), no one has been brought to justice.

# TAKE ACTION

The Serbian authorities have the responsibility to investigate the enforced disappearances in 1999 of ethnic Albanians and others by Serbian police and paramilitary forces and to bring those responsible to justice.

## WRITE TO VLADIMIR VUKČEVIĆ, THE WAR CRIMES PROSECUTOR IN SERBIA

- Urge the Prosecutor to investigate the enforced disappearances of the Qerkezi family and their relatives and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.
- Provide the details of the case given on this card, adding that an investigation had previously been opened by UNMIK.
- Ask the Prosecutor to ensure that the families are kept informed of any developments in this case.
- Ask for full co-operation and exchange of information with the European Union-led Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), which has been responsible for investigating and prosecuting war crimes in Kosovo since December 2008.

### Send appeals to:

War Crimes Prosecutor  
Vladimir Vukčević  
Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor  
Belgrade District Court  
Ustanička 29  
11000 Beograd  
Republic of Serbia  
Fax: +381 11 3082 782  
Email: kabinet@tuzilastvorz.org.rs  
Salutation: Dear Mr Vukčević

### Send copies to:

Head of EULEX Justice Component  
Alberto Perduca  
EULEX Kosovo Justice Building  
Str. Lidhja e Prizrenit no.9  
P.O. Box 268  
1000 Pristina  
Kosovo  
Fax: +381 38 2030 555  
Email: alberto.perduca@eulex-kosovo.eu

*Images overleaf (from left to right): Halim Qerkezi, Ardian Qerkezi, Armend Qerkezi, Artan Qerkezi*

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www.amnesty.org  
August 2009  
Index: EUR 70/012/2009