

23/09/2018

## "I WAS NOT CRYING ABOUT MONEY AND PHONE BUT BECAUSE I FELT DESPERATE"

**Date and time:** September 23, 2018 02:00

**Location:** 20 km away from Velika Kladuša, Croatia, Croatian-Bosnian border

**Coordinates:** 45.05980583155904 , 15.734214185676364

**Push-back from:** Croatia

**Push-back to:** Bosnia

**Demographics:** 4 person(s), age: 26 - 32 , from: Syria, Iraq, Algeria

**Minors involved?** No

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

**Police involved:** 3 male Croatian officers in blue shirts

**Taken to a police station?:** unknown

**Was the intention to ask for asylum expressed?:** Yes

**Reported by:** No Name Kitchen

### ORIGINAL REPORT

The group of 13 men left Velika Kladuša (BIJ), and crossed to Croatia where they separated. A group of four continued walking through the Croatian interior. When they were in a forest close to the Slovenian border, they were detected by three Croatian men in blue shirts. Two of the four individuals tried to run away, but the officers caught them. Then, they attacked all four of them, hitting their backs and faces with batons, breaking their phones, and stealing their money.

*" They [Croatian police] stopped and started beating us, at the Slovenian border. They broke our phones and stole our money, 200 euros from me. When the police broke my phone and stole my money, now I cannot talk with my wife and children. From who can my wife find money for me that I can continue my trip? I had an idea to go to Europe and work and send my family money and after, take them to Europe, but now... It is not the first time, this is the second, that the Croatian police beat us and steal our money. "*

One of the individuals tried to speak out and ask for asylum in Croatia, but the officers didn't allow him to say anything. When he tried to speak out, he received a hit by a baton from one officer. All four individuals were then put into a van and deported back to Bosnia, without any opportunity to access the asylum procedures. On the way to the border, the van stopped at several police stations to pick up other people on the move. The van then stopped 20 km away from Velika Kladuša (BIH) at around 2 am, but the respondent couldn't remember the exact location because he didn't have his phone to see GPS and it was too dark to recognize the area. When they arrived at the border, the officers told all individuals to get off the vehicle and to return to Bosnia:

*" The police told us to quickly go and don't change the direction, ' Quickly, quickly, go! ', they said to us. I was crying for one hour afterwards in a forest. I was not crying about money and phone but because I felt desperate. I do not remember the phone number of my family, so I cannot call them . "*

The respondent also cried at the end of the interview while explaining to me his fear of having to go back to Iraq, where the situation is dangerous for him. In addition, his family would be disappointed by his journey that was for nothing:

*“ I want to go back to Iraq, but I have nothing. If I go back to Iraq, my family will ask me what I have been doing for one year when I was out of my country and now coming back with nothing. For the first time when the police caught me and broke my phone, and for one month I have not spoken to my wife and family, and now I cannot support them. My children keep asking about me, but I cannot talk with them ... Now, I come back with nothing, and lost my job. I was a police man in Iraq. I never ever beat anyone. I am human and person, we are similar, I cannot do anything to anyone .”*