

01/09/2018

"THE OFFICER HIT HIS RIGHT EYE SOCKET, WHICH WAS LEFT BRUISED AND HIS SIGHT WAS TEMPORARILY AFFECTED."

Date and time: September 1, 2018 02:00

Location: Karlovac, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.4928973 , 15.555268299999966

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Bosnia

Demographics: 7 person(s), age: unknown , from: Syria, Algeria

Minors involved? Yes

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

Police involved: Croatian police officers in black commando uniforms, caught and robbed by 3 officers (initially with white jeep), physically attacked by 6-7 border police officers

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Balkan Info Van

ORIGINAL REPORT

On September 1st. 2018, A group of seven people on the move traveled on foot from Velika Kladusa, walking directly north into the Croatian interior. After walking for two days the group was moving through an area of rural/suburban woodland near to Karlovac and was spotted by a police patrol vehicle (white jeep) on a nearby road. Two officers jumped out of the car while the driver waited inside the vehicle. These two officers, dressed in black commando uniforms, shouted to the group to stop. The victims complied with this instruction and waited for the officers to reach them.

The police told them to sit down and began to body-search them. The officers stole all their belongings, including bags, jackets, mobiles, money and power banks. They also removed all White Papers (Bosnian documents), which they did not return. The victims asked for permission to go back to Bosnia.

A small van was brought to the roadside and all the seven people were loaded into the back of it. It took approximately an hour to deliver them to a rural border location, during which the men stayed in the dark with inadequate ventilation. There the doors were opened and the group was told to go out. They were on the Croatian-Bosnian border, near Poljana.

Along with the initial officers, 6-7 more officers were waiting outside, all dressed in black. The group was told to stand while the police searched their bodies again, in spite of having all their belongings taken at their initial seizure. When it became apparent that one member of the group, a 17 year old Algerian male, still had a mobile phone in his pocket, the police began to shout at him in Croatian. He pleaded with the officers politely, asking them not to take it. But the officer closest to the man used the reinforced heel of his boot to stamp hard to the victim's upper foot. The officer also hit to his right eye socket – cheekbone area which was left bruised, and his sight was temporarily affected. When everybody

had been searched, the police told them to walk down into a small stretch of stream (a gully/tributary of river Glina).

When whole the group was standing in the ditch, the officers, standing at the bank, said “heidi”. As the men started to move, the officers began to beat them with batons. Some officers jumped lower to kick and strike the victims across their back as they tried to escape across the stream and into Bosnian territory. There were left visible baton strikes across the kidneys, consistent with these blows from behind, especially on the back of one of the victims.

The victims crossed into Bosnia and knew from previous push backs that they were around 20 km westwards from Velika Kladusa. It took until early morning to arrive back to the town, having no money for the bus.