



ECHR puts questions to Russian Government after receiving new inter-State case from Ukraine concerning events in the Sea of Azov

In response to a request for interim measures in the context of a new inter-State application lodged by the Government of Ukraine against the Russian Federation under Article 33 (Inter-State cases) of the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights has put **factual questions to the Russian Government to be answered by 3 December 2018**.

The Ukrainian Government submitted an urgent request under Rule 39 of the Rules of Court to indicate to the Russian Government an interim measure in the interests of the 24 sailors of the Ukrainian Navy captured in the waters of the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait on 25 November 2018.

The Ukrainian Government requested in particular that Russia provide urgent medical assistance to the wounded sailors and information about the current state of health of Ukrainian Navy crew members, the place of their detention and all medical assistance that is being provided to them. They also requested that the sailors be treated as prisoners of war in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 and that they be repatriated without delay.

The Court put the following questions to the Russian Government:

- Are the officers and men of the Ukrainian naval vessels *Berdyansk*, *Nikopol* and *Yany Kapu* deprived of their liberty? If so, on what ground and where are they being held?
- Can it be confirmed that there are wounded among the officers and men of the three Ukrainian naval vessels? If so, who are they, what are their injuries and what medical treatment have they received?

Lastly, it invited the Russian Government “to submit all relevant documents”.

The European Court’s examination of the request for an interim measure has been adjourned pending receipt of the Russian Government’s reply.

Under Rule 39 the Court may indicate to the parties any interim measure which it considers should be adopted in the interests of the parties or of the proper conduct of the proceedings before it.

The inter-State application was lodged on 29 November 2018 and has been registered under application no. 55855/18, *Ukraine v. Russia* (VIII).

There are currently four other *Ukraine v. Russia* inter-State applications pending before the Court and over 4,000 individual applications apparently related to the events in Crimea or the hostilities in Eastern Ukraine. Further information can be found in the [press release](#) published on 27 August 2018.

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The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe Member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.