

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: EUR 63/14/93

Distr: UA/SC

28 May 1993

Further information on Extra 47/93 (EUR 63/12/93, 14 May 1993) - Deliberate and arbitrary detention of civilians/deliberate and arbitrary killings/fear of torture and ill-treatment

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: Civilian population in Mostar and in villages in central Bosnia-Herzegovina

On 20 May 1993 a United Nations (UN) spokesperson stated that 1,800 Muslim civilians who had been detained earlier in May by Bosnian Croatian forces of the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) during fighting in Mostar had been released. He reportedly urged Bosnian Government forces to carry out reciprocal releases of Croats in Konjic northeast of Mostar.

According to press reports, only a small number of the Muslims released from Mostar were able to return to their homes. Many others - often refugees from other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina - took shelter in abandoned apartment blocks or slept in the street. Some of those released were reportedly expelled to the Muslim-held quarters of the town, where there are acute shortages of food and water. On 23 May UN officials reported that HVO troops were evicting up to 200 Muslims a day in Mostar in a campaign to rid the city of some 10,000 refugees who had arrived over the past year.

The following day Bosnian Government forces and the HVO mutually accused each other of failing to abide by an agreement to release prisoners and of continuing to detain a certain number of prisoners. On 25 May the two sides again agreed to release all civilians, in the presence of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). They also agreed to release military prisoners on an "all for all" basis. Amnesty International has not yet learned the extent to which this latest agreement has been implemented.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express and airmail letters either in English, French or German or in your own language:

- welcoming reports of the release of civilians detained in Mostar and in central Bosnia-Herzegovina, but urging the release of any who remain detained;
- urging that any persons who remain detained, whether civilian or military, be granted effective safeguards against torture or ill-treatment;
- urging that all those responsible for grave human rights abuses, including deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, and torture or ill-treatment of detainees be brought to justice;
- stressing that Amnesty International is concerned for victims of all nationalities and is appealing to both sides in this case.

APPEALS TO

1) Representative for the Bosnian Croats:

Mate Boban
Glavni Ured Hrvatskog Vijeća Obrane
Trg Rondo BB
88000 Mostar
Bosnia-Herzegovina (via Croatia)
Faxes : + 38 58 841 455

Salutation : Dear Mr Boban

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2) Head of the Croatian Defence Council:

General Milivoj Petković
Glavni Ured Hrvatskog Vijeća Obrane
Trg Rondo BB
88000 Mostar
Bosnia-Herzegovina (via Croatia)
Faxes: + 38 58 841 455

Salutation : Dear General

3) President of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

His Excellency Dr Alija Izetbegović
Predsjednik Republike Bosne i Hercegovine
Ambasada Bosne i Hercegovine
Pantovak 96
41000 Zagreb
Croatia
Faxes: + 38 41 441 899

Salutation : Dear President

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: Croatian and Bosnian diplomatic representatives in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 June 1993.