



Interim measure issued in sonic-weapon case

The European Court of Human Rights (a Chamber of seven judges) has decided on 29 April 2025 to grant part of the applicants' requests and **to issue an interim measure** in the case **Đorović and Others v. Serbia** (application no. 8904/25).

The case concerns the alleged use of a sonic weapon for crowd control by the authorities at demonstrations and concern that it could be used at future demonstrations. The applicants had requested that the Court issue an interim measure that the Serbian authorities would (i) prevent use of sonic weapons in such circumstances; (ii) prevent criminal prosecution of those who take part in public debate on the use of a sonic weapon on 15 March 2025; and (iii) conduct an effective investigation into the allegations that a sonic weapon had been used.

The Court indicated to the Government that it should prevent any use of sound devices for crowd control.

Measures under Rule 39 of the [Rules of Court](#) are decided in connection with proceedings before the Court, without prejudging any subsequent decisions on the admissibility or merits of the case. The Court grants such requests only on an exceptional basis, when the applicants would otherwise face an imminent risk of irreparable harm. For further information, see [the factsheet on interim measures](#).

The applicants are 47 Serbian nationals.

On 15 March 2025 the applicants took part in a protest in Belgrade. While observing 15 minutes silence in memory of those who had died following the collapse of the canopy at Novi Sad train station in November 2024, at around 7 p.m. loud sounds and airwaves disrupted the demonstration. Allegedly the applicants experienced intense instinctive fear, panic, shock, accelerated heartbeat, trembling, hearing problems, vomiting, nausea, tachycardia, and similar symptoms. Some allegedly sustained physical injuries due to the panic. Up to 4,000 people reported their experiences of the incident.

On 24 March 2025 the applicants requested that the Court indicate, in particular, that the Serbian authorities prevent using such means against demonstrators in future protests.

Decision of the Court

The Court (a Chamber of seven judges) decided on 29 April 2025 to issue an interim measure. Concerning the applicants' request that the Court indicate that the State should prevent the use of sonic weapons or similar devices at future protests by the State and/or non-state actors, the Court indicated to the Government, until further notice, that any use of sound devices for crowd control (other than for communication purposes) must be prevented in the future. It noted that use of such weapons for crowd control was unlawful in Serbia and, in particular, potentially serious health effects that could be caused to a large number of persons.

The applicants' other requests were ruled as not falling under the Rule 39 procedure and so the Court did not indicate any interim measures.

The Court reiterated that the decision did not mean it had taken any position as to whether use of such weapons had occurred on 15 March 2025, and that it is without prejudice to any application the applicants might lodge. The applicants have one month to submit a substantive application under Article 34 (right of individual petition) of the Convention.

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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.