

02/10/2018

"[...] [THE OFFICERS] DROVE IT [THE CAR] VERY FAST, SO THAT WE WERE FALLING FROM ONE SIDE TO ANOTHER"

Date and time: October 2, 2018 22:00

Location: near Straza, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.45673258509522 , 15.411406136949608

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 3 person(s), age: 30-40 , from: Morocco, Algeria

Minors involved? No

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

Police involved: Violated and deported by 10 Croatian border officers in black uniforms, the one being particularly rude and aggressive was a bold man between 40-50 years old with blue eyes

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of three men walked started in Velika Kladusa (BIH) and crossed the Croatian border, heading further North, with the intention to reach Italy and seek asylum there. After three days of walking, on October 2, 2018, they had almost reached the Slovenian border. At around 10 pm that evening, they were walking in a forest close to the village of Straza (HRV), where they were detected by the Croatian authorities. A female officer caught the men, asked them for their identification papers and questioned them about their intentions in Slovenia. According to the respondent, this officer treated them with respect, and they didn't have any problem with her. Following the short verbal investigation by her, the three of them were transported by a police car to a police station near the Bosnian border where they were handed over to around 10 Croatian border authorities. Those however treated the group of three "like animals". First, they frisked their bodies and then took all their phones and money. They were told that once they were going to be deported, all their belongings would be returned, but they would later only receive their phones back, completely destroyed.

"One officer was the worst. He had no hair and maybe he was between 40 or 50 years and he is with blue eyes."

When the three of them tried to ask the officers whether it was possible to apply for asylum in Croatia, this bold man shouted at them in Croatian something they didn't understand, and hit them with a baton. According to the respondent, this man was probably the one who would later attack them the most during their push-back to Bosnia. Afterwards, the men were transported by a van to a forest at the Croatian-Bosnian border nearby the official border check point close to Velika Kladusa (BIH). There they were pushed back and physically attacked:

"They [the policemen] put us into a big car and drove it very fast, so that we were falling from one side to another. They turned on the heater really high, and after switched on air conditioning very high, so we had problems to

breath and felt sick. They stopped the car in some abandoned place. We were sitting and waiting inside the car for a very long time. I suppose that the policemen were waiting until it got very dark outside, so that no one could see how they were attacking us. When it could be around four in the morning [on the 3rd October], they told us to get out of the car. It was really dark: the lights of the police car were also switched off. We started feeling the hits by batons from all sites and could hear the screams of the police officers attacking us. I think all of them, 10 officers, were beating us and shouting at us to go back to Bosnia. I did even not know from where the hits were coming from, we could just feel them, everywhere, on our back, legs, head, face. This is racism."

After the attack and push-back to Bosnia, the three of them had several injuries. All their bodies were covered in bruises and scratches. The respondent's face was also scratched, one friend had a bruised leg (see photos), and the other's back was in pain. They nevertheless had to walk back to the makeshift camp in Velika Kladusa (BIH), where their violent journey had started. All of them were then treated by a nurse from No Name Kitchen.