

TAKE ACTION NOW

Send your letters to:

| | |
|--|---|
| <u>Prime Minister</u> (Salutation: Dear Prime Minister) Ljubco Georgievski Predsedatel na Vladata Ilindenska b.b. 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 115 285 | <u>Minister of Foreign Affairs</u> (Salutation: Dear Minister) Dr Slobodan Chashule Minister za nadvoreshni raboti Dame Gruev 6 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 115 790 www.mnr.gov.mk e-mail: mailmnr@mnr.gov.mk |
| <u>Minister of Internal Affairs</u> (Salutation: Dear Minister) Ljube Boshkovski Minister za vnatreshni raboti Dimche Mirchev bb 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 112 468 | <u>Minister of Justice</u> (Salutation: Dear Minister) Idzet Memeti Minister za pravda Dimitrie Chupovski 9, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 226 975 www.covekovi-prava.gov.mk |

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for human rights. Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote respect for all human rights. For more information about Amnesty International and our work on increasing awareness of human rights violations and racism, contact Amnesty International in your country:

or write to: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom www.amnesty.org

AI Index: EUR 65/009/2002

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Dark days in Tetovo



Sheref Ademi © AI

Alleged Torture and Ill-treatment of Roma in Macedonia - The Case of Sheref Ademi



amnesty international

ALLEGED TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT OF ROMA IN MACEDONIA - THE CASE OF SHEREF ADEMI

On 19 July 2001, Sheref Ademi, a Rom taxi driver from Tetovo, was stopped at a police checkpoint in Saraj while on his way to Skopje and severely beaten by police. Of Albanian and Rom mixed parentage, he considers himself a Rom, but thinks he was beaten by the police because they thought he was of ethnic Albanian origin. At the time of the incident, armed clashes between the Macedonian security forces and insurgents of an armed ethnic Albanian organisation called the National Liberation Army (NLA) [fighting for greater rights for ethnic Albanians in Macedonia who make up between a quarter and a third of the population] were frequent in the area and tensions were very high.

According to Sheref Ademi's own account: *"the police asked for my documents... and took them into a little hut. They found the name of [ethnic Albanian] Xhevat Ademi on the list of people banned from entering the USA and asked me who he is. I said I did not know and that I was a Rom. They asked if my family were in the mountains [with the NLA]. I denied that. The policeman said, 'are you telling me I am wrong?' and signalled to other policemen and the chief came."*

"Then I was surrounded by about 20 policemen, two with guns. Eight of them came up to me. They asked why I was arrogant. Two held my hands behind my back. Six others beat me with hands, feet, gun butts. I fell to the ground. A bus from Skopje bound for Gostivar passed and hooted. There were also some people on the bridge, but none of them could get near. One of the

policemen said, 'It's enough for him' and threw the documents on the taxi seat."

Sheref Ademi managed to drive back to Tetovo, where his injured arms were put in plaster at the hospital. He complained about his ill-treatment to a Macedonian doctor, who contacted the police. Sheref Ademi was called by the head of the local security police department who listened to his account and apologized, saying that there were individuals at fault on both sides of the conflict. However, although Sheref Ademi asked for help from the police in pursuing his complaint, he heard nothing further from the official.

Amnesty International is concerned that Sheref Ademi was subjected to ill-treatment by the Macedonian police and that he was denied his right to seek justice. The organization believes this case is illustrative of a pattern of alleged ill-treatment and arbitrary arrest of ethnic Albanians and Roma in Macedonia. For more details see *Macedonia: Dark days in Tetovo (AI Index EUR 65/007/2002)*.

