

14/02/2018

"POLICEMEN PULLED THEM UP INTO KNEELING POSITION, ORDERING THEM TO KEEP THEIR ARMS IN THE AIR, AND PROCEEDED TO HIT THEM WITH BATONS"

Date and time: February 14, 2018 02:00

Location: Vinkovci, Croatia

Coordinates: 45.2879058 , 18.805678100000023

Push-back from: Croatia

Push-back to: Serbia

Demographics: 2 person(s), age: 29 , from: Algeria

Minors involved? No

Violence used: beating (with batons/hands/other), pushing people to the ground, insulting, theft of personal belongings

Police involved: five armed policemen

Taken to a police station?: unknown

Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?: Yes

Reported by: Info Park

ORIGINAL REPORT

A man and a woman from Boufark, Algeria, both aged 29, tried to cross the border to Croatia on the night between February 13th. and 14th. 2018, with intentions to seek asylum and stay in Croatia. They were traveling alone on foot for several hours when Croatian police intercepted them nearby Vinkovci at 2am. In their words, there were 5 armed police officers who immediately pushed them on the ground, using a lot of force and searched both the man and the woman, taking their backpacks, their mobile phones, and about 50 euros that they had with them.

During the search police officers shouted at them in a language they did not understand. After they had been searched, policemen pulled them up into kneeling position, ordering them to keep their arms in the air, and proceeded to hit them with batons in the general area of thighs, back and neck, using offensive language the whole time and occasionally spitting on them.

The man tried to explain to them that they wanted to ask for asylum and several times he said "Asylum" and "Azil" hoping that the policemen would stop the beating and allow them to stay in Croatia. But one of the police officers got mad at these words and punched him in the head with his fist, breaking his nose and knocking him to the ground. Around 4am., the man and the woman were handcuffed and escorted to the Serbian border in a police vehicle, after which they were released and ordered to walk back to Serbia.

Both the man and the woman returned to Belgrade in the afternoon and were treated at Doctors without borders (MSF) clinic. The man has medical documentation which confirms that he suffered a broken nose, a fractured left hand and visible bruises on his face, back and thighs.