

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

FIFTH SECTION

CASE OF BUZYNA v. UKRAINE

(Application no. 59562/17)

JUDGMENT

STRASBOURG

28 May 2026

This judgment is final but it may be subject to editorial revision.



In the case of Buzyna v. Ukraine,

The European Court of Human Rights (Fifth Section), sitting as a Committee composed of:

Gilberto Felici*, President*,
Mykola Gnatovskyy,
Vahe Grigoryan*, judges*,

and Martina Keller, *Deputy Section Registrar,*

Having regard to:

the application (no. 59562/17) against Ukraine lodged with the Court under Article 34 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms ("the Convention") on 3 August 2017 by a Ukrainian national, Ms Valentyna Pavlivna Buzyna ("the applicant"), who was born in 1939, and was represented by Mr A. Zakharov, a lawyer practising in Kyiv;

the decision to give notice of the complaints under Article 2 of the Convention and the complaints related to the length of proceedings under Article 6 § 1 of the Convention to the Ukrainian Government ("the Government"), represented by their Agent, most recently Ms M. Sokorenko, and to declare the remainder of the application inadmissible;

the parties' observations;

Having deliberated in private on 7 May 2026,

Delivers the following judgment, which was adopted on that date:

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE CASE

1. The application was lodged by Ms Valentyna Buzyna ("the applicant"). She was the mother of Mr Oles Buzyna ("the victim"), a well-known author and journalist, perceived as having pro-Russian views, who was shot dead near his home in Kyiv on 16 April 2015.

2. On the day of the murder the crime scene and the victim's body were inspected. A car used in the murder was found and seized. It appears that the examination of the car and the objects found in or around it ultimately allowed for the identification of suspects M. and P. On that day and on the following days a large number of investigative measures, such as witness interviews, searches, and the collection of biological samples and data from social networks and telecommunication operators, were conducted.

3. In June 2015 M. and P. ("the defendants") were arrested and on 18 June 2015 the Investigation Department of the Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior in Kyiv ("the Kyiv Police Directorate") charged them with murder.

4. According to the charges (as subsequently amended), from August 2014 M. was an officer in a volunteer police battalion which was attached to the Kyiv Police Directorate and which participated in the operations in the east of Ukraine. From 28 March 2012 to 6 November 2014, he was a member of a nationalist political party. He became acquainted with P., who was also a member of another nationalist political party. They shared the views of

members of informal radical nationalist and far-right groups and knew about the victim's social and political views, which were characterised by a commitment to close relations between Ukraine and Russia, Eurasianism, monarchism and Russian-Ukrainian bilingualism of Ukrainian culture. At the beginning of 2015 M. and P. entered into a conspiracy with other unidentified persons to commit the premeditated murder of the victim on the grounds of hostility towards his views. They unlawfully purchased a firearm, allegedly an 1895 Nagant revolver. In March 2015 they purchased an imported car, registered in Italy, to use it in the murder. Using the car, from 9 to 16 April 2015 they monitored the victim in the yard of the building where he lived. After collecting sufficient information, the defendants and other unidentified persons decided to commit the murder on 16 April 2015. On that day, the defendants, wearing civilian clothes and surgical masks specially purchased for the purpose of disguising themselves, shot and killed the victim on the spot.

5. The investigators, apparently using DNA and mobile phone tracing evidence, traced the car to the defendants. The defendants denied their guilt throughout the proceedings.

6. Initially, the investigation was conducted by the Investigation Department of the Kyiv Police Directorate. In October 2015 the investigation was transferred to the prosecutor's office, given that prior to and at the time of the murder, M. had been a member of the Ministry of the Interior's armed unit.

7. The applicant and the victim's widow, Ms Nataliya Buzyna, were recognised as aggrieved parties in the proceedings.

8. In November 2015 a court ordered Facebook and Skype to provide certain information from the defendants' accounts. A forensic handwriting examination was ordered.

9. On 4 February 2016 the investigation was assigned to the Odesa Regional Police Department and on 14 March 2016 returned to the Kyiv city prosecutor's office.

10. In December 2015 the defendants were released and placed under house arrest, which was later lifted.

11. On 10 December 2015 a court, on a motion by the defence, examined several witnesses, some of whom testified that the defendants had an alibi.

12. In December 2015 and January 2016 the court authorised the collection of information about P.'s handwriting and information related to mobile communication with M.'s girlfriend, with his commanding officer and with another person.

