

2015-05-04

Fråga-svar

Tjetjenien/Ukraina. OMON och tjetjenska specialförband i Ukraina.

Fråga

- Finns det någon information om OMON:s verksamhet i Tjetjenien under perioden 2008-2011? Har myndigheten inom ramen för sin verksamhet begått kränkningar av mänskliga rättigheter?
- Finns det någon information om huruvida Kadyrov rekryterar individer tillhörande specialförband för att tjänstgöra som soldater i Ukraina?

Svar

Lifos anmärkning: Omon är inte en självständig myndighet utan en beteckning som används för diverse specialstyrkor som sorterar under polisen. Sammanlagt handlar det om 100-tals olika enheter. Skall man försöka hitta en motsvarighet inom svensk polisorganisation är nog det närmaste man kan komma piketpolis. Frågan om OMONs verksamhet i Tjetjenien blir därmed svår att besvara då det skulle kunna avse 100-tals olika enheter varav de flesta aldrig har varit i närheten av Tjetjenien. De OMON-enheter som för närvarande är aktiva i Tjetjenien sorterar nästan uteslutande under det tjetjenska inrikesdepartementet och är således ”lokala” OMON-styrkor.

Finns det någon information om OMON:s verksamhet i Tjetjenien under perioden 2008-2011? Har myndigheten inom ramen för sin verksamhet begått kränkningar av mänskliga rättigheter?

Flera NGOs har rapporterat om det uppmärksammade försvinnandet av Islam Umarpashayev. Human Right Watch (HRW) är en av huvudkällorna och beskriver vad som hände hösten 2009. HRW (2011):

On December 11, 2009, Islam Umarpashaev was forcibly disappeared, when he was abducted from his home in Chechnya and

held in incommunicado detention until his release on April 2, 2010. During his detention, he was subjected to torture and other forms of cruel and inhuman treatment. Umarpashaev alleges that he was held at the headquarters of the Chechen Special Task Police Force (OMON) and has described being handcuffed to a radiator for the first three months of his detention, beaten, threatened, and deprived of food on a regular basis.

I en rapport av Danish Immigration Service (DIS) framgår ytterligare detaljer om vad som hände, även det ursprungligen berättat av HRW. DIS (2011):

When he refused, the OMON unit decided to make him a “fake suicide bomber”. That is when law enforcement officials allegedly keep a person until he grows a beard and long hair to resemble the members of the illegal armed groups living in the forest and mountains. At some point the captive will be killed and left in the forests, only to be “discovered” by law enforcement officials claiming the body to be a dead rebel killed in a successful anti terrorism operation. (s. 60)

Efter Umarpashayevs frigivning rapporterar HRW att efterspelet präglats av hot från OMON. HRW (2011):

However, soon afterwards, on August 17, 2010, a witness protection officer assigned to Umarpashaev and his family facilitated a meeting between a Chechen OMON commander and Umarpashaev's father and brother. According to them, the commander threatened them with severe reprisals unless they could convince Islam Umarpashaev to withdraw his complaint.

The Joint Mobile Group and Novaya Gazeta, a leading independent Russian newspaper, reported that at a ministerial meeting in February 2011 in Grozny where the case was discussed, the head of the Chechen OMON threatened that if investigators tried to enter OMON premises, he would order his officers to open fire.

Both the Ministry of Internal Affairs for Chechnya and the key Russian military base, Khankala, refused the investigators' requests for armed escorts to the OMON premises, allegedly for fear of possible bloodshed. Eventually, the investigation team secured the assistance of officers from the Chechnya investigative committee's own security service and were able to enter the OMON headquarters, accompanied by Umarpashaev and a representative of the Mobile Group, who participated at their own risk.

Only one OMON servicemen was present on the premises but Umarpashaev identified him as one of the officers who had mistreated him when he was confined there. Currently, the investigation is seeking to interrogate all of the OMON servicemen and to enable Umarpashaev to identify other possible perpetrators.

