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SOCIETY-DEPORTATION-UN

Government does not cooperate with the UN Working Group

New York, Podgorica, (MINA) – Montenegrin Government did not reply to requests for information in 15 cases investigated by the UN Working Group for Enforced Disappearances.

This has been stated in the latest report of that UN body, published by the UN Human Rights Council, entitled Promotion and Protection of all Human Rights – Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Including the Right to Development.

It is emphasized that the Montenegrin Government did not supply single information on those cases.

The Working Group has been informed on the 16 cases of enforced disappearances by the NGOs and the victims' families. In the meantime, one case was clarified on the basis of information supplied by the Government, while in other cases cooperation had been missing.

In the Working Group report it is stated that that body was informed that the Montenegrin authorities did not provide reparations for the victims and families of the victims of the 1992 deportation of Bosnians from Montenegro.

Montenegrin authorities, as stated, did not ensure a good start of an independent investigation on disappearances nor did they process those responsible for alleged disappearances of 83 Bosnian civilians.

One of the 15 cases for which the Working Group requested information, relates to the case of the pre-war president of the municipality of Srebrenica Malik Meholic. That case is investigated by the Working Group because there has been no data on Meholic following his arrest.

Prelevic Law Firm, representative of the victims and families of the victims of deportation, had previously written on two occasions on behalf of Meholic family to the then Minister of Interior Dragan Djurovic and the Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic seeking information on what had happened to Meholic.

Djurovic and Djukanovic never responded to those letters.

The assigned judge of the Basic Court in Podgorica had in the meantime stopped the civil procedure initiated by the Meholic family – his wife, sons and brother, because of „insufficient“ evidence. Prelevic Law Firm appealed this decision.

Criminal investigation against six suspects for deportation is being led for more than two

years to date without result. According to the Criminal Procedure Law the investigations should be closed within a six-month deadline and may only exceptionally be prolonged, when a competent judge needs to especially justify to the president of court why it had been impossible to finish the investigation within the deadline.

Around 100 victims, plaintiffs in civil proceedings, came on their expense to testify in civil proceedings before the Basic Court in Podgorica, while the state never used those opportunities to ask them to provide statements at the same time in the criminal procedure, as well, although the state prosecutor had always been informed on dates of their arrival for months in advance, state in the Prelevic Law Firm.

None of the six survivors of the deportation and the concentration camp in Foca, of whom four have come to testify in civil proceedings initiated before the Basic Court in Podgorica, had been invited to testify in criminal investigation.

Prelevic Law Firm earlier announced that they are preparing an application to the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg, due to ineffective investigation and violation of articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
(The End)