13. From April to July 2016 a number of court orders were issued for the collection of biological samples from the defendants and their mothers, witnesses were questioned and documents were collected.

14. In the period from 30 March 2016 to 22 June 2017 the investigation was repeatedly suspended in order to request information from the United States of America and Italy.

15. In August 2016 the applicant's representative wrote to the prosecutor's office, stating that he had learned from unspecified sources that M. was a person of interest in another criminal case (citing the specific case number) concerning a robbery investigated by the Kyiv Pecherskyi District Police. He stated that the material collected in that other case indicated that in late March 2015 M. had been organising a group of people who would be engaged in the surveillance of a person, that M. had been in communication with a certain R. and had been looking to equip members of the group which he was organising with previously-unused SIM cards to ensure that they could not be traced. The representative stated that this indicated that M. and P. had been members of a larger group and demanded that that information be investigated. In September 2016 the prosecutor's office replied that the information would be verified.

16. In October and November 2016 the applicant's representative asked the prosecutor's office to investigate information contained in a Facebook post published on 15 October 2016 by Mr V., whom the applicant described as a journalist and blogger. The two-paragraph post (which the applicant enclosed) was worded in general, polemical terms and was dedicated to the reported appointment of an unnamed former head of the military intelligence service to a post in the President's office. The post alleged, in general terms, that the appointee was an American agent, that "his subordinates" had supervised drug trafficking in cooperation with Russian intelligence services, that they had "shot up a mobile group of the [Security Service of Ukraine (*Sluzba bezpeky Ukraiiny* – "SBU")]", had "murdered Buzyna the writer" (which was the only reference to the victim's murder in the post) and had blown up a candy store associated with the then-President of Ukraine, and that the latter act had caused them to be killed by the SBU. In December 2016 the prosecutor's office responded that the investigation had been suspended, so no action could be taken.

17. On 27 June 2017 the pre-trial investigation concerning the defendants was completed and the file was provided to the parties for examination. In November 2017 the case was sent to the Kyiv Shevchenkivskyi District Court for trial.

18. The Government submitted the following information about the trial. Because the defence challenged the prosecution and the court, lodged 184 complaints against the actions of the investigating authority with the trial court, the case was scheduled for examination only on 7 June 2018. In the period from 23 October 2018 to 9 November 2021 the defence submitted 20 challenges to the judges, the jurors and the prosecution. The defence also submitted voluminous applications to have the prosecution evidence declared

inadmissible and numerous requests to postpone the hearings. On 11 June 2019, on account of the change of the presiding judge, the trial was restarted.

After Russia's full-scale military attack on Ukraine had begun on 24 February 2022, the hearings were adjourned in February, October and December 2022 for safety reasons or because of cuts to the electrical service.

On 11 April 2023 the hearing was adjourned because the defendants had been sent to serve in the armed forces of Ukraine.

Two jurors reached the maximum age for jury duty and, accordingly, were released from duty in August 2022 and April 2023, but could not be replaced for some time because of a lack of a sufficient number of reserve jurors. The pre-selection of new jurors took place in May 2023.

In the meantime, because the defendants were absent and there was no complete jury in place, the trial court was unsure how to proceed and sent a request for clarification to the Supreme Court.

On 16 September 2024 the Supreme Court replied that the domestic court could select new jurors, since the selection of jurors was not one of the questions which needed to be resolved with the participation of jurors.

19. According to the most recent available information, on 24 September 2024 the court hearing was adjourned on account of an air raid alert and the next hearing was scheduled for 4 December 2024.

20. In June 2017 a separate set of criminal proceedings was split from the case against M. and P. to investigate whether there had been any other individuals involved in the murder. The investigation was entrusted to the State Bureau of Investigation ("SBI"). On 2 August 2021 the Prosecutor General's Office issued to the SBI a number of directives to reactivate the investigation; in particular, it instructed the SBI to interview the victim's mother and widow, to collect information from the police and the SBU about any operational-search activities, if any, in respect of M., P. and two other individuals, which might have been conducted in 2014 and 2015, to examine the materials of the criminal investigation to which the applicant's representative had referred in 2016, and to consider whether V. should be questioned in view of his publication which might indicate that he had some information about the murder (see paragraphs 15 and 16 above). According to the most recently available information, the investigation remains pending.

THE COURT'S ASSESSMENT

I. *LOCUS STANDI* OF Ms NATALIYA STANISLAVIVNA BUZYNA

21. Ms Valentyna Buzyna died on 17 March 2025. Ms Nataliya Stanislavivna Buzyna, who is Oles Buzyna's widow, expressed her wish to pursue the proceedings.

