

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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EXTRA 25/95

Unacknowledged detention

3 March 1995

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Bajram RED EPAGI , medical doctor, novelist

Bajram Red_epagi_, a kidney specialist working in the former military hospital in Sarajevo, has not been seen since 27 February 1995, when he was reportedly taken from his workplace. There are reports that he is being held in an army barracks in the town, but his family have been unable to obtain official confirmation of his detention.

On the same afternoon, Bosnian Army soldiers came to Bajram Red_epagi_'s apartment and carried out a search, ostensibly for arms or documents. It has been alleged that the soldier in charge of the search acknowledged that the doctor was in detention and produced forged documents relating to Bajram Red_epagi_'s military obligations. Uniformed soldiers and a civilian reportedly carried out a further search of the apartment on 2 March.

On the evening of 2 March, Bajram Red_epagi_'s wife reportedly received a visit from a former government minister and an army officer in which they accused her husband of corruption and stated that he "had admitted everything" and would be tried in a military court.

Before the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, Bajram Red_epagi_, a Muslim, was employed as a doctor in the military hospital in Sarajevo. In late 1991 he was reportedly detained for several months for criticizing the role of the Yugoslav National Army in the war in Croatia in a newspaper interview. He is not believed to be a member of any opposition party, but he has expressed criticism of the policies of the Bosnian authorities. His political opinions may be the motive for his detention.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Large numbers of people have "disappeared" or been held in unacknowledged detention since the outbreak of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in spring 1992. In most cases the "disappearances" or detentions occurred as forces from one side, principally, but not exclusively Bosnian Serb forces, tried to consolidate their control over an area. The victims were then almost exclusively of a different nationality from the perpetrators. For example, Muslims were made to "disappear" by Bosnian Serb forces in Prijedor and Serbs and Muslims were victims of Bosnian Croat forces in Mostar. Although there have been reports of various forms of pressure on opponents of the Bosnian Government, there have been no documented cases of the "disappearance" of Muslims in Sarajevo perpetrated by Bosnian Government forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes (*) in English, French, German or your own language:

- calling for an immediate investigation into the reported detention of Bajram Red_epagi_ in Sarajevo on 27 February 1995;
- urging that his relatives be informed immediately of the results of the investigation and, if it is confirmed that he is in detention, for the reasons for his detention to be made public;
- seeking assurances that, if in detention, he is being treated humanely in accordance with international standards and calling for him to be given

immediate access to a lawyer and his relatives, and to be immediately released unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO

(* Please note that fax is the only means of communication into Bosnia.

President of the Presidency:

Alija Izetbegovi_

President of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Sarajevo

Satellite fax: +871 144 62 65 or + 871 144 62 55 (if voice, ask for fax)

(Cost is US\$7 to US\$10 per page. Connections may be easier to be obtain using delayed transmission overnight)

Terrestrial fax: +387 71 472 491

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Bosnia-Herzegovina accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 10 April 1995.