DIS (2011):

HRW considered that since then the investigation has been acting in an effective and professional manner, but none of the involved OMON servicemen have given evidence despite official summons. The head of OMON in Chechnya has explicitly threatened the Russian federal investigator on his life should he come close to the OMON facility. (s. 60)

I en senare rapport av DIS (2015) konstateras:

An ICG analyst in Moscow referred to the investigation into the murder of human rights activist Natahlia Estemirova and the investigation into the case of Umarpashaev, who was illegally detained by the Chechen OMON as illustrative of the complete impunity enjoyed by Chechen OMON and other police units close to Kadyrov. Both cases have been transferred for investigation outside of the Chechen Republic. (s. 18)

Ytterligare två personer sägs ha varit frihetsberövade av OMON under samma period som Umarpashayev. Reuters (2011):

Two people Umarpashayev says were imprisoned with him are still missing, and rights activists say they fear one is dead and the other has fled abroad.

Memorial says its figures may show only a quarter of the true scale of abuses because many Chechens have feared coming forward since one of the group's leading campaigners, Natalia Estemirova, was shot dead hours after being abducted in 2009.

I en intervju konstaterar Igor Kalyapin, chef på Committee Against Torture, att rädsla för repressalier förhindrar att brott begångna av bland andra OMON undersöks. Open Democracy (2011):

Midway through the 2000s the carte blanche for carrying out illegal violence was gradually transferred from the Feds to the representatives of local defence and law enforcement agencies, which were controlled by Kadyrov. As a consequence, four years ago we [Committee Against Torture] began to receive complaints about the new Kadyrov policemen, rather than the Feds. Each time the staff in our Chechen division told me that the suspects were people answering to one of three men: Deputy Adam Delimkhanov, Deputy Chairman of the Government Magomed Daudov, or the head of OMON (special services), Alikhan Tsakayev. Each time they told me it had been made clear that if they took up these cases, they and their relatives would be intimidated, tortured and murdered.

Committee Against Tortures regionala grupp i Tjetjenien, Joint Mobile Group (JMG), har även undersökt andra övergrepp som tillskrivs OMON.

Front Line Defenders (2012):

The JMG has also received information regarding two new cases in which members and commanders of the Chechen OMON are suspects. One of these cases concerns the illegal detention and brutal torture by policemen of employees of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Interior Ministry of the Chechen Republic.

Andra incidenter som hittats har ikke gått att belägga genom olika källor utan nämns enstaka gånger. Caucasian Knot (2008):

On July 23 in Gudermes, OMON (Special Militia) fighters of the Chechen MIA beat and detained several dozens of women who gathered at the countryside residence of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov with intent to ask him for help. The "Caucasian Knot" correspondent learnt about it from an anonymous source who talked to one of the participants of the action.

Den tjetjenska nyhetssajten Kavkaz Center hänvisar till en lokal tidning som beskrivit hur en finno-urgisk man misshandlats och skalperats av OMON-styrkor. Kavkaz Center (2011):

Russian soldiers from the gang of "Perm OMON squad" committed another racial crime ... According to the newspaper, "Local Time", riot police has brutally beaten a local resident Oleg Bychkov, and then took off his scalp while he was still alive. As a result, the Finn has died. The crime was committed at the end of July, but was not disclosed until now.

Inrikesministeriet i Perm avvisar påståendena som nonsens (Ura.ru, 2011).

Norska Landinfo skriver i en rapport att det finns mange rapporter om ulovlige bortföranden men att det i mange fall er svært att veta vilka sikkerhetsstrukturer som er innblandade. Landinfo (2014):