Please send appeals to the Prime Minister, Minister of Justice, Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs using the addresses at the back of this leaflet,

- **urging** them to ensure that a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation is undertaken into these allegations, and, if they are well founded, to ensure that any officials responsible are brought to justice and that Sheref Ademi receives fair and adequate compensation

TAKE ACTION NOW

Send your letters to:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p><u>Prime Minister</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Prime Minister) Ljubco Georgievski Predsedatel na Vlada Ilindenska b.b. 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 115 285</p> | <p><u>Minister of Foreign Affairs</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Minister) Dr Slobodan Chashule Minister za nadvoreshni raboti Dame Gruev 6 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 115 790 www.mnr.gov.mk e-mail: mailmnr@mnr.gov.mk</p> |
| <p><u>Minister of Internal Affairs</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Minister) Ljube Boshkovski Minister za vnatreshni raboti Dimche Mirchev bb 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 112 468</p> | <p><u>Minister of Justice</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Minister) Idzet Memeti Minister za pravda Dimitrie Chupovski 9, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 226 975 www.covekovi-prava.gov.mk</p> |

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for human rights. Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote respect for all human rights. For more information about Amnesty International and our work on increasing awareness of human rights violations and racism, contact Amnesty International in your country:

or write to: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom www.amnesty.org

AI Index: EUR 65/009/2002

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



The conflict area around Tetovo © AI

Dark days in Tetovo

Alleged Attempted Murder By Macedonian Police Reservists - The Case Of Muharem Ibraimi



amnestyinternational

ALLEGED ATTEMPTED MURDER BY MACEDONIAN POLICE RESERVISTS - THE CASE OF MUHAREM IBRAIMI

Muharem Ibraimi is a 36-year-old businessman from Tetovo who owns a car parts dealership with his brother. He reported that he was stopped on 16 September 2001 by five uniformed police reservists while driving in a Mercedes in the centre of Tetovo in the afternoon. Although this was not an official checkpoint they asked for his documents. He stated that:

“They asked me to get out of the car, but showed no interest in my documents and hit me with the butt of a gun. They forced me into the seat behind the driver’s seat. All five got into the car. I could tell by their behaviour and the smell of alcohol that they were drunk.”

The reservists then drove at high speed on the motorway to the capital Skopje and out again on the road to Kumanovo. Muharem Ibraimi overheard that his captors were themselves anxious to avoid being seen by the police. While in the car he was threatened. *“One of them asked me, ‘How do you want to die?’ He put a knife to my eye and said: ‘With a gun or a knife?’ They took my money, I had about 1200 Deutschmarks and a gold chain and watch. Before Kumanovo we turned off and went about 15 kilometres into the mountains where it was very rocky. They stopped, took me from the car, put on their masks, put me by a rock. They were standing in a row to shoot me. One of them who was not so drunk said ‘Don’t shoot him here, a tractor driver saw us.’”*

According to Muharem Ibraimi’s account, the group of reservists seemed to disagree amongst themselves what to do with him. At one point they suggested trying to get his brother to ransom him, but finally they took him to a bridge over the River Vardar near Skopje. *“By this time it was about 9pm and dark. They took me from the car and tied my hands behind my back with rope. They tied my legs together with a military belt. They threw me from the bridge into the river. The river was*

full and moving fast. I kept going under and struggling to breathe. The water took me to a place under some trees, where I was caught by a log. I was able to get my face out of the water and could see they were looking for me to shoot me. Two came down along the bank to look for me. They looked for 15 minutes but they couldn’t see me because I was under the trees. I heard when they left, but I waited for 30 minutes to be sure they wouldn’t come back. I managed to loosen my hands and feet and to swim 100 metres to make sure I left no traces.”

After returning to Tetovo, Muharem Ibraimi reported the incident to the police there. He reported that they had a record of all the police reservists, including photographs, but they did not let him see these to identify his attackers. He engaged a lawyer who prepared a criminal denunciation, dated 24 September 2001 against five unknown assailants, which called on the Ministry of the Interior to co-operate to identify them. As far as Amnesty International is aware, the Ministry of the Interior has failed to respond to this request. The case illustrates Amnesty International’s concern that some security officials in Macedonia are apparently able to act with impunity without being held to account for offences committed. For more information see *Macedonia: Dark days in Tetovo. AI Index EUR 65/007/2002.*

Please send appeals to the Prime Minister, Minister of Justice, Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs using the addresses at the back of this leaflet,

- **urging** them to ensure that a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation is undertaken into these allegations, and, if they are well founded, to ensure that any officials responsible are brought to justice and Muharem Ibraimi receives fair and adequate compensation.

