

## Albania

<b>Response to Information Request Number:</b>	ALB0001.ASM
<b>Date:</b>	15 September 2000
<b>Subject:</b>	Albania: Information on persecution and human rights abuses by the Albanian military against the Albanian people during the 1980s
<b>From:</b>	INS Resource Information Center, Washington, DC
<b>Keywords:</b>	Albania / Military / persecution / abuses / Ministry of Interior / Enver Hoxha

### Query:

Was the military of Albania involved in the oppression and persecution of the Albanian people during the 1980s?

### Response:

In order to secure his leadership and achieve the extreme isolation of Albania from the rest of the world, former leader Enver Hoxha (Albanian leader from 1944-1989) consolidated power through the use of Internal Ministry security forces. It was these forces, local police and the Sigurimi (state security officers), that were the instruments used in the oppression of the Albanian people. These forces (esp. the Sigurimi) were involved in censorship; monitoring ideology of party members; purging the party, the government, and the military; and the political reeducation of labor camp inmates. The Ministry of Internal Affairs placed personnel domestically and abroad to monitor foreign governments and diplomatic missions to Albania (*Albania: A Country Study* 1994, 227-239).

Albanian Frontier Guards, though organized along military lines and trained in military institutions, were until 1991 subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, not the Ministry of People's Defense. In addition to the mandate of preventing illegal entry into Albania, the Frontier Guards were also charged with the task of preventing individuals, at times using force, from illegally exiting Albania (*Albania: A Country Study* 1994, 236).

The RIC found no evidence that the military was involved in the persecution or oppression of the Albanian people. This is very consistent with the structure of Communist governments: The military focused entirely on external military threats while Interior Ministry troops or security forces -- often organized in a military fashion -- focused on internal threats and repression of any potentially revolutionary actions by the people.

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RIC within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

### References

*Albania: A Country Study*. 1994. Edited by Raymond Zickel and Walter R. Iwaskiw. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Federal Research Division.

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