European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT 2013) besøkte offisielle anholdelsessteder og varetektsfengsler i Tsjetsjenia (og Dagestan) på en reise til regionen i april/mai 2011. De intervjuet også flere varetektsfengslede. I rapporten beskrives et par tilfeller¹⁷ fra Tsjetsjenia (fra 2010 og 2011) der de aktuelle personene ble pågrepet og ført til steder de ikke kunne identifisere (i ett av tilfellene dreide det seg om et privat hus), for så å bli mishandlet (slag og elektrisitet ble brukt). Etter noen dager ble de ført til lovlige anholdelsessteder. Disse eksemplene stemmer overens med tidligere informasjon Landinfo har fått om at personer pågripes, føres til et uoffisielt anholdelsessted, utsettes for mishandling for å presse frem en tilståelse, for deretter å bli ført til et lovlig anholdelsessted.¹⁸ Flere kilder Landinfo intervjuet i Moskva i november 2012, var av den oppfatning at disse ulovlige anholdelsesstedene trolig er lokalene til ulike sikkerhetsstrukturer, som etter loven ikke har rett

til å holde eller avhøre personer, men kun pågripe i kraft av å være organer som overholder samfunnsorden. Organer som ble nevnt som trolig holder personer ulovlig var OMON, PPSM-2, Neftepolk (Milashina, møte i Moskva november 2012; Inter-regional Committee Against Torture, møte i Moskva november 2012; Memorial, møte i Moskva november 2012). (s. 12-13)

Etter det Landinfo kjenner til, vet den tsjetsjenske befolkningen ofte ikke hvilke strukturer som pågriper i de enkelte tilfellene. Sikkerhetsstrukturene legitimerer seg vanligvis ikke ved ankomst og beskrives ofte som maskerte. Det er heller ikke alltid at uniformene deres har insignia. (s. 26)

Finns det någon information om huruvida Kadyrov rekryterar individer tillhörande specialförband för att tjänstgöra som soldater i Ukraina?

Det finns många rapporter om stridande tjetjener i östra Ukraina, men huruvida de är direkt utskickade av Kadyrov är inte entydigt. The Jamestown Foundation (2014-05-30):

Chechens have also surfaced in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. News agencies have provided links to video reports purporting to show the presence of Chechens among the unidentified armed groups in eastern Ukraine. Sometimes, the uninformed opinion of a lay person looking outside from his car (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAPe02IXBQI>) is considered sufficient to figure out that the Chechens are kadyrovtsy, meaning those Chechens who are loyalists of Ramzan Kadyrov, the authoritarian Moscow-backed Chechen leader.

The clearest apparent confirmation of the presence of Chechens in the conflict came in a CNN report in Donetsk. Two people replied to the reporter's question that they were from Chechnya and were kadyrovtsy. They refused to say what unit they were from, but nodded affirmatively when the reporter suggested that they were with the Russian interior ministry (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAAqqBIRxIY>).

However, it was not immediately clear from the report if the Chechens were dispatched to Ukraine by the Russian authorities.

Även Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) har publicerat artiklar om kadyrovtsy i Ukraina. RFE/RL (2014-08-30):

Meanwhile, evidence continues to mount of the presence on the side of the pro-Russian separatist forces in eastern Ukraine of hundreds of fighters sent by Chechen Republic head Ramzan Kadyrov. Those fighters are apparently primarily volunteers from among the various police and security forces subordinate to Kadyrov, who has consistently denied that there are any "Chechen battalions" in

Ukraine, even after the "Financial Times" quoted a fighter named Zelimkhan who said he and his comrades in arms had been sent to Ukraine in mid-May on Kadyrov's orders.

How many "kadyrovtsy" either volunteered or were sent to Ukraine is unclear, but separate, unconfirmed casualty reports suggest the figure may have been as high as 1,000.

Ramzan Kadyrov dementerade på Instagram att trupper skickats till Ukraina. Deutsche Welle (2014-05-28):

In a statement posted to Instagram [<http://instagram.com/p/ohIgWPiRoG/>] on Wednesday, Kadyrov rejected the claim that Chechen soldiers were fighting along side pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.

"I officially declare that this does not correspond to the truth," Kadyrov said. "There are no 'Chechen servicemen' or even 'military columns from Chechnya' in the conflict."

