

14/04/2019

"WE WERE PUT LIKE ANIMALS IN A CAGE."

Date and time: April 14, 2019 17:30

Location: Trebinje, Bosnia

Coordinates: 42.70710754978689 , 18.350968746298804

Push-back from: Bosnia

Push-back to: Montenegro

Demographics: 12 person(s), age: unknown , from: Syria

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: insulting

Police involved: 2 police officers, blue uniforms with the Bosnian police emblem on the shoulder, 2 white VW vans with blue stripes on the side. Later an unknown number of Montenegrin authorities and on the way back to the camp one other Montenegrin officer.

Taken to a police station?: yes

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention, denial of food/water

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Border Violence Monitoring

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group left Nikšić (MIH) in the evening by bus to reach a village near the Bosnian border. From there they walked for two days through the forest. As they approached the village of Trebinje (BiH), they felt very tired and cold. The small children were hungry and thirsty, some of them had high temperature. The group tried to seek help. When one Bosnian family saw the group, they told them:

„ Don't walk here, go forest!“

But the group decided to continue walking where they were. Another man saw them and made a phone call. While on the phone, he was looking at the group and 15 minutes later, a white VW van arrived. Two officers stepped out of the car, trying to stop the group.

One officer asked them where they were from and if they had documents.

“He ask in a rough way.“

One Syrian individual showed him his document and the officer made a phone call, saying:

„ I have a group of Syrians here, what I do with them?“

When he finished his call, he told the group:

„ You go back to Montenegro. You have ten seconds to get into the car or I start to beat you! I will destroy your phones and I will steal your money!“

Frightened, the group entered the van, which was way too small for all of them.

„ It is a car for 6 people. We were sitting like sardines in the car.“

One individual asked the officer where they were going, and he said:

„ Back to Montenegro!“

„ But we need milk and food for the children.“

The officer answered: *„ We will give you. Go to Serbia, go to Montenegro, it's good!“*

After approximately 30 minutes in the car, they arrived at the border checkpoint Klobuk. The officers took all their phones and put the individuals in three small rooms divided by white metal fences. There was no space for them to move and the children started crying.

„We asked the officers again to give us milk for the babies. He pointed at us and laughed. He said: 'I don't have, I am not market.' We were put like animals in a cage.“

Later in the evening, another „good“ officer came, telling the group: *„ I want to help you but I cannot,“* and left.

At around 7pm, the officers asked the individuals:

„ What you have?“

Then he brought every man from the group with him to a small room, one after another. The officer searched the clothes of the men.

„He asked for money. I said I don't have money. He even checked in my underwear.“

The women were not taken to the room, but their bags and purses were searched. One officer found some Euros in one woman's purse. He gave the money to her husband, saying:

„ Give police Montenegro money. You pay for drive back to camp.“

The husbands answered: *„I will pay when I arrive.“*

The officer answered: *„ No, I need now. Some days ago, a family had no money, and they had to walk back to Podgorica!“*

The officer points at a Bosnian police car: *„ This car police Montenegro. Give him money, police Montenegro good.“*

The husband still refused to hand his money to the officer and the car left .

At around 11 pm, the group got released from their small cells and the officers returned their phones. The group had to enter two big, black windowless vans, each fitting approximately six persons. With those, they were deported to the Montenegrin border crossing at the Ilino brdo checkpoint.

When they arrived, they asked the Montenegrin authorities for a bus to Podgorica and managed to catch a bus whose last stop was Nikšić. Once arrived there, they didn't have any option to get further.

A Montenegrin officer saw the group at the bus station, asked for their documents and checked their registration papers from the camp in Spuž. The group asked him for help to get to the camp, but he didn't want to help them and left after checking the papers.

At 2 am they decide to take taxis back to Podgorica, where they spend the night outside in front of the camp in Spuž.