

21/08/2018

## **"THE BACK DOOR OF THE VAN WAS OPENED, BUT THEY WERE BROUGHT OUT INDIVIDUALLY SO THAT THE FOUR OFFICERS WAITING AT THE BORDER COULD BEAT THEM WITH THE BLACK ISSUE BATONS."**

**Date and time:** August 21, 2018 11:00

**Location:** 30km north west of Sturlic, Croatia.

**Coordinates:** 45.01169106525231 , 15.734471701072493

**Push-back from:** Croatia

**Push-back to:** Bosnia

**Demographics:** 4 person(s), age: unknown , from: Afghanistan

**Minors involved?** Yes

**Violence used:** beating (with batons/hands/other), exposure to air condition and extreme temperature during car ride, insulting, threatening with guns, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings, reckless driving

**Police involved:** 4 Croatian police officers in black "commando" uniform

**Taken to a police station?:** no

**Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?:** Unknown

**Reported by:** Balkan Info Van

### **ORIGINAL REPORT**

The group of people on the move concerned in this case, travelled in a group of four on foot, heading NW through the Croatian forests near the border crossing at Sturlic. After 10 days of walking, the group were using a single track gravel road that was flanked by trees on both sides.

At approximately 11am they heard a car approaching and where met by a police patrol vehicle. Two officers dressed in black commando uniform jumped out, one pointing his handgun at them. The police shouted at them to stop, which they complied with.

The four men were searched, at which point their power banks and money were taken. The three that had mobilephones watched as the officers broke the screens, damaging them irreparably. A van was brought to transport them back to the border to Bosnia. The four people were loaded into the back of the vehicle. It had no windows or ventilation and they describe the sickening journey they had as the driver continuously swerved across the road to make them sick.

After approximately an hour's drive, they were brought to a rural border location unknown to them. The back door of the van was opened, but they were brought out individually so that the four officers waiting at the border could beat them with the black batons. The 4 officers, dressed in black commando uniforms, attacked all attacked each person, one by one.

The blows brought out bruising on the hands of the victim, but all received severe impact injuries to the head, legs and torso.

After being beaten, the group were told to walk back into Bosnia. They headed back east on foot, only to find that they had been pushed back near to Bihac (approximately 30km from the city). Even though they had been pushed back at midday, they took another twelve hours to reach shelter in V. Kladusa, forced to walk on foot because they had no money or means of transport.

The police involved in this incident were dressed in commando uniforms. The two arresting officers (though no paperwork, or processing took place) were armed with handguns. At the border, they and two colleagues from the same unit used standard issue police batons to inflict violence on the four victims.

The incident occurred over byram, meaning the primary health services were disrupted and the victims were unable to access treatment for several days, at which point there was not much that could be done for the severe bruising suffered.