

22/02/2017

"THEY GRABBED HIM AND SMASHED HIS HEAD AGAINST THE GROUND BREAKING HIS TEETH"

Date and time: February 22, 2017 00:00

Location: Border near Bački Breg, Hungary

Coordinates: 45.92563248555201 , 18.953475952148438

Push-back from: Hungary

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 45 person(s), age: unknown , from: unknown

Minors involved? Yes

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

Police involved: 30-40 police officers

Taken to a police station?: no

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Unknown

Reported by: Fresh Response

ORIGINAL REPORT

On February 22nd, 2017 a group of 42-45 people on the move crossed the Hungarian Border near Bački. The group included three or four minors and five to ten elderly people. After midnight the fence was cut and the group got through. Just after moving through the fence they looked back and saw a police car behind them, the police saw that the fence had been cut. The group of 42-45 people waded for about an hour before getting to a main road, the group saw police cars on the other side of the road who were looking for them, there was also a helicopter. The group then hid in a field next to the road. The police looked for them for about 20–25 minutes, about 30–40 police officers. The group was spotted, as they were caught in the lights from the helicopter.

Five minutes later the police arrived and started screaming and shouting at the group of people who were all sitting, and proceeded to beat them with batons hitting every person numerous times, and kicking them. The police kept hitting and kicking them for about 15–20 minutes. The interviewee describes that people were beaten so badly that they were crying very loudly, and that the police were both hitting at the group, but also individual beatings.

You would think that they wouldn't hit the elderly and the minors, but they hit them just as much. They didn't even bother to see who was older and who was younger; they just started hitting us right away.

One person was caught individually and not along with the group of 42-45 people, the police beat him individually for about half an hour while questioning him about where his group was. The police grabbed him and smashed his head against the ground breaking his teeth. Blood was coming out of his ears and from his nose. His mouth was cut where the teeth had been broken. When the police dropped the group in Serbia this person was unable to move and the group carried him to the Horgoš transit zone.

The interviewee describes that the policemen were humiliating and laughing at the group while beating them, saying things like: *Muslims are animals*. The police ordered them into a line and made them sit down. The police asked each

person where they were from while still hitting them.

Whenever they felt like it, they would hit you. If one of us was sitting in a different way than the others or if the line wasn't straight, they would drag them out of the line and would beat them and push them back saying: Sit straight! In my whole life I've never been that scared. I've never been beaten this way and I've never seen anyone who was beaten this way.

The police then searched through their belongings, and made them undress while still beating them. The group of people were ordered back into a line and got their clothes back. The group was then ordered into a police van and brought them back to Horgoš. The police ordered the group to stand in a line again and one of the police officers held a can of teargas up towards them, then a police car arrived from the Serbian, and the interviewee estimates that this caused the police officer not to use the teargas.

The police then ordered them to read a loud a paper stating something along the lines of: *We crossed the Hungarian border illegally. We know know that we can go legally through a transit zone, if we experienced any violence we can report it.* But without any information as to how or where one could do this. ' The police filmed them as they were reading. Afterwards the Group was deported and forced to the Serbian side of the border