

Asylum Interview Transcript

Interview: I

Interviewee: A (Atah)

Date

Location

Interviewer (I): Good morning, Atah. Can you start by telling us where you are from?

Atah (A): My family is from the South of Albania.

I: What is your tribe?

A: I belong to the Otvo group, which makes up the majority in the Southern region

I: For how many years did you go to school?

A: I went to university.

I: Where in Albania did you live?

A: I attended National University of Albania in the North. I stayed there after University.

I: What did you do for work?

A: Since the war, it has been very difficult to work. I worked in different offices.

I: Do you have any family with you?

A: No, it is just me.

I: Do you have any family in Albania?

A: My mother, Amina. My younger sister, Nia, is still in school.

I: What does your mother do?

A: My mother is important to our community. She has been working with local organizations to provide assistance to those affected by the violence.

[Details about journey]

I: Do you have any other documents with you that you wish to submit?

A: Yes, I have some letters from community leaders and organizations in Albania attesting to the dangers I faced. I also have documents from the doctor here.

I: Thank you for providing these documents, Atah. If you have any other documents you need to submit, you can send this within the next 24 hours if you want them to be considered with your application.

A: Okay.

I: Can you briefly tell us why you are seeking asylum?

A: For security reasons. My family have been living in constant fear due to the ongoing conflict in our region.

I: What do you mean by security reasons?

A: There is a war in our country because of the APP. My father was a politician against the APP and he was killed.

I: I'm truly sorry to hear about your loss. Can you tell me more about the APP and the war.

A: The Albanian People's Party have been in power for 40 years. They are corrupt and abuse their power. After the elections the war began.

I: How did the war begin?

A: In 2015, as the elections approached, demonstrations were met with increasing force from the police. Many of my friends were forcibly disappeared, and the situation became unbearable.

I: That's a terrible loss, Atah. Can you tell us about your father's role in these events?

A: He led the Albanian Liberation Party during the 2005 presidential elections.

I: Were you part of the Albanian Liberation Party?

A: No, I wasn't officially part of the party, but I participated in protests against the authoritarian government.

I: How did you participate in the protests?

A: I attended the protests. Things became worse during the 2015 elections when the situation escalated into chaos.

I: How did your father die?

A: My father was a symbol of hope for many. He was at the forefront of the demonstrations, leading the opposition against the government. He was killed in the gunfire while protesting in the capital.

I: After these events, can you describe the current situation in Albania?

A: The country has descended into civil war, causing suffering and poverty. Different factions, including the government and the resistance, are in conflict. The situation is particularly bad in the Southern provinces, where most ALP supporters reside, and around the capital, which is the headquarters of the ALP.

I: I see. You also mentioned divisions based on ethnicity. Could you tell us more about that?

A: Yes, the ethnic divisions in Alfania have exacerbated the conflict. Because I am Otvo, I have been targeted by militia groups from the Voto minority. The Voto want to establish the Republic of Votostan in Northern Alfania and view ALP members as enemies.

I: It sounds like a very dangerous situation. How have you been targeted?

A: I stayed in the North to avoid the battles in the centre. My family said I should not go to the South. I was detained twice by militia groups.

I: Can you tell us about your detention.

A: The second time was particularly bad. I was held in a small room. There were no windows and I did not receive any food. I could not sleep.

I: How long were you held there?

A: Because I could not sleep, it felt like an eternity. I lost consciousness multiple times and was forced through a tube.

I: Where were you held?

A: I do not know where it was.

I: How did you escape?

A: I managed to escape by bribing one of my captors.

I: You said you do not know where it was but you saw when you escaped?

A: It was dark and I needed to get away. I do not know where it was.

I: What about the first time you were detained?

A: It was only a couple hours.

I: Thank you for sharing your experiences, Atah. Is there anything else you'd like to add or any other details you think are important for us to know?

A: I just want to emphasize how bad the situation in Alfania is. The violence and instability continue to escalate, and innocent people are dying every day.