TAKE ACTION NOW

Send your letters to:

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Dark days in Tetovo

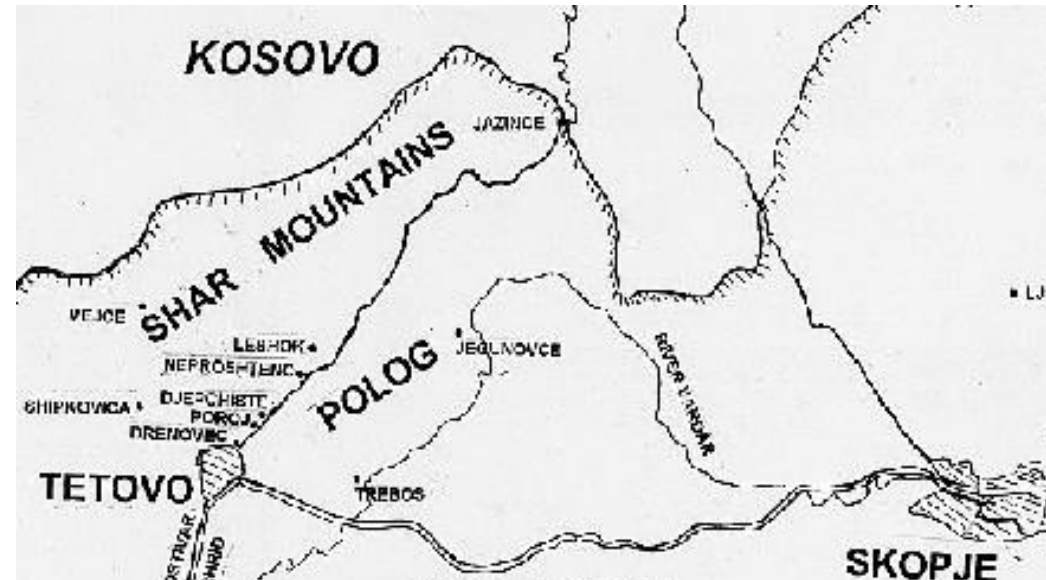
| | |
|--|---|
| <p><u>Prime Minister</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Prime Minister) Ljubco Georgievski Predsedatel na Vlada Ilindenska b.b. 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 115 285</p> | <p><u>Minister of Foreign Affairs</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Minister) Dr Slobodan Chashule Minister za nadvoreshni raboti Dame Gruev 6 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 115 790 www.mnr.gov.mk e-mail: mailmnr@mnr.gov.mk</p> |
| <p><u>Minister of Internal Affairs</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Minister) Ljube Boshkovski Minister za vnatreshni raboti Dimche Mirchev bb 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 112 468</p> | <p><u>Minister of Justice</u></p> <p>(Salutation: Dear Minister) Idzet Memeti Minister za pravda Dimitrie Chupovski 9, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia Fax: +389 2 226 975 www.covekovi-prava.gov.mk</p> |

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for human rights. Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote respect for all human rights.

