



European Court applies urgent interim measure in the case of the Russian daily newspaper *Novaya Gazeta*

The European Court of Human Rights has decided to apply an urgent interim measure in the case **ANO RID Novaya Gazeta and Others v. Russia** (application no. 11884/22).

The Court, in the interests of the parties and the proper conduct of the proceedings before it, and having regard to the exceptional context in which the request has been lodged, invited the Russian authorities, under Rule 39 of the Rules of Court, to abstain until further notice from actions and decisions aimed at full blocking and termination of the activities of *Novaya Gazeta*, and from other actions that in the current circumstances could deprive *Novaya Gazeta* of the enjoyment of its rights guaranteed by **Article 10 of the Convention (freedom of expression)**.

Under Rule 39 of the Rules of Court, the Court may indicate interim measures to any State Party to the European Convention on Human Rights. Interim measures are urgent measures which, according to the Court's well-established practice, apply only where there is an imminent risk of irreparable harm.

The applicants are two Russian companies, ANO RID Novaya Gazeta and OOO Telekanal Dozhd, and two Russian nationals, Dmitriy Andreyevich Muratov, and Natalya Vladimirovna Sindeyeva. They are all based in Moscow. Mr Muratov is the 2021 Nobel Peace laureate and editor of *Novaya Gazeta*, a daily newspaper. Ms Sindeyeva is the owner of Telekanal Dozhd, a television company.

On 3 March 2022 the Court received a request by Mr Muratov for an interim measure in the above application, asking that the Court indicate to the Russian Government not to interfere with lawful activity of Russian mass media, including *Novaya Gazeta*, covering the armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine, in particular, to refrain from blocking information items and materials containing opinions different from the official point of view of the Russian authorities; and to abstain from full blocking and termination of the activity of Russian mass media, including *Novaya Gazeta*. The request referred to an imminent risk of irreparable harm to freedom of expression and the silencing of independent media in Russia. Mr Muratov referred, in particular, to several orders by the Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media (*Roskomnadzor*) for *Novaya Gazeta* to delete specific articles published between 24 February and 1 March 2022 concerning the conflict in Ukraine from its website; and cited examples of several other media which had been blocked in Russia, and whose activity had been discontinued in the meantime, including *Telekanal Dozhd*.

In their subsequent submissions all the applicants referred notably to new Articles introduced on 4 March 2022 into the Criminal Code criminalising, in particular, the spread of knowingly untrue information about the actions of the Russian armed forces with heavy custodial and financial penalties. With reference to that legislation, on the same date *Novaya Gazeta* stopped reporting on military action in Ukraine and deleted the already published materials on the matter.

Decision

On 8 March 2022, the Court (the Chamber to which the case has been allocated) examined the request as submitted and the additional materials provided by the applicants. In the interests of the parties and the proper conduct of the proceedings before it, and having regard to the exceptional context in which the request has been lodged, the Court indicated to the Government of Russia to abstain until further notice from actions and decisions aimed at full blocking and termination of the

activities of *Novaya Gazeta*, and from other actions that in the current circumstances could deprive *Novaya Gazeta* of the enjoyment of its rights guaranteed by Article 10 of the Convention.

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 a real risk of irreversible harm. For further information, see [the factsheet on interim measures](#).

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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.