22. The Government objected, arguing that rights under Article 2 of the Convention could not be transferred from an indirect victim to another

indirect victim and that Ms N. Buzyna should herself have introduced an application raising complaints related to the death of her husband. Moreover, they argued that the rights under Article 6 of the Convention were non-transferable.

23. The Court observes that, where a violation of the right to life is alleged, the Convention bodies have accepted applications from relatives of the deceased, including a deceased's parents and widow (see, for example, *Aytekin v. Turkey*, judgment of 23 September 1998, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* 1998-VII; *Railean v. Moldova*, no. 23401/04, 5 January 2010; and *Carter v. Russia*, no. 20914/07, 21 September 2021).

24. Where applications were introduced by next-of-kin of the diseased but those applicants later died while proceedings were pending before the Court, the Court accepted the standing of their next-of-kin, who were themselves also related to the deceased or disappeared, to pursue the applications (see *Janowiec and Others v. Russia* [GC], nos. 55508/07 and 29520/09, § 101, 21 October 2013; *Mikiyeva and Others v. Russia*, nos. 61536/08 and 4 others, §§ 112-16, 30 January 2014; and *Vazagashvii and Shanava v. Georgia*, no. 50375/07, § 70, 18 July 2019).

25. In such cases, the decisive point is not whether the rights in question are or are not transferable to the heirs wishing to pursue the procedure, but whether the heirs can in principle claim a legitimate interest in requesting the Court to deal with the case on the basis of the applicant's wish to exercise his or her individual and personal right to lodge an application with the Court (see *Singh and Others v. Greece*, no. 60041/13, § 26, 19 January 2017).

26. Accordingly, the Court accepts that Ms Nataliya Stanislavivna Buzyna has standing to continue the present proceedings in the applicant's stead; however, reference will still be made to the applicant throughout the ensuing text.

II. ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 2 OF THE CONVENTION

27. The applicant complained under Articles 2 and 6 of the Convention that the State had been responsible for the murder and that it had failed to protect the victim's life and to carry out an effective investigation into the murder within a reasonable period of time.

28. The Court, which is master of the characterisation to be given in law to the facts of the case, finds that the complaints at issue fall to be examined from the standpoint of Article 2 of the Convention under its substantive and procedural aspects (see *Igor Shevchenko v. Ukraine*, no. 22737/04, §§ 37-38, 12/01/2012; *Arskaya v. Ukraine*, no. 45076/05, §§ 57 and 58, 5/12/2013; *Nina Kutsenko v. Ukraine*, no. 25114/11, § 104, 18/07/2017; and *Tërshana v. Albania*, no. 48756/14, §§ 125-26, 4 August 2020).

A. Admissibility

29. The Government submitted that the applicant had failed to exhaust effective domestic remedies by failing to lodge a civil claim for damages. The applicant submitted that the effective domestic remedies had been exhausted. She had lodged a civil claim for compensation within the framework of the criminal proceedings and no separate civil claim could be lodged until a verdict had been delivered in the criminal proceedings.

30. The Court reiterates that the Contracting Parties' obligation under Articles 2 and 3 of the Convention to conduct an effective investigation could be rendered illusory if, in respect of complaints under those Articles, an applicant were required to bring an action leading only to an award of damages (see, for example, *Mocanu and Others v. Romania* [GC], nos. 10865/09 and 2 others, § 234, ECHR 2014 (extracts)). Accordingly, the remedy put forward by the Government is not capable of providing redress for the situation complained of. It follows that the preliminary objection is unfounded and must be dismissed.

31. The Court notes that these complaints are not manifestly ill-founded within the meaning of Article 35 § 3 (a) of the Convention or inadmissible on any other grounds. They must therefore be declared admissible.

B. Merits

1. The parties' submissions

(a) Procedural limb of Article 2 of the Convention

32. The applicant submitted that there had been no effective investigation. The case concerning the defendants had been submitted to a court in 2017, but there had been no progress in the trial. Over the course of four years, even before Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine on 24 February 2022, only four out of 20 volumes of evidence had been read out. No witnesses had been examined. Defendants had not appeared for hearings. The court had allowed the defence to obstruct the trial by filing numerous documents and challenges and by their lawyers being absent; the trial court had failed to react to that. Hearings had been scheduled at long intervals, two to three months apart. In the years after 24 February 2022, the court had been unable to determine with certainty whether M. had been serving in the military. The absence of a complete judicial panel had made it impossible to proceed with the case.

