

18/09/2018

"HE SAID: "LAY DOWN OR I SHOOT!"

Date and time: September 18, 2018 01:00

Location: Slovenia, Stara Cerkev

Coordinates: 45.712329970805875 , 14.906216060098814

Push-back from:

Push-back to:

Demographics: person(s), age: , from:

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used:

Police involved: Slovenian police, Croatian police

Taken to a police station?:

Treatment at police station or other place of detention:

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Rigardu

ORIGINAL REPORT

The respondent of this case described how the group of migrants was captured in the Slovenian interior, around 10km from the Croatian border. The thirteen people walked on foot through the woodland. The group included two minors and one elderly person. Several days traveling they were crossing a stretch of gravel parking and nearing a police officer. It was dark (evening of the 16th Sept) and the group could not see the officer very well. But the interviewed men could hear him shouting and he spoke to them aggressively in english, telling them:

“lay down or I shoot!”

The group complied and waited on the ground as the officer circled them (continuing to aim his pistol at them). The officer then called for further police and after some minutes a van arrived with two more officers. The group was searched (all their belongings removed) and then loaded into the police van which transported them to a nearby station. At the station the Slovenian police forced them to sign deportation documents (all in Slovenian). The men had no access to a translator and when they asked for asylum in Slovenia the police officers simply ignored them.

Two minors were present in the group but the police coerced them into signing as adults. The group gave their fingerprints and details and after around 6/7 hours they were brought from the station and taken by van to the border. The respondent describes how the Slovenian police drove them and led them out across the concourse area of a large road crossing (between Slovenia and Croatia). The Croatian police was waiting at the other side to receive the men. As they arrived they had to stay at makeshift cells made out of containers. The men asked for asylum again but the Croatian officers simply ignored the request as well. The officers, dressed in sky blue border uniforms, processed the migrants

by taking their names and ages. Again when the two minors stated that they were 17, but have been forced to sign papers for adults while police officers called them “motherfuckers”.

They were locked in a cell all together for around ten hours. The group passed the night without food and water. As such

the men were forced to pay the police to buy them something to eat. For water they had to drink from the toilet in the cell. After the confinement the fourteen males were loaded into one combi (Croatian van) and driven for 4 – 5 hours. The journey made them all feel sick because of the heat, the lack of air and the cramped space.

Once the combi stopped, the group was released at a rural border spot by a stretch of river. It was past midnight – the capture and pushback took three days, September 16th to 18th. The group was frightened, tired and sick. The back of the combi was opened and they saw four officer waiting. They wore blue Croatian border uniforms and black masks over their faces. The victim describes how:

“You could just see their eyes.”

The officers beckoned them out one by one and started to beat them. Two more police officers joined from the side of the car. During the beating one officer fired his pistol into the air (just above the victims head). Once the victim laying on the ground while the six officers circled them and beat them heavily with their batons.

One Iranian man was summoned from the van near the start of the violence. The police offered him a plastic bag full of broken phones and as soon as he held out his hands to take it the officers began to strike him heavily and shouted at him. The minors were also beaten alongside the adults and one of the seventeen year old boys lost his shoe during the assault. None of their possessions (aside from the broken phones) were returned. The victim interviewed had his medical certificates, personal paperwork and family contacts stolen. He had a very high level of spoken english, so requested for the items back. When the police

heard him they refused to return the belongings, but he described how they stopped hitting him because:

“If they know someone can speak english, they don’t beat that person because they [Croatian Police] can pass the information (about border violence).