

20/03/2019

“Go and don’t come back. If you come back we will attack you.”

Date and time: March 20, 2019 02:30

Location: Melinovac

Coordinates: 44.738539 , 15.906933

Demographics: 2 males, Moroccan, 29 and 26, pushed back with around 60 people

Minors involved? Unknown

Violence used: beating with large metal torches

Police involved: 2 police officers and one military officer. Deep navy blue uniforms, caps, Croatian police symbols, carrying pistols and batons. Military officer carrying a 60 cm wooden baton, the color of wood, in his hand, jacket and trousers, no hat, green color uniform. 2 police vans and one police car, with visible insignia, white in colour with blue line in the middle, with ‘Policija’ written on the side

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: [Re:]ports Sarajevo

Original Report

The 2 men stopped in an abandoned house inside the village of Glibodol in Croatia at 11:00am on the 19/03. The house was small with one storey, bare white brick, with a red tiled roof. The men slept outside the house on the terrace, which was covered, in sleeping bags. The men slept until they were woken at 16:30 by 2 police officers and one military officer. The officers woke the 2 men by saying, ‘Hello, Hello.’ The officers spoke only a little English. They told the men to stand up and searched the men taking their phones and power banks; the men would not see either of these again. The officers then took pictures of the men. They told the men to pick up their things, the men collected their belongings, one man forgot his sleeping bag in the hurry to collect his things. The men were led 400 meters to another house. On the way one officer asked one of the men why he had come here? The man replied “There’s a storm, we just want to hide from the snow”. The man then asked if the officer could help them and that the man needed a doctor. He asked to be taken to a camp, not specifying any particular camp. The officer said ‘Ok, ok’. They led the men inside the other house where there was around 40 Pakistani men who had also been caught by the police. Here there were around 7 officers, 2 women and 5 men. There were also 2 military officer with semi-automatic rifles. All the Pakistani men were standing up. They put the two interviewees in a separate room for around one and a half hours. They searched the men and their bags but didn’t take anything further, having already taken their phones and power banks. Occasionally the police would check on the men but did not ask any questions. They told all the men to leave the house one by one, leading them out of the building into a police van. The interviewees were the last 2, leaving after the Pakistani men. The group of Pakistani men were lead to a van nearest the house which was empty. The men all got into the van except 2. These 2 men joined the interviewees and walked to a second van on the opposite side of the road from the house that contained around 20 people, all Pakistani, who had not been held in the house. The 4 men got into this van. At this point there were 2 police vans and 2 police cars. They closed the doors, there were no windows in the van and they could not see where they were going. They drove for around an hour and a half. The journey was very bumpy and around 5 people were sick, including one of the interviewees. They were unable to speak to the officers in the front of the van. The van was cold. They took the men to a place “like a big garage.” It had 3 brick walls and one metal shutter. All the men exited the van. They saw the other van that had been at the house, but it was empty and they did not find out what happened to the men who had been inside it. The garage had a stone floor with a thin plastic covering the floor. On one wall was lined rubbish, some in plastic bags, some in open bins. The pile was several meters long and smelt like urine. “It smelt like a bad

toilet". The men were left in this place for 4-5 hours. "It was freezing cold, you couldn't sleep because of the cold. Our clothes were wet from walking in the snow." Inside the garage there were no police officers, they were shut inside with no water, no food and no toilet. People were forced to urinate in the corner. After 2 hours the shutter opened and 2 officers entered. They took 15-20 of the men and led them outside and then closed the shutters again. After a further 2 hours, the shutters opened and the men were led to an open area around 300 meters from the garage, walking in a single file straight line. The men described that the garage appeared to be inside of a small military area. To keep people in line the men were hit with large metal torches on the legs and arms. The men were led towards 2 military officers with black fabric masks covering their faces and holding semi-automatic rifles. "We were like chickens, I didn't want to remember that moment. We were like animals". The men then stopped. The officers with the rifles then asked the men, 'Who speaks English?' One of the interviewees responded that he did. "The men said, tell everyone, that if you come back we will attack you". One officer with a rifle walked at the head of the line and the other at the rear, the men were made to walk. One of the men walked outside of the line to use his inhaler, he is Asthmatic, and was hit on the chest with the butt of a rifle, but not hard enough to leave visible marks. They walked for around 15 minutes through the snow and ice. They walked over a mountain. After 15 minutes the officers led them to a track that was well trodden. They then told them, 'Go and don't come back. If you come back we will attack you.' "It was snowing, it was really hard to keep walking." They then walked for an hour until they reached a main road. They then walked all the way back to Bihac, arriving back at 6:00am. On the way they met many people also making the trip back to Bihac, who had also been pushed back.



Image 3: Drawing of the house where the 2 men were caught by the police. Drawn by the interviewees.

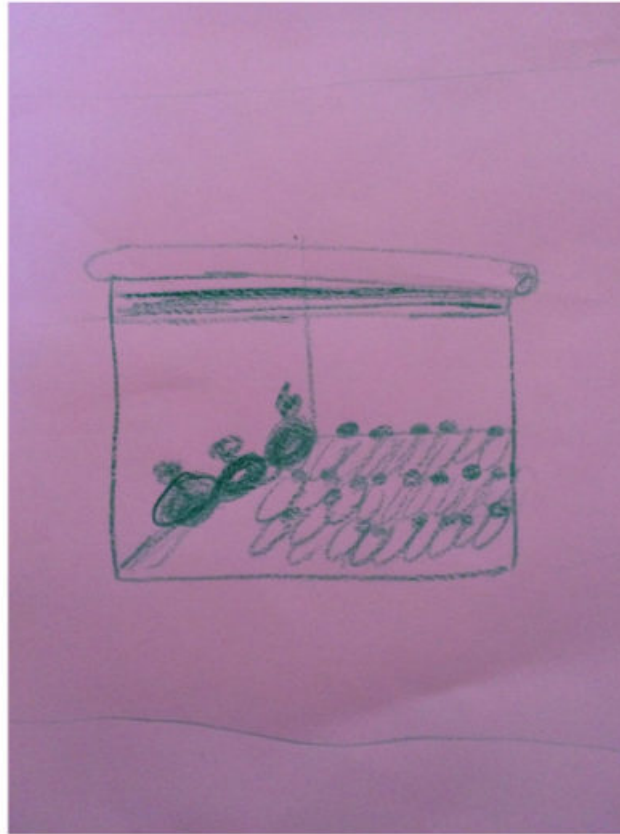


Image 4: Drawing on the 'garage' where the men were held before being pushed back. Drawn by the interviewees