



Belgrade, March 25, 2025

ECHR Asks Serbia to Respond by March 31 on Alleged Use of Sonic Weapons at March 15 Belgrade Protest

Last night, the European Court of Human Rights requested that the Republic of Serbia respond to questions regarding the possible use of sonic weapons at the protest in Belgrade on March 15, 2025. Serbia has been given a deadline of March 31, 2025, to clarify whether illegal means were used against demonstrators, the legal basis for the alleged use of such weapons, and the measures in place to prevent their arbitrary use. The response is due next Monday, March 31.

Civil society organizations – including the Belgrade Center for Human Rights, Crta, FemPlatz, Civic Initiatives, the Initiative for Economic and Social Rights A11, and the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM) – appealed to the European Court of Human Rights on behalf of 47 Serbian citizens. The appeal concerns an incident that disrupted the 15-minute delivery of mail to the victims of the tragedy at the Novi Sad train station.

In their submission to the Court in Strasbourg requesting the imposition of temporary measures, civil society organizations highlighted that the 15-minute silence for the victims of the eave collapse in Novi Sad was violently interrupted by the use of an unknown and potentially dangerous sonic or similar device. This incident caused bodily harm, severe anxiety, panic, and a stampede among those gathered. Additionally, over 4,000 Serbian citizens have contacted these organizations, reporting various health issues, physical injuries, and psychological symptoms related to the event.

Although Serbian officials and institutional representatives initially denied the state's possession of sonic weapons, they later, under public pressure, acknowledged the existence of at least 16 LARD¹ devices of varying power within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It is worth noting that the use of such weapons in Serbia is illegal, and their procurement did not comply with applicable regulations.

The European Court of Human Rights has also requested that the citizens who submitted complaints provide concrete information by March 31, 2025 – particularly regarding the health conditions and consequences experienced by those in Serbia who were exposed to a sonic or similar device during the peaceful protest in Belgrade on March 15, 2025.

Our organizations will continue to support citizens in determining the facts about the events of March 15 and in protecting their rights and interests in proceedings before both international and domestic bodies.

¹ Eng. Long-range Acoustic Device