
ROMANIA JAILS FORMER GULAG BOSS FOR 20 YEARS

31.03.2016

30.03.2016

BalkanInsight

A Romanian court on Wednesday sentenced former jail commander Ioan Ficior to 20 years in prison for the deaths of 103 political prisoners during the Communist regime.

He has 10 days to appeal.

This was the second trial of a head of a Communist-era lockup in Romania since dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was tried and executed in 1989.

Ficior, 87, was accused of involvement also in beating detainees, depriving them of medical treatment and forcing them to drink dirty water, which caused dysentery.

He denied wrongdoing and said he was merely following orders.

Between 1958 and 1963, Ficior ran the notorious prison in Periprava, in a remote area inside the Danube Delta, where many non-Communist leaders and other opponents of the regime were incarcerated.

Last month, in the first case of its kind in Romania, the high court of cassation and justice upheld a 20-year prison sentence for Alexandru Visinescu, a former prison commander accused of aggravated murder in the deaths of at least 12 political prisoners during the Communist era.

More than 50 years have passed since the prisoners died but under Romanian law there is no time limit on prosecuting serious crimes.

After decades of denial, Romania has started to try to punish Communist-era crimes. In 2014, the Institute for Investigating the Crimes of Communism, IICCMER, published a list of 35 people allegedly involved in detaining and torturing dissidents during Communist times.

In recent years, chilling details have emerged about the torments that guards inflicted on political prisoners in the gulags.

Reports say that around 120,000 of a total of 617,000 political prisoners died during that time. Most were politicians, priests, writers and diplomats but some were also peasants.

The investigating committee is concentrating on political crimes committed from the early 1950s

until 1964, when a general amnesty was declared.

Marian Chiriac Bucharest

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/romanian-jails-former-gulag-boss-03-30-2016#sthash.yBYixUt8.dpuf>

Kaynak/Source: