

EXTERNAL

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Zaim ZEJNULLAHU - Kosovo province, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Zaim Zejnullahu is an ethnic Albanian from Vitina town in Kosovo province. He is a member of the Democratic League of Kosovo (the main party representing ethnic Albanians in Kosovo) and President of the local Financial Council, one of the "parallel" institutions (outside the official state institutions) created by ethnic Albanians, most of whom do not recognize Serbian/Yugoslav authority in the province. Like many other ethnic Albanian political activists he has on a number of occasions been arrested by police who have also searched the Council's offices.

Most recently, it is reported that shortly after mid-day on 18 October 1995 he was arrested in the middle of Vitina town by police, who made him get into their car and then drove away. As they left the town, the police officers pulled a coat over his head, handcuffed him and held his head down on the car seat so that he was unable to see. The police officers continued to drive, while threatening him that they would take him to the border with Macedonia, give him some cans of fuel and shoot him so that it would look as though a fuel smuggler had been shot. At about 3pm they stopped at a police station, took him into an office there (still blindfolded) and handcuffed him to a metal chest. They then began to question him about his political activities and accused him of being commander of a clandestine "defence headquarters".

While questioning him they reportedly punched and slapped him and beat him with rubber truncheons, demanding that he "confess". They took it in turns to beat him while the questioning continued. He remained in the office, injured and handcuffed, until the following day, when he was released at about 9am. It was only on his release that he learned from passers-by in the street that he was in the town of Kamenica (about 35 kilometres from Vitina).

Zaim Zejnullahu was reportedly physically injured by the beating he received from the police officers and subsequently sought medical treatment.

On 19 October 1995 it was reported that criminal proceedings had been started against Zaim Zejnullahu and two other ethnic Albanians on charges of "inciting resistance to measures and laws of state bodies". These charges reportedly refer to an incident in 1991 when he allegedly called for the dismissal of three Serbian members of the local Assembly.

Amnesty International's concern: Amnesty International is concerned that Zaim Zejnullahu was beaten and otherwise ill-treated at Kamenica police station on 18 October 1995 by state security police and is calling for a full and impartial investigation into the incident. The organization is further calling for those responsible to be brought to justice. Both Yugoslav law and international human rights treaties which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia recognizes as

legally binding (in particular the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment ratified by the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991) prohibit torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Amnesty International opposes unconditionally torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners.