

ALBANIA: ENDING IMPUNITY FOR TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Appeal Case: Beqir Kaba

On 13 May 2004 Beqir Kaba, aged 19, was arrested and taken to Peshkopi police station after a neighbour accused him of theft. He later alleged that when he denied the accusation police officers beat him with rubber truncheons on his back, shoulders, legs and hands. He said that they had twisted and pulled at his beard and his ears with pincers, and threatened to kill him. He was released the following day without charge.

Photographs, taken five days after the incident, apparently clearly showed severe bruising on various parts of his body, and a medical forensic examination later confirmed that he had injuries inflicted by a “heavy instrument”.

Beqir Kaba filed a complaint against five police officers. Although local police at first denied that he had been ill-treated, it was later reported that criminal proceedings had been started against two police officers on a charge of “arbitrary acts”.

Take action now

Please write to the Prosecutor General with copies to the Minister of Public Order, the Minister of Justice and the People’s Advocate (Ombudsperson):

- Inform them that Amnesty International is concerned about allegations of ill-treatment of detainees at police stations in Albania, and at continuing impunity for police officers reasonably suspected of torture and ill-treatment;
- Explain that you are writing in connection with the alleged ill-treatment of Beqir Kaba, and outline brief details of the case;
- State that you understand that criminal proceedings have been started against two police officers on a charge of “Arbitrary Acts”, under Article 250 of the Albanian Criminal Code, and ask to be informed of the outcome of these proceedings;
- State that you welcome the fact that an investigation has been started into Beqir Kaba’s complaint, but that you would very much like to know the reasons for applying Article 250 of the Criminal Code, rather than Article 86, dealing with “torture and any other degrading or inhuman treatment”, which it seems would more accurately reflect the seriousness of the alleged offence;
- Recall that all victims of torture and ill-treatment should have, under the Convention against Torture, to which Albania is a signatory, an enforceable right to compensation, and ask what measures will be taken – if the police officers are convicted – to provide Beqir Kaba with appropriate compensation.

PLEASE WRITE TO:

Prosecutor General

Z. Theodor Sollaku

Prokurori i Përgjithshëm,
Rruga Qemal Stafa,
Tirana, Republic of Albania

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Fax: +355 42 29 085

Minister of Public Order

Z. Igli Toska

Ministri i Rendit Publik
Ministria e Rendit Publik,
Sheshi Skenderbej, Nr.3
Tirana, Republic of Albania

Salutation: Dear Minister

Fax: + 355 42 58625 (confirmed January 2002)

mrp@mpo.gov.al

Minister of Justice

Z. Fatmir Xhafa

Ministri i Drejtësisë
Ministria e Drejtësisë
Blvd “Zog I”
Tirana, Republic of Albania

Salutation: Dear Minister

Fax: +355 42 28359

You could also send a copy to

Ministry of Justice – Directory of Foreign and Public Relations

Ministria e Drejtësisë
Drejtoria e Marreveshjeve Nderkombetare
Blvd “Zog I”
Tirana, Republic of Albania
Tel/Fax: + 355 4 240 444
Email: dmjp@justice.gov.al

If you are sending letters by email, please send them as an attachment.

For copies only: please send by post

People’s Advocate (Avokati i Popullit) - Ombudsman

Dr Ermir Dobjani

Bulevardi e Deshmoret e Kombit, Nr 3, Kati i II,
Tirana,
Republic of Albania