33. The applicant further submitted that there had been no progress in the investigation initiated to identify additional third parties who had possibly been involved in the murder (see paragraph 20 above). That case had not been actively investigated and had been transferred among different authorities on formal grounds. Only on 29 October 2021 had the investigators been granted temporary access to the criminal case, within the framework of which, as the applicant had alleged in 2016 (see paragraph 15 above), M. had been under

police surveillance around the time the murder had been committed. No further action had been taken in that respect. The victim's mother and widow had not been interviewed, contrary to the directives of the Prosecutor General's Office (see paragraph 20 above).

34. The Government submitted that the investigation had been complete and efficient, bearing in mind the complexity of the case, and that it had met all the Convention requirements. The pre-trial investigation had been launched promptly and involved a large number of investigative measures. After conducting all the necessary investigative measures, the authorities had identified two persons involved in the murder. It was for the domestic courts to decide on their guilt. There had been no indication that the investigation had lacked independence. The applicant had been granted the status of an aggrieved party and she had had access to the case file. She had been duly informed of the status of the investigation and she had consistently received responses to her motions and requests. All the necessary measures to secure a timely trial had been taken. However, owing to the complexity of the case, which had required a large number of investigative measures, and the behaviour of the defence, the domestic court had been prevented from examining the case in due time.

(b) Substantive limb of Article 2 of the Convention

35. In the application form the applicant alleged that the State had failed to protect the victim, despite knowing about the danger to his life in view of (i) the statistics on crimes against journalists in Ukraine and (ii) the victim's public statements about his life being threatened. As to the former, the applicant submitted that 1,093 employees of media companies had been victims of crime from 2013 through 2017 and 19 journalists had died, including 11 persons in 2014, and that at least four journalists had been killed between 2014 and 2015 as a result of hostilities in the east of Ukraine. The applicant alleged that the victim had made statements to the effect that he was in danger, both on Vladimir Solovyev's show on Russian TV on 30 January 2014 and "one month before his death" in an interview given to *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, a Russian government publication. The applicant also alleged that the victim's personal data, including his address, had been published on the Myrotvorets website just prior to the murder, on 14 April 2015.

36. The applicant did not reiterate these submissions in the observations submitted in reply to the Government's observations.

37. The Government submitted that a violation of the right to life could not be attributed to the State. Even though M. had been a police officer, he had not been acting as a State agent or been exercising his official duties. Instead, the pre-trial investigation had established that he had disguised himself in order not to be identified and prosecuted. He had not acted under the command of other State agents. The Government compared the case to *Enukidze and Girgvliani v. Georgia* (no. 25091/07, 26 April 2011), pointing

out that, as in that case, the death had not occurred in the context of any police operation and M. had not acted in the exercise of his official duty. Moreover, he had acted while disguised in civilian clothes.

2. The Court's assessment

(a) Procedural limb of Article 2 of the Convention

38. The relevant general principles have been summarised in *Mustafa Tunç and Fecire Tunç v. Turkey* ([GC], no. 24014/05, §§ 169-82, 14 April 2015).

39. In particular, once the investigative obligation has been triggered, compliance with the procedural requirement of Article 2 is assessed on the basis of several essential parameters: the adequacy of the investigative measures, the promptness of the investigation, the involvement of the deceased person's family, and the independence of the investigation. These elements are inter-related and each of them, taken separately, does not amount to an end in itself (ibid., § 225).

40. Moreover, this is not an obligation of results to be achieved but of means to be employed. The Court accepts that not every investigation is necessarily successful or comes to a conclusion coinciding with the claimant's account of events. However, it should, in principle, be capable of leading to the establishment of the facts of the case and, if the allegations prove to be true, to the identification and punishment of those responsible (see *Paul and Audrey Edwards v. the United Kingdom*, no. 46477/99, § 71, ECHR 2002-II).

41. The Court observes that the pre-trial investigation was launched expeditiously and a considerable number of complex investigative measures were conducted promptly, which resulted in charges being brought against two individuals. Given the complexity of the task which the investigating authorities faced, there was no indication of any issue with the effectiveness of the investigation at the pre-trial stage, as far as it concerned identification of individuals against whom charges were brought.

