

EXTERNAL

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LUXEMBOURG: PROLONGED ISOLATION

Amnesty International has learned that Satko ADROVIC was placed in isolation (régime cellulaire strict) in Schrassig prison (Centre pénitentiaire de Schrassig) on 3 December 1993 as a punishment for attempting to escape. He is not due to be released from solitary confinement until 3 June 1994. Satko Adrovic recently spent a period of eight and a half months in isolation (from 16 November 1992 until 3 August 1993) as the result of a previous attempt to escape.

Amnesty International is concerned that prolonged isolation may have serious effects on the physical and mental health of prisoners and may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Solitary confinement in Schrassig prison is imposed either for disciplinary reasons or in cases where prisoners are classed as dangerous. Prisoners in isolation spend 23 hours per day in their cells. For one hour per day they are transferred into another cell, open to the outside but covered by a wire mesh, where they are allowed to exercise alone.

In January 1993 the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), a committee of experts set up under the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, carried out a nine-day visit to the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. The visit to places of detention, including Schrassig Prison, was carried out within the framework of the CPT's programme of periodic visits. In November 1993 the Luxembourg Government published the report drawn up by the CPT. In the report the Committee criticized the use of prolonged solitary confinement for disciplinary purposes as "unacceptable".

Amnesty International has raised its concerns about the use of solitary confinement with the Luxembourg authorities and in October 1992 the organization published a 4-page document entitled Luxembourg: Prolonged isolation of detainees in Schrassig prison (AI Index: EUR 32/01/92).

The organization is seeking information from the Luxembourg authorities concerning the measures the prison authorities have taken to alleviate the physical and psychological effects of prolonged isolation on Satko Adrovic.