

26 April 1999

Further information on UA 73/99 (EUR 70/32/99, 13 April 1999) - Possible extrajudicial execution / Repression of media

Additional concern: Fear for safety

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA Miodrag Perovi_, Nebojša Red_i_, other Yugoslav and foreign journalists/media workers

Amnesty International remains deeply concerned for the safety of independent journalists in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as new reports of repression of the media emerge. On 24 April 1999, Miodrag Perovi_, the founder of the Montenegrin independent weekly magazine *Monitor* and the independent radio station Antena M, reportedly went into hiding after an unsuccessful attempt by the Federal Yugoslav military authorities to deliver an arrest warrant to him. The exact nature of the charges contained in the warrant is not known. It appears, however, that Miodrag Perovi_'s refusal to obey requests of the Yugoslav Army to stop transmitting foreign broadcasts, including those of the BBC and the Voice of America, and the criticism which his media outlets have levelled at the Yugoslav Army and police operations in Kosovo province, are the motive behind the authorities' actions.

In a similar move, the Podgorica Military Court reportedly issued another summons against Neboja Red_i_, the Editor-in-Chief of radio Free Montenegro. He is believed to have gone into hiding as well. Amnesty International fears that the men may be arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned on the above-mentioned grounds, in which case the organization would consider them to be prisoners of conscience.

In addition, there have been several reports of harassment of foreign journalists in Montenegro. Antun Masle, a Croatian journalist working for the weekly *Globus* was arrested on 20 April by Yugoslav military police. On 21 April Eric Vaillon, a cameraman for French TV1 was arrested in Ro_aje municipality near the border with Kosovo. Both men are reportedly being held in pre-trial detention in a prison outside Podgorica, the republic's capital, on suspicion of spying.

Background

Montenegro, which together with Serbia forms the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, has not recognized the state of emergency announced by the Federal Yugoslav government on 24 March, following the start of North Atlantic Alliance Operation (NATO) air strikes against the country. The relationship between the two constituent republics has been further strained by a move from the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Miloševi_ to replace the commander of the Second Yugoslav Army, stationed in Montenegro on 1 April and by the refusal of the Montenegrin President, Milo Djukanovi_, to put the Montenegrin police force, which is loyal to his government, under Yugoslav Army command. On 19 April, the conflict between military authorities and the republican government was further exacerbated when the Montenegrin deputy Prime Minister, Novak Kilibarda, was ordered to appear before a military court on charges of "undermining the military defence capacity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" after he had publicly stated that Montenegrins should refuse to be mobilized into the Yugoslav Army. Montenegrin civilian police refused to execute the court order against the deputy Prime Minister.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/ airmail letters in Russian, English, French or in your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Miodrag Perovi_, Nebojša Red_i_ and other independent journalists in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in particular in Montenegro;
- expressing concern for the safety of the French and Croatian journalists who remain in pre-trial detention in Montenegro and urging the Yugoslav military authorities to treat them according to international standards, in particular to refrain from ill-treating them and to grant the International Committee of the Red Cross immediate and unrestricted access to them;
- urging full respect for the internationally-recognized right to freedom of expression and the lifting of restrictions on press freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Slobodan Milošević_

Predsednik SRJ

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email: slobodan.milosevic@gov.yu

Salutation: Dear President

Prime Minister

Predsednik Savezne Vlade

Dr Momir Bulatović_

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11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Fax: + 381 11 636 775 or + 381 11 659 682

email: momir.bulatovic@gov.yu

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Federal Minister of Justice

Zoran Knežević_

Ministar za pravosuđe

Savezno ministarstvo za pravosuđe

Bulevar Mihaila Pupina 2

11070 Beograd, Yugoslavia

Fax: +381 11 636 775

E-mail: zoran.knezevic@gov.yu

Salutation: Dear Minister

Chief of General Staff of the Army of Yugoslavia

Colonel General Dragoljub Ojdanić_

Načelnik Generalštaba Vojske Jugoslavije

Kneza Miloša 37

11000 Beograd

Yugoslavia

Salutation: Dear General

COPIES TO:

Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ministar za inostrane poslove

Zivadin Jovanović_

Savezno ministarstvo za inostrane poslove

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Salutation: Dear Minister

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and to diplomatic representatives of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 June 1999.