42. It is true that, initially, the investigation was conducted by the police investigators, who were under the Ministry of the Interior, as was the unit in which M. served at the time. There is no indication, however, that that undermined the independence of the investigation. While the volunteer unit in which M. served was under the same Ministry of the Interior Directorate, it performed entirely distinct functions and there is no indication of any connection between that unit and the Investigation Department (see *Mustafa Tunç and Fecire Tunç*, cited above, §§ 222-25).

43. There is no explanation, however, in respect of the very considerable delay which occurred at the trial stage.

44. The circumstances of the case indicate that the trial was delayed most recently on account of the defendants' mobilisation into the armed forces.

While the Court does not question the respondent State's choice to mobilise criminal defendants into the armed forces, the circumstances of the present case indicate that doing so required that safeguards should have been put in place so that the rights of other parties to the proceedings were duly respected. What is more important, however, is that the proceedings had already been considerably protracted by the time Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine began on 24 February 2022, lasting, by then, for four years and three months before the trial court.

45. The Court reiterates that in Article 2 cases, the lengthiness of proceedings is a strong indication that the proceedings were defective to the point of constituting a violation of the respondent State's positive obligations under the Convention, unless the State has provided highly convincing and plausible reasons to justify the length of the proceedings (see *Lopes de Sousa Fernandes*, no. 56080/13, § 219, 19 December 2017).

46. In the circumstances of the present case, the Court is not convinced that the Government have provided convincing and plausible reasons to justify the length of the criminal proceedings.

47. Moreover, the Government did not rebut the applicant's allegation that it took authorities at least five years to follow up on very specific allegations made by the applicant concerning M. being under police surveillance around the time of the relevant events (see paragraph 20 above).

48. In this context the Court reiterates that a failure to follow an obvious line of inquiry would indeed undermine to a decisive extent the investigation's ability to establish the circumstances of the case and the identity of those responsible (see *Mustafa Tunç and Fecire Tunç*, cited above, § 175).

49. The Court considers that it was vital for the authorities to verify that lead, even if it might eventually prove unfounded (see *Kolevi*, cited above, §§ 200-01).

50. The failure to follow up on V.'s publication was not of the same importance because V.'s statements were quite vague, apparently sensationalist in nature and contained little relevant information. However, the Prosecutor General's Office itself in 2021 considered that that lead should at least be investigated, which apparently had still not been done at that point, even though the issue had first been raised in 2016 (see paragraphs 16 and 20 above). Therefore, while this failure in itself may not be sufficient to raise the issue of thoroughness of the investigation, it does provide an additional reason for the overall conclusion that the investigation was not thorough in respect of following up on evidence of the potential involvement of additional third parties in the murder.

51. In the Court's view, its findings in respect of the adequacy of the investigation and its promptness and reasonable expedition suffice to conclude that the investigation was not effective, as required by Article 2 of the Convention.

52. There has accordingly been a violation of this provision in its procedural limb.

(b) Substantive limb of Article 2 of the Convention

(i) Negative obligations

53. The Court reiterates that a Contracting State will be responsible under the Convention for violations of human rights caused by acts of its agents carried out in the performance of their duties. However, a State may also be held responsible even where its agents are acting *ultra vires* or contrary to instructions (see *Basenko v. Ukraine*, no. 24213/08, § 78, 26 November 2015, with further references). Where the behaviour of a State agent is unlawful, the question of whether the impugned acts can be imputed to the State requires an assessment of the totality of the circumstances and consideration of the nature and circumstances of the conduct in question (see *Sašo Gorgiev v. the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, no. 49382/06, §§ 47-48, ECHR 2012 (extracts)).

54. Having regard to the circumstances of the present case, the Court is not convinced that the alleged private acts should be held imputable to the respondent State as a whole just because that individual happened to be its agent. Indeed, the impugned acts were so flagrantly abusive and so far removed from the perpetrators' official status, that their serious criminal behaviour cannot engage the State's substantive international responsibility (compare *Enukidze and Girgvliani*, cited above, § 290).

55. In the present case, while M. was a serviceman in an armed formation of the Ministry of the Interior, there is no indication of any connection between his role as part of that formation and the murder. He did not use any special powers, tools or information conferred on him in connection with his position (compare *Kotelnikov v. Russia*, no. 45104/05, § 93, 12 July 2016). There is no indication of any connivance or acquiescence by the authorities in respect of his actions.

