

15/10/2018

"HE USED SEVERE FORCE, HITTING THEM IN THE FACE, ON THE TORSO, ARMS AND LEGS"

Date and time: October 15, 2018 12:30

Location: Near Pašin Potok, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.170309 , 15.766164

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 15 person(s), age: unknown , from: Iran

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), insulting, gunshots, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: The initial captors were two Croatian officers dressed in blue who participated in the theft of belongings and loaded the men into the cramped conditions of the estate car. The other set of perpetrators were 6-7 officers, all dressed in blue uniforms who enacted the violent pushback. They were all male, apart from one woman. The primary offending officer using a gun to threaten the group wore a face mask to disguise his identity

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: detention

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: No

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 15 had been walking through the forested hills of Croatia for four days, when they were apprehended by the Croatian authorities.

The authorities detected them near the roadside of the road M1, approximately 30 km north of the town of Slunj (HRV). They had been walking through a forest when they were observed at a short distance by two Croatian officers dressed in blue uniforms. They were ordered to stop and sit down. The group complied and waited while the officers checked their belongings and frisked them. The officers told them that they would be treated fairly if they co-operated now. When they took their phones, they told them:

"If you give your cell phone now you will get it back at border."

Afterwards, they were led by the two officers to the road where a police car was parked. Shortly after, a van arrived, and they were immediately loaded into its backspace. The van was cramped and, they drove in this condition for over an hour.

When the van stopped, they found themselves in a semi-rural, hilly farmland area with some small houses in the distance. Six or seven more officers were waiting for them there, all dressed in blue, one of them was female. One of the male ones stood closest to the back of the van, wearing a balaclava and carrying a large gun at a shoulder harness.

"He had big, big gun. Look like Kalashnikov."

As the 15 individuals began to exit the van, the officer fired three rounds with his gun into the air, just over their heads.

He then withdrew a black baton from the holster on his waist and began to attack every individual during exiting the vehicle. He used severe force, hitting them in the face, on the torso, arms and legs. One individual was struck heavily across the eye socket and nose, causing bruising and bleeding. The other officers stood back and laughed as the main perpetrator with the balaclava attacked them.

"The police sit more back and laugh."

Afterwards, one of the other officers approached the group and gave them back some of their now destroyed phones.

"If you (people on the move) be good, we police be good with you, but they lie to us, they hit us and stole our phones."

The group fled back to Bosnia to escape further violence, because once again the officer with the baton began to threaten, and even chased them. It was just after midday when they walked for an hour until they arrived back at the camp in Velika Kladuša (BIH).

One of the group sought medical treatment from the MSF field clinic for severe contusions and internal bleeding, a blood blister, below the right eye socket (see document and medication). The other individuals also suffered superficial injuries on arms and legs.