Kadyrov har även vid andra tillfället förnekat förekomsten av tjetjenska trupper i Ukraina, men RFE/RL anser att det finns skäl att ifrågasätta uttalandena. RFE/RL (2014-05-09):

Speaking to journalists in Grozny, Kadyrov said categorically that "there are no Chechen battalions in Ukraine."

Another source, too, has cast doubts on Kadyrov's denial. Earlier this week, Kavkazcenter, the official website of the North Caucasus Islamic insurgency, posted what it said was a letter it had received from a member of one of the Chechen security forces subordinate to Kadyrov who had been sent first to Crimea and then to Slovyansk.

Kadyrov's denial that any "Chechen battalions" are currently deployed in Ukraine was, moreover, formulated in such a way that it does not preclude the presence on Ukrainian soil of informal military units from Chechnya.

Kadyrovs övriga uttalanden under 2014 har inte heller de tjänat till att klargöra situationen. The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst (2014-06-04):

Chechnya's President Ramzan Kadyrov's behavior deserves particular attention. He has on several occasions distanced himself from news that Chechens are involved in the Ukraine crisis, but has nevertheless repeatedly asserted that should the circumstances necessitate it and Putin give an explicit order, Chechens would readily volunteer to Ukraine to fight "fascists and banderovites."

Global Voices hänvisar till Kavkazcenter och anger att volontärer aktivt rekryterats för att strida i Ukraina och att personer värvas genom påtryckningar. Global Voices (2014-09-12):

It is not immediately clear if local branches of the security services, perhaps facing quotas, compelled soldiers in the North Caucasus to participate in Ukraine's war, or if these men traveled there on their own. The Web portal Kavkazcenter reported on volunteer recruitment centers that opened in Grozny and closed suddenly. In March this year, Oleg Leusenko published on LiveJournal a letter from a Chechen woman named Elmira, who claims that Chechen volunteers from Grozny are threatened and intimidated, if they refuse to fight in Ukraine.

The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst har via Caucasian Knot uppgifter om att volontärerna erbjudits betalning. The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst (2014-06-04):

Some sources suggest that Chechen authorities have exerted immense pressure on Chechen youngsters within Chechnya and in cities of Russia proper to volunteer to Ukraine. Chechen authorities have allegedly gone so far as to open recruitment centers in Grozny, Achkhoy-Martyan, Znamenskoye, and Gudermes, while those resisting recruitment have been deemed "cowards." Caucasian Knot also quotes a local source according to which, in order to encourage recruitment to the Ukraine battlefield, which is rather unpopular among Chechens, authorities promise around US\$350 a day to any Chechen volunteering to the Ukraine conflict.

I en senare artikel i The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst ges ytterligare förklaring till hur volontärer värvas, och en förklaring till varför de därför kan vara kadyrovtsy i grunden. The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst (2014-10-15):

In the Chechen context, a member of the Chechen law enforcement in general and a kadyrovets in particular would, if discarded from military service for whatever reason, become excluded from the protection of his comrades-in-arms. In turn, this would dramatically increase the risk of becoming a target for his or his family's enemies in blood feud. Given that many kadyrovtsy have been involved in extrajudicial killings, humiliation, and injuring of their fellow countrymen suspected of providing support to insurgents or because they were relatives of insurgents, this has raised the pressure on would-be volunteers to obey instructions.

De flesta källor anser att de tjetjener som strider i Ukraina hör till en bataljon vid namn Vostok. RFE/RL (2014-05-30):

So what is the Vostok Battalion and what is it doing in eastern Ukraine?

The Vostok ("East") Battalion was formed by Chechen warlord Sulim Yamadayev in 1999, at the onset of the second Chechen war.

Together with his four brothers, Yamadayev defected from the Chechen separatist insurgency in protest at its growing Islamization and rounded up a group of loyal fighters.

It was officially disbanded shortly after the war in what experts believe was a political move to end the scorching rivalry between "Vostochniki," as the battalion was colloquially known, and members of the "Kadyrovtsy," the feared militia controlled by Moscow-backed Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

Yamadayev's 2009 killing in Dubai sealed the Vostok Battalion's demise.

