

25/01/2019

## "ALL I WANT TO DO IS TO FIND A PLACE TO BE AND I WILL FIND A JOB AND BRING MY BOY TO BE WITH ME"

**Date and time:** January 25, 2019 00:00

**Location:** Črnomelj, Slovenia, Lokve 90, police station

**Coordinates:** 45.5962968 , 15.171635599999945

**Push-back from:** Slovenia

**Push-back to:** Croatia, Bosnia

**Demographics:** 6 person(s), age: unknown , from: Syria, Egypt, Eritrea, Sudan

**Minors involved?** Unknown

**Violence used:** threatening with baton

**Police involved:** 2 police officers with blue uniform, 2 stars, "M61" at the shoulder, 1 small police car; Slovenian police officers at police station; Bosnian police officers at border

**Taken to a police station?:** yes

**Treatment at police station or other place of detention:** detention, fingerprints taken, papers signed

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

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

### ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of six left from Velika Kladuša (BIH) on January 13, 2019. After walking for nine days in Croatia, they reached Slovenia. While walking through Croatia, the group faced deep snow, reaching up to their legs, for the main part of their journey. After crossing the border of Slovenia, the group continued walking for around 25 km, which took them two days. They already had tried previously that month, to enter Slovenia in order to request asylum.

After two days and nights, they entered a town in Slovenia on the morning of January 25, with the intention of finding a police station to turn themselves in and request asylum.

But when they approached the town, the group of six was apprehended by two Slovenian officers in a small car around 9.30 am. They wore blue uniforms with two star emblems on top of each other on their chests.

*"Also it say 'M61' on the shoulder of the uniforms."*

The six of them were taken to exactly the same police station where the respondent had been taken to earlier in January, when he had entered Slovenia also with the intention of claiming asylum.

During his time in the station, the respondent was interviewed by a translator who, in his opinion, conducted his job more professionally than the previous translator he met in Slovenia.

*"It was good translator."*

This translator was male with tan skin and short hair. He spoke a Lebanese dialect of Arabic and was approximately 50

years old. The respondent explained that, in comparison to his previous translator, this translator only asked questions after being asked by the officer in the room. He did not, other than the previous translator, independently conduct the interview.

Despite this, the respondent faced some difficulties during the interview, especially in regard to his intention to claim asylum. During his previous interviews in Slovenia, one of the officers had crossed out his intended destination of Slovenia and written Italy. As such, the respondent described being told by the officer in charge of his interview that they could not offer him asylum, since they believed he would just continue to Italy. The officer then asked the respondent via the translator, why he came to Slovenia and why he had left his home country. He implied that Darfur is a safe place for people to live in. When the respondent began to describe his past, elaborating on his experiences being tortured by officers in his country, the officer told him that he didn't care and moved on to the next question.

Afterwards, the respondent described that all of his groups' bags, sleeping bags, and clothes were thrown out in Slovenia. He thought that perhaps this was because they were wet and soaked through with water and accordingly the authorities didn't want to keep them. Although he didn't see any officer disposing the things, they never received them back.

Additionally, the respondent had his phone smashed by Slovenian authorities in the police station. He was later given this phone back. This behavior was surprising to the respondent who commented that he had only heard of Croatian police officer breaking phones. During their time at the station, the female member of the group, who was pregnant, was taken to a doctor or hospital where they confirmed she was seven months pregnant.

The respondent described being advised to sign similar papers to the ones that he had signed previously in Slovenia. He didn't have his photos taken, but had to give his fingerprints. He was told that he normally would have to pay a €480 fine for crossing the border illegally. However, the authorities told him that they would not make him pay this time.

At around 4 pm, the group of six was brought to a Croatian police station at an official border checkpoint between Slovenia and Croatia. At this location, the respondent had to sign several documents which were written in Croatian. After being detained at the station for several hours, they had to enter a van and were transported back to the Bosnian border.

When the van finally reached the border at 10.30 pm, they had to get off one by one.

*"One officer pretend to hit us. He made us scared, but then, he didn't hit us."*

The officer targeted them with his baton, but then stopped shortly before actually touching them. Another officer discouraged him from continuing. The respondent supposes the reason for this behavior to have been the presence of a woman.

After crossing the border to Bosnia, the six of them walked five kilometers back to the Miral camp, outside of Velika Kladuša.

The respondent had left his country after he was tortured by police officers in Darfur. In the end of the interview, he described his desperation to find a safe place to restart his life and be reunited with his son:

*"All I want to do is to find a place to be and I will find a job and bring my boy to be with me"*

He expressed multiple times his confusion that Slovenian authorities continue to deny him this opportunity.