

22/04/2019

"ONE POLICE OFFICER DRAGGED THE DRIVER OUT OF THE CAR AND STARTED BEATING HIM"

Date and time: April 22, 2019 00:00

Location: Trebenje, Bosnia

Coordinates: 42.7127486 , 18.5365625

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Montenegro

Demographics: 11 person(s), age: 3-46 , from: Iraq, Kurdistan

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), kicking, forcing to undress, reckless driving

Police involved: 1 black van, 3 officers (Bileca), two of them in a black uniform, one in a blue uniform. On the uniform they had on their shoulder a „Serbian emblem, because it was in the Serbian Republic of Bosnia. One police officer in civil clothing, a white polo shirt and blue jeans. 1 van, 3 police officers in blue uniform while transported from Bileca to Trebenje, the same 3 officers were at Trebenje border checkpoint Klobuk. One of them was older with grey hair and „a little bit big with a belly“, the others were described as maybe 35 years old.

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, photos taken, papers signed, no translator present, denial of food/water, the group gave the officers money and the police bought food for them at the police station in Bileca

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 11 was sitting in the back of a van, driving on the main road of Bileca (BIH) , when they were stopped by the Bosnian authorities for a control. One officer dragged the driver out of the car and started beating him in front of the group which disturbed the m and the children started crying. The officer told them :

“Don’t worry, we will bring you to the camp in Sarajevo.”

The officers then drove the group in the same van to the police station in Bileca. T here, they were brought to a big room, which was described as a “hall” with tables and chairs but without windows. The officers took photos of all individuals and of their registration paper s of the camp in Montenegro. After wards , they asked who could speak English. One man answered with “yes”, and was taken to another room, which looked “like an office”. There, he was interviewed from an older guy in civil clothes, a white polo shirt and blue jeans. He asked the man who spoke English about how he got to Bileca, how he organi z ed the trip, how they got in touch with the driver and about details of him and the other individuals . He further asked him to sign six papers in Bosnian language, although the respondent told the officer that he didn’t understand them, to which the officer replied :

„ Just sign it!“

After, the individual was brought back to the room. The group asked the officers for food and water , but were told:

“Give us money and we will bring you food!”

So t he group gave some money to the officers and got pizza and something to drink in return . They had to spend all night in th is hall . The next morning around 10 am, the group was taken outside of the station. They were told to stand in front of the black van, which had taken them from Bileca before. The older man in the white polo shirt, who conducted the interview, took a photo of the group. This photo was later found online in a newspaper, together with videos from the „cage“ in Trebenje, where the group was detained after: <http://saff.ba/sokantno-kod-trebinja-drze-migrante-sa-djecom-i-zenama-u-kavezima-video/>

The organization Are You Syrious (AYS) received the videos and the photo from the “cage” from one of the individuals of the group, but not the photo in front of the van. Afterwards, a white van arrived with three officers. The group was loaded in the van and forced to sit on the floor, as there weren’t any other options.

“We had to sit on the floor, the very dirty floor.”

The officers drove in a very unsafe manner and apparently very fast. The group was brought to the Trebenje (BIH) border checkpoint Klobuk and was put in small rooms, separated by a white metal fence. The floor of this “cage” was again very dirty. There, they didn’t receive any food or water. The officers asked:

“How much money do you have?”

To which the group replied by naming an amount of money. Then, the men of the group were one after another called in to a separate room where they were shouted at and forced to undress to their underwear. The officers searched all their clothes and luggage, but no money was taken from them. Later, when they returned to the cell, an officer kicked a guy’s leg with his foot, telling him to clean the cell. He did so with the help of the other individuals of the group. Around 5 pm, they were released from the cell and boarded on a local bus, which brought them to Niksic (MNE). They had to pay for the bus themselves. From Niksic, they took a bus back to Podgorica and from there another bus to Spuz, where the camp is located.

“There was a husband and his wife with us in the group. One night before the police caught us, they left the group to go to the highway to find help because the wife was about to give birth. Later we met the husband alone in Bileca police station. He was kept in a cell. He told us he got beaten because he asked for food. The police had earlier brought his wife to the hospital, where she gave birth. All this time, the husband was kept in a cell, not able to contact his wife. He didn’t know how she was doing. Now, two days later, they brought him together with his wife and the new-born to the camp in Sarajevo.”