



Expansion of interim measures in relation to Russian military action in Ukraine

On 1 and 4 March 2022 the Court (the President of the Court) indicated a number of interim measures to the Government of the Russian Federation in relation to the military action which commenced on 24 February 2022 in various parts of Ukraine and recalled that the interim measure indicated on 13 March 2014 to both the Russian Federation and Ukraine in relation to the events in eastern Ukraine remained in force (see press releases of [1 March 2022](#) and of [4 March 2022](#)).

The Government of the Russian Federation submitted their comments on 5 and 11 March 2022.

On 16 March 2022 the Government of Ukraine asked the Court to indicate to the Government of the Russian Federation a number of interim measures in addition to those which the Court had indicated on 1 March 2022 and invited the Court to reiterate the urgency of compliance by Russia with the interim measures directed on 1 and 4 March 2022.

The Court (the President of the Court) examined the Ukrainian Government's request and on 24 March 2022 invited the Government of the Russian Federation to provide, *inter alia*, their comments on those requests and to reply to a number of specific questions relating to the requests. At the same time, the Court also invited the Government of Ukraine to provide further information and updates.

The Government of the Russian Federation have not provided any replies to those requests.

The Government of Ukraine, for their part, informed the Court on 28 March 2022 that they maintained their request and provided updates and additional information.

In their request of 16 March 2022 and further submissions of 28 March 2022, the Government of Ukraine requested the Court to indicate to the Government of the Russian Federation that they should not use any form of prohibited, nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and should not engage in any further indiscriminate use of any weapons, or any further use of armed force anticipated to have a disproportionate impact on civilians.

They further requested that the Russian Federation should not take any steps whether by further attack, cessation of power supply, or otherwise capable of undermining the safety and security of nuclear facilities within Ukraine and should safeguard the fundamental rights of all staff currently detained at such sites.

The Ukrainian Government also requested the Court to order the Russian Federation to cease any operations by Russian forces or agents aimed at the assassination (or abduction or disappearance) of the civilian leadership of Ukraine and of other Ukrainian citizens and to immediately safeguard the fundamental rights of at least the Head of Nikolske Village (Mr Vasyl Mitko), the Mayor of Dniprorudne (Mr Yevhen Matveyev), and the Chairperson of Melitopol District Council (Mr Sergiy Pryyma), all abducted by Russian agents between 11 and 13 March 2022.

The Government of Ukraine further asked the Court to indicate to the Russian Federation that they should ensure unimpeded access of the civilian population to safe evacuation routes approved by the Government of Ukraine, healthcare, food and other essential supplies and should ensure rapid and unconstrained passage of humanitarian aid and movement of humanitarian workers and that the said evacuation routes should allow civilians to seek refuge in safe havens within Ukraine or safe third countries excluding the Russian Federation or Belarus. In that connection, the Ukrainian Government alleged that the Russian Federation authorities and agents had begun a process of abduction and forced transfers of large numbers of civilians (including children) to the Russian Federation.

Having regard to the requests and the information submitted by the Ukrainian Government, the Court reiterates its interim measure of 1 March 2022 in which it indicated to the Government of the Russian Federation to refrain from military attacks against civilians and civilian objects, including residential premises, emergency vehicles and other specially protected civilian objects such as schools and hospitals, and to ensure immediately the safety of the medical establishments, personnel and emergency vehicles within the territory under attack or siege by Russian troops. The Court considers that this interim measure must be understood to cover any and all attacks against civilians, including with the use of any form of prohibited weapons, measures targeting particular civilians due to their status, as well as the destruction of civilian objects under the control of Russian forces. The Court thus concludes that this part of the request is already covered by the interim measure indicated on 1 March 2022 which remains in force.

The Court further recalls the interim measure already indicated on 4 March 2022 to the Government of the Russian Federation, under Rule 39, that, in accordance with their engagements under the Convention, notably in respect of Articles 2, 3 and 8, they should ensure unimpeded access of the civilian population to safe evacuation routes, healthcare, food and other essential supplies, rapid and unconstrained passage of humanitarian aid and movement of humanitarian workers.

In the context of the present request and having regard to the current situation on the ground, the Court decides to indicate to the Government of the Russian Federation, under Rule 39, that the said evacuation routes should allow civilians to seek refuge in safer regions of Ukraine.

The Court has also decided to give immediate notice of the above interim measure to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in accordance with Rule 39 § 2 of the Rules of Court.

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.