

29/11/2018

"THEY TREATED US LIKE ANIMALS OR WORSE"

Date and time: November 29, 2018 02:00

Location: Buhača, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.18660310615787 , 15.779482464889725

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 4 person(s), age: 19-45 , from: Palestine, Syria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, water immersion, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 10 masked officers

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The two friends had spent two days in Croatia prior to their game in attempt to track the movement and patterns of the Croatian border authorities before leaving as a group of four. During this time, one of the two described :

"[We] learned everything about them, when they go and watch and when they change people."

After this, they returned to Velika Kladuša, took their friends, and the four of them left on November 27 , 2018 . The group arrived at the border, watched the officers change shifts around 2 pm and crossed into Croatia by foot. They walked around three hours and then hid themselves i n the forest to wait for the next day. It was quite cold at this point, with a steady rain that turned soon into snow. The group exited the forest and walked for around three hours before they came across an abandoned house with running water inside. The group entered the house to take a rest and some water . The respondent believed that at this point some officers were watching them from afar with night vision glasses . He was pretty sure that he saw those officers, but the rest of the group did n't believe him and continued talking and making noise. The officers were drawn in closer to the house by the noise and eventually made their presence known, shouting:

"Stop! This is the police!"

The four of them offered no resistance.

At this point, there were only two officers but after initially apprehending the group, they radioed for back up. A short time later, three police cars arrived , one large van and two smaller police cruisers. In total, ten officers arrived with those. They then took two of the friend's phones, one power bank, and more than €3 50 . They never received any of these personal belongings back.

Shortly after these devices were taken, the officers began to search the bags of the group and discovered that in one backpack, there was a phone which he had tried to hide from them. Angry at this, one of the officers took it out of the bag and began to hit the owner of the bag on the head with the phone. The officer raised the phone

back behind his head and brought down the phone with force to hit the individual on the forehead with the front side of the phone and began to repeatedly ask :

“What is this? What is this?”

An other officer then punched him in the jaw with a closed fist and kicked him in the chest so hard that he fell backwards from where he was sitting and tumbled down the hill which was behind him.

“They treated us like animals or worse. They laughed at us and beat us as they search my things and threw them into the ground. It was snowing and was so cold.”

The officers present at this time all wore black balaclavas except for one officer who wore glasses which were hiding his face. He was described as a “normal” officer insofar as the group didn’t see any identifying marks which would signal him as outranking any of the other officers present. The respondent was under the impression that this individual was working on a computer at this point and that this computer was related to the reasons of their capture. Specifically, that he had used it to track their location via GPS on their mobile phones.

The group of four was then taken back to the Bosnian-Croatian border and when they arrived had to get off the van one by one. Each of them was then hit by the officers with batons and pushed to fall down a hill into a small stream close to the Bosnian side of the border. The respondent was taken out of the car and beaten by the officers with batons.

“He wanted to hit me on the head. I put my hand on my head to protect my face so he hit me on my knee.”

One of the respondents also mentioned that as he fell down while trying to escape back to Bosnia.

“[The officers] dragged us on the dirty road.”