For more information about Amnesty International and our work on increasing awareness of human rights violations and racism, contact Amnesty International in your country:

or write to: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom www.amnesty.org

AI Index: EUR 65/009/2002



The conflict area around Tetovo © AI

Alleged Torture And Ill-treatment In Macedonia - The Cases Of Rami Kurtishi, Abdulla Bilali And Ajrush Gega



amnestyinternational

ALLEGED TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT IN MACEDONIA - THE CASES OF RAMI KURTISHI, ABDULLA BILALI AND AJRUSH GEGA

On 19 July 2001 at 10am, three ethnic Albanians, Rami Kurtishi, Abdulla Bilali, and Ajrush Gega were stopped in Abdulla Bilali's taxi at a police checkpoint at Leshok when they were on the way to the Kosovo border crossing at Jazinec. This was at a time when armed clashes between the Macedonian security forces and insurgents of an armed ethnic Albanian organization called the National Liberation Army (NLA) [fighting for greater rights for ethnic Albanians in Macedonia who make up between a quarter and a third of the population] were frequent in the area and tensions were very high. After a wait of an hour or two at the checkpoint, the three were taken in the taxi and another police car to the security service building in Skopje. A few hours later, the three of them and some Macedonian passers-by witnessed a search of the taxi, during which six hand grenades and three fuses were allegedly found in the spare wheel compartment.

According to Rami Kurtishi's father, Qenan Kurtishi, who obtained this information during visits to Rami in prison, and confirmed later by Rami, when the three arrived in Skopje: *"They were put in the basement of the state security building in Skopje. They were all tortured. They were in separate rooms but each could hear the screams of the other. After 4 hours of beating they were all brought back to the taxi to check it again. There were lots of inspectors and police around in the yard of the building. The police fetched two passers-by from the street as witnesses. When they searched the car they found 6 bombs and 3 fuses.....Then they were taken back to the basement and tortured for another 25 hours. Ajrush was hit comparatively little, the taxi driver more and Rami the most. He doesn't know how many times he was beaten with wood by many different people. He lost consciousness."*

When Qenan first saw his son on 23 July in Shutka prison for only five minutes Rami was *"completely lost and unable to speak. I just saw him for five minutes and then they took him away"*. During the next visit on 1 August Rami could speak. *"He didn't know that his father had previously been to visit. He said he had been beaten mainly on the back and his kidneys had been damaged so that he had been afraid to eat or drink for 10 days because he couldn't use the toilet. He was still only taking juice. He couldn't sit or stand."* Qenan Kurtishi also reported that all three accused apparently made statements about their ill-treatment at every court hearing, but this was not included in the court records.

In Rami Kurtishi's own statement to Amnesty International he confirms his father's report of his condition when he arrived in the prison and describes how he was cared for by a fellow prisoner, Skender, with ointment provided by his father. When, after some 10-11 days Skender told him the wounds on his buttocks had re-opened and were infected, *"I asked for help from the prison doctor and he sent me on a special pass to the civil state hospital. There they wouldn't accept me, telling me: 'We don't treat terrorists'. From there they sent me back to prison without any help."* He was still in need of treatment after his release in December 2001 as part of the Presidential amnesty. Independent corroboration of the injuries sustained by Rami comes from his family, an unsuccessful appeal from his lawyer dated 9 November for release on grounds of ill-health, and the photograph, taken on 20 December after Rami's release, showing how five months later the worst wound had still not healed. Rami reports that he was interviewed in prison by delegates from the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture on 23 October and provided them with medical documentation.

Amnesty International is concerned about allegations made by Rami Kurtishi, Abdulla Bilali and Ajrush Gega that they were subjected to arbitrary arrest and ill-treatment, and in Rami's case alleged torture, by the Macedonian police and were not allowed their rights in detention. The organization believes these cases are illustrative of a pattern of alleged ill-treatment and arbitrary arrest of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia. For more details see *Macedonia: Dark days in Tetovo (AI Index EUR 65/007/2002)*.

Please send appeals to the Prime Minister, Minister of Justice, Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs using the addresses at the back of this leaflet,

- **urging** them to ensure that a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation is undertaken into these allegations, and, if they are well founded, to ensure that any officials responsible are brought to justice and that Rami Kurtishi, Abdulla Bilali and Ajrush Gega receive fair and adequate compensation.