

*Council of Europe*  
*The Secretary General*

Strasbourg, 11 December 2024

Minister,

The Russian Federation still has a binding international law obligation to take measures to implement the judgments in which the European Court of Human Rights has found it has violated human rights. For this reason, the Committee of Ministers continues to supervise these cases and adopt decisions in respect of them. On 3-5 December 2024, the Committee of Ministers examined cases concerning the Russian Federation and it has invited me to write to you about them. These were notably:

- The *Khashiyev and Akayeva* Group, concerning military operations of the Russian authorities in the Chechen Republic and neighbouring regions mostly in 1999-2006, including killings notably as a result of indiscriminate bombings and failures to properly organise safe passages for civilians, ill-treatment, disappearances, ineffective investigation thereof and the resulting mental suffering of the victims' relatives. The Committee of Ministers deeply deplored further deterioration of the situation with the human rights in the Chechen Republic in general and the continuation of similar violations. It reiterated the authorities' obligation to ensure that the Russian armed forces and law-enforcement agencies comply with the requirements of humanitarian law in their functioning and prevent further similar violations. It further indicated the need to create an *ad hoc* humanitarian high-level mechanism in charge of search for the disappearances in the region.
- The *Bryan and Others, Butkevich, Chemodurov, Chirikov and Nekrasov, Dzhavadov, Kazakov, Kudeshkina, Obukhova, Saliyev, Verzilov and Others* cases or Groups, concerning freedom of expression, notably the right to criticise politicians and to report on public assemblies and court proceedings by journalists; to report crimes to competent authorities; to register and disseminate a newspaper; to highlight important public issues, including the environment, through artistic and other performances, without being attacked and arbitrarily arrested; and for judges to constructively criticise the judiciary. The Committee of Ministers deeply deplored further deterioration of the situation with the freedom of expression in the Russian Federation, notably the recent repressive practices based on laws using the vague definitions of so-called "foreign agents", "extremism," "undesirable organisations", "fake news about the war", "discreditation of the army and authorities", or "calls for sanctions" against the Russian Federation and its citizens.

.../...

Mr Sergey Lavrov  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Russian Federation

*F - 67075 Strasbourg Cedex*  
*France*

*Tel. + 33 (0)3 88 41 20 51*  
*+ 33 (0)3 88 41 20 00*

It further underlined that these repressive laws and practices run counter to the conclusions and spirit of the judgments under consideration and that repealing them and redressing the situation of all those convicted on the basis of these laws and practices in breach of their right to freedom of expression appears to be a necessary prerequisite to any further, meaningful general measures in these cases.

Relevant decisions adopted by the Committee of Ministers are enclosed.

On behalf of the Council of Europe, I should like to urge once again your authorities to comply with the unconditional obligation to abide by the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in respect of the Russian Federation and to take all measures required to execute them.

Yours sincerely,



Alain Berset