The unit, however, was not truly dissolved.

"It was never really broken up, it was re-profiled and incorporated into a Defense Ministry unit based in Chechnya," says Ivan Sukhov, a Russian journalist and North Caucasus expert.

The battalion now flexing its muscles in eastern Ukraine, however, is unlikely to be an exact resurrection of the commando formed by Yamadayev 15 years ago.

"I think the heart of the unit is made up of veterans of the original battalion," says Mark Galeotti, a New York University professor and expert on Russian security affairs. "But it is clear that the present incarnation also includes non-Chechens and soldiers who did not fight in the earlier force."

Även andra källor tvivlar på att bataljonen har någon närmare koppling till Kadyrov. The Jamestown Foundation (2014-05-30):

Those who like to point to the Vostok battalion should understand that the battalion was led by Ramzan Kadyrov's worst enemy, Sulim Yamadaev. So Kadyrov would not have allowed his people, the kadyrovtsy, to use the name of the battalion of his former nemesis. Another indicator that the group may not have ties to Kadyrov is the fact that fighters from the so-called Vostok battalion openly smoked in front of cameras—something which would be highly improbable, to put it mildly, in Kadyrov's units because it is haram (forbidden) in Islam and the Chechen strongman, at least in public, tries to have his subordinates maintain the appearance of being good Muslims (<http://argumentua.com/stati/donetsk-posle-vyborov-kadyrovskaya-svoloch-est-vlasti-net>).

Tyska Deutsche Welle citerar en försvarsexpert som pekar på gruppens brist på stridserfarenhet och att den leds av en ukrainare som tecken på att den inte består av Kadyrovs specialförband. Deutsche Welle (2014-06-05):

Russian defense policy expert Vladislav Shurygin said he did not believe the Vostok battalion consisted of special forces. "It is made up of volunteers," he said, adding that many of the fighters had no

combat experience. "That's why so many of them died in the battle at the Donetsk airport."

The Vostok battalion, for example, is under the command of Alexander Khodakovsky, a former employee of the Ukrainian security agency. This is why some experts doubt that the battalion has anything to do with the Chechen squad of the same name.

I en intervju med befälhavaren för Vostokbataljonen, Alexander Khodakovsky, publicerad i juni, hävdas att inga kadyrovtsy varit del av enheten. Reuters (2014-06-01):

He and other Vostok fighters said their casualties included one native of Chechnya ... "There are no Chechens now. There were. They left yesterday (on Thursday) with their injured and killed. There was only one casualty among the Chechens," Khodakovsky said. "They were volunteers, not Kadyrovtsy."

I en artikel från november 2014 av Jamestown Foundation anses det vara klarlagt att tjetjenerna i Ukraina inte är utskickade av Kadyrov. Jamestown Foundation (2014-11-07):

The deployment of Russian military units from Chechnya in Ukraine (kavkazcenter.com, August 8) was perceived as the deployment of Chechen military units even though the percentage of ethnic Chechens in those units barely reached 1 percent of their total. Those forces also sometimes were referred to as "kadyrovtsy," but that was also incorrect, since the units sent to Ukraine were from the defense ministry, not the interior ministry, where the kadyrovtsy actually serve.

Denna sammanställning av information/länkar är baserad på informationssökningar gjorda under en begränsad tid. Den är sammanställd utifrån noggrant utvalda och allmänt tillgängliga informationskällor. Alla använda källor refereras. All information som presenteras, med undantag av obestridda/uppenbara fakta, har dubbelkontrollerats om inget annat anges. Sammanställningen gör inte anspråk på att vara uttömmande och bör inte tillmätas exklusivt bevisvärde i samband med avgörandet av ett enskilt ärende. Informationen i sammanställningen återspeglar inte nödvändigtvis Migrationsverkets officiella ståndpunkt i en viss fråga och det finns ingen avsikt att genom sammanställningen göra politiska ställningstaganden. Refererade dokument bör läsas i sitt sammanhang.

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