56. There is likewise no credible allegation that service weapons or other service equipment were used in the murder or that it was committed while M. was engaged in any police operation, was on duty or was in uniform (compare *Fergec v. Croatia*, no. 68516/14, § 36, 9 May 2017; contrast, for example, *Sašo Gorgiev*, § 49, and *Gorovenky and Bugara v. Ukraine*, nos. 36146/05 and 42418/05, § 34, 12 January 2012). On the contrary, according to the charges (see paragraph 4 above) as they currently stand, and which the applicant did not contest in that part, the defendants allegedly used a privately purchased foreign-registered car and an unlawfully purchased non-standard antique weapon and disguised themselves in generic civilian clothing to hide their identity.

(ii) Positive obligations

57. The relevant principles have been summarised in *Kurt v. Austria* ([GC], no. 62903/15, §§ 157-60, 15 June 2021). In particular, the first sentence of Article 2 § 1 enjoins the State not only to refrain from the intentional and unlawful taking of life, but also to take appropriate steps to safeguard the lives of those within its jurisdiction (ibid., § 157). For this positive obligation to arise, it must be established that the authorities knew or ought to have known at the relevant time of the existence of a real and immediate risk to the life of an identified individual from the criminal acts of a third party and that they failed to take measures within the scope of their powers which, judged reasonably, might have been expected to avoid that risk (ibid., § 158).

58. The applicant did not maintain her allegations set out in paragraph 35 above in the comments submitted after notice of the application was given to the Government. However, the Court will proceed on the presumption that there are no grounds for striking out this part of the application under Article 37 § 1 (a) of the Convention (contrast *Nikolay Kucherenko v. Ukraine*, no. 16447/04, §§ 39-41, 19 February 2009; *Visloguzov v. Ukraine*, no. 32362/02, §§ 98-100, 20 May 2010; *M. v. Ukraine*, no. 2452/04, § 93, 19 April 2012; and *Lazarenko and Others v. Ukraine*, nos. 70329/12 and 5 others, §§ 22-25, 27 June 2017).

59. The applicant did not provide evidence of the victim's alleged public statements concerning threats against him or detailed information about their exact tenor. In any event, there is no indication that those media appearances were sufficient to put Ukrainian authorities on notice in respect of a specific danger to him at the time (see paragraph 35 above).

60. As to the publication on the Myrotvorets website, the Court has already found, in *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia* ((dec.) [GC], nos. 8019/16 and 2 others, § 498, 30 November 2022), that there was no evidence of Ukraine's involvement in or control over that website. Moreover, as the Court pointed out in that case (ibid., § 499), there were thousands of people listed on the website. The mere fact of the publication could not be taken to indicate that the authorities knew or ought to have known about the particular danger to the victim. Even accepting the applicant's assertion concerning the date of publication on the website (14 April 2015), the charges against the defendants indicate that the conspiracy to commit murder was already advanced by that date and that the victim's address was already known to them (see paragraph 4 above).

(iii) Conclusion

61. In view of all these considerations, the Court finds that there has been no violation of the substantive limb of Article 2 of the Convention.

APPLICATION OF ARTICLE 41 OF THE CONVENTION

62. The applicant claimed 100,000 euros (EUR) in respect of non-pecuniary damage.

63. The Government contested that claim, arguing that it was unsubstantiated and that the applicant had failed to seek compensation at the domestic level for the excessive length of criminal proceedings.

64. The Court, ruling on an equitable basis, awards the applicant EUR 12,000 in respect of non-pecuniary damage, plus any tax that may be chargeable.

FOR THESE REASONS, THE COURT, UNANIMOUSLY,

1. *Holds* that Ms Nataliya Stanislavivna Buzyna has standing to continue the present proceedings in the applicant's stead;

2. *Declares* the application admissible;

3. *Holds* that there has been a violation of Article 2 of the Convention in its procedural limb;

4. *Holds* that there has been no violation of Article 2 of the Convention in its substantive limb;

5. *Holds*
   (a) that the respondent State is to pay Ms Nataliya Stanislavivna Buzyna, within three months, EUR 12,000 (twelve thousand euros), plus any tax that may be chargeable, in respect of non-pecuniary damage, to be converted into the currency of the respondent State at the rate applicable at the date of settlement;
   (b) that from the expiry of the above-mentioned three months until settlement simple interest shall be payable on the above amount at a rate equal to the marginal lending rate of the European Central Bank during the default period plus three percentage points;

6. *Dismisses* the remainder of the applicant's claim for just satisfaction.

Done in English, and notified in writing on 28 May 2026, pursuant to Rule 77 §§ 2 and 3 of the Rules of Court.

Martina Keller Deputy Registrar	Gilberto Felici President