

18/03/2019

"SIR, I AM NOT A TERRORIST – I AM REFUGEE!"

Date and time: March 18, 2019 00:00

Location: Lohovo, Croatia, at the Croatian/ Bosnian border next to Lohovo

Coordinates: 44.729039, 15.91538

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 30 person(s), age: 17-26 years old, from: Pakistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, pointing gun at the face

Police involved: three officers wearing blue uniforms in a police car, a prisoner van, four police officers leading the group through the woods

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The 21 – year – old man and his 24 year old friend, both from Pakistan, started from Bihać on April 16, 2019, with a group of 30 other young Pakistani men aged 17 to 26 years.

After two days of walking, one Croatian citizen saw the group in the Croatian woods. The respondent suppose that this person might have called the police, as 10 minutes after the incident, three officers wearing blue uniforms arrived with a police car.

The respondent and others of the group decided to run, but his friend, who normally is always with him, couldn't run, due to his hurting foot. At the time of the interview, it was still hurting him. So one of the three officers was able to catch this friend, which made the respondent return to his friend, to not be divided from each other. Thus, the officer caught him too and insulted them:

"Next time you come, we shoot. We have dogs, we have cars, we have helicopters, we have weapons, we have everything to stop you!"

One of the officers was pointing with his gun to the face of the respondent, whilst standing next to him. He defended himself:

"Sir, I am not a terrorist – I am refugee!"

The officers called for reinforcement and 20 minutes later, a prisoner van arrived and brought the group in a three to four hour drive directly to the Bosnian border near Bihać. The temperature in the car was about four degrees, and they drove really harsh which made the people inside falling from one side to the other.

The respondent says, his experience is, that if you are pushed-back near Bihać, the officer's violence is less than

if you are dropped off near Velika Kladuša.

This time the respondents themselves weren't victims of physical violence, but other people of the group were pushed by the police officers towards the direction they were leading them. It were four police officers leading the four people they had caught in a row through the forest.

The respondent supposes, the Croatian officers must also be poor people, because they always ask for money, phones and food.

“ Germany gives cameras to Croatian police with which you can see up to 8 km in the night!”

“ I've been here for six months, and I had six games. Once I'll reach France I'll write a book about all this!”