

13/05/2019

""I TELL HIM, NO I AM MUSLIM AND HE SAID: THIS IS NOT MY PROBLEM""

Date and time: May 13, 2019 05:00

Location: Near Sisak, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.4850767 , 16.373115600000006

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 9 person(s), age: 6 months, 7, 24-35 , from: Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon

Minors involved? Yes

Violence used: threatening with guns, forcing to undress, destruction of personal belongings, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: 5 Croatian special police officers

Taken to a police station?: no

Treatment at police station or other place of detention: photos taken, personal information taken

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: No Name Kitchen

ORIGINAL REPORT

The group started walking from Velika Kladuša at around midnight on May 10th. After three days of walking in the forest, while crossing a road, the group was stopped by five Croatian authorities at around 5:00 am on the 13th of May. they got caught, while crossing a road. The officers were wearing what the respondent described as uniforms similar to those worn by the Croatian Special Police.

The policemen pointed their guns at the group, ordering them to stop.

"My husband said: Why are you doing like this? We are a family, We have a baby, you can't do it like this"

The respondent described that they requested the authorities to take them to a camp, claiming that their baby had gotten sick during their travels and that one of the women was in fragile health due to a previous surgery she had in Iran. The officers replied positively, agreeing and saying there was no problem. They then searched the group, touching only the men, and removing all phones, money, camping gas, and sleeping bags. In addition, one of the men was told to undress in order to have a full body search.

The respondent described that the policemen then registered their names and took pictures of everyone's face but the baby's. The officers ordered the female respondent to remove her hat for the picture, even after she said she did not want to due to her Muslim beliefs:

"I tell him, no I am muslim and he said: This is not my problem"

She also inquired why they were not taking pictures of her child and asked them to register him also, however the policemen ignored her.

The respondent described that later, the other female of the group asked to be taken to hospital because she was in pain, due to her infected surgery scar. The officers ignored the request and told the group to go inside the police van. They were driven by two policemen for one hour and a half until the Bosnian border, where they ordered the group to leave their vehicle and go back to Bosnia.

The respondent described that they were, at this point, exhausted and had no knowledge of their location. As a result they decided, even though it was day time, to sleep by the street. At around 6:00 pm, a Bosnian couple that lived nearby this location found them. The locals provided them food, milk and let them take a shower at their house. However they are not allowed to do this, having to first explain this to the group and telling them they could not stay there.

Around 8:00 pm, after being given directions on the way back to Velika Kladuša they restarted walking. The respondent then described that a Bosnian man who passed in front of them with his car, told them to stop, and that he could call a friend who would come and give them a ride if they wanted to pay. The families agreed and waited by the road, until this man showed. They ended by paying him 45 euros to be taken back to the city where they arrived around 10:00 pm.