



PETITION **STOP POLICE BRUTALITY**

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SIGN



Prof. Nils Melzer - UN Special Rapporteur;
David Maria Sasoli - President of the European Parliament;
Christian Danielsson - Director General of the European Commission for Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations;
Vladimir Rebić - Director of the police;
Dragan Kujundzić - Head of the internal police control sector;

We, the signatories of this petition, ask for your immediate attention to the abuse of human rights in Serbia which occurred between July 7th and 11th 2020. We request an independent investigation and subsequent penalty for the brutal violence perpetrated by the police of the Republic of Serbia against its citizens while participating in protest in July 2020.

Thousands of people of all ages, including the elderly, students and children, were present at the protests, which arose as a spontaneous reaction on to the inconsistency in the government's enforcement of Covid-19 measures and a new curfew, which was only instituted following an illegitimate re-election.

The use of force carried out in those days by members of the police was inhumane, inappropriate and used primarily against peaceful protestors, and sometimes even by-standers. All protestors exercised their constitutional right to free speech, as recognized in the Serbian constitution. On the three days of July 7, 8 and 9, members of the police tolerated hooligan attacks, protected violent behaviour but threw tear gas and brutally beat citizens in selective situations.

There is evidence that the tear gas used had expired more than 5 years ago. There is video evidence that police brutally beat random passers-by and abused them with disproportionate force. Among this video evidence, footage shows an entire police platoon beating a citizen lying helplessly on the street, an incident where a policeman knocks a boy with autism off his bicycle while another policeman knees him in the head. The disproportionate use of force is also visible in a video where a police officer hits a minor amongst a group of fleeing kids who were fleeing from them, as well as a situation when three police officers approach and beat the heads of three young men sitting quietly on a park bench with batons.

You can see some of the video evidence here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=806wfzeJNEY>

Authorities justified the intervention of the police in several statements after the incident, while the director of the police, Vladimir Rebić, stated that "the police reacted only when their lives were in danger," a statement which is clearly not true.

Why is this important?

We must never again have a situation where members of the police abuse and beat the citizens whose taxes fund their wages. We don't want future generations to fear whether they will be beaten for exercising their right to assembly. We don't want anyone's parents to worry about their children returning home beaten up for no reason.

Following police violence at anti-corruption protests in Romania two years ago, a similar online petition signed by more than 82,000 people was launched by Declic, after which police violence ended thanks to a UN response.

We ask for you to give this the same attention and respond accordingly,

Marina Pavlić, Executive Director of Kreni-Promeni

Savo Manojlović, President of the Association for the Protection of Constitutionality and Legality