

# Rules of the Committee of Ministers for the supervision of the execution of judgments and of the terms of friendly settlements

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(adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 10 May 2006 at the 964<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies and amended on 18 January 2017 at the 1275<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

## General provisions

### Rule 1

1. The exercise of the powers of the Committee of Ministers under Article 46, paragraphs 2 to 5, and Article 39, paragraph 4, of the European Convention on Human Rights, is governed by the present Rules.
2. Unless otherwise provided in the present Rules, the general rules of procedure of the meetings of the Committee of Ministers and of the Ministers' Deputies shall apply when exercising these powers.

### Rule 2

1. The Committee of Ministers' supervision of the execution of judgments and of the terms of friendly settlements shall in principle take place at special human rights meetings, the agenda of which is public.
2. If the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers is held by the representative of a High Contracting Party which is a party to a case under examination, that representative shall relinquish the chairmanship during any discussion of that case.

### Rule 3

When a judgment or a decision is transmitted to the Committee of Ministers in accordance with Article 46, paragraph 2, or Article 39, paragraph 4, of the Convention, the case shall be inscribed on the agenda of the Committee without delay.

### Rule 4

1. The Committee of Ministers shall give priority to supervision of the execution of judgments in which the Court has identified what it considers a systemic problem in accordance with Resolution Res(2004)3 of the Committee of Ministers on judgments revealing an underlying systemic problem.
2. The priority given to cases under the first paragraph of this Rule shall not be to the detriment of the priority to be given to other important cases, notably cases where the violation established has caused grave consequences for the injured party.

### Rule 5

The Committee of Ministers shall adopt an annual report on its activities under Article 46, paragraphs 2 to 5, and Article 39, paragraph 4, of the Convention, which shall be made public and transmitted to the Court and to the Secretary General, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe.

## I. Supervision of the execution of judgments

### Rule 6 - Information to the Committee of Ministers on the execution of the judgment

1. When, in a judgment transmitted to the Committee of Ministers in accordance with Article 46, paragraph 2, of the Convention, the Court has decided that there has been a violation of the Convention or its protocols and/or has awarded just satisfaction to the injured party under Article 41 of the Convention, the Committee shall invite the High Contracting Party concerned to inform it of the measures which the High Contracting Party has taken or intends to take in consequence of the judgment, having regard to its obligation to abide by it under Article 46, paragraph 1, of the Convention.
2. When supervising the execution of a judgment by the High Contracting Party concerned, pursuant to Article 46, paragraph 2, of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers shall examine:
  - a. whether any just satisfaction awarded by the Court has been paid, including as the case may be, default interest; and

- b. if required, and taking into account the discretion of the High Contracting Party concerned to choose the means necessary to comply with the judgment, whether:
  - i. individual measures<sup>1</sup> have been taken to ensure that the violation has ceased and that the injured party is put, as far as possible, in the same situation as that party enjoyed prior to the violation of the Convention;
  - ii. general measures<sup>2</sup> have been adopted, preventing new violations similar to that or those found or putting an end to continuing violations.

### Rule 7 - Control intervals

1. Until the High Contracting Party concerned has provided information on the payment of the just satisfaction awarded by the Court or concerning possible individual measures, the case shall be placed on the agenda of each human rights meeting of the Committee of Ministers, unless the Committee decides otherwise.
2. If the High Contracting Party concerned informs the Committee of Ministers that it is not yet in a position to inform the Committee that the general measures necessary to ensure compliance with the judgment have been taken, the case shall be placed again on the agenda of a meeting of the Committee of Ministers taking place no more than six months later, unless the Committee decides otherwise; the same rule shall apply when this period expires and for each subsequent period.

This rule was clarified by the Ministers' Deputies at 1100th meeting of the Committee of Ministers, as follows:

"decided that, as from that date, all cases will be placed on the agenda of each DH meeting of the Deputies until the supervision of their execution is closed, unless the Committee were to decide otherwise in the light of the development of the execution process;"

### Rule 8 - Access to information

1. The provisions of this Rule are without prejudice to the confidential nature of the Committee of Ministers' deliberations in accordance with Article 21 of the Statute of the Council of Europe.
2. The following information shall be accessible to the public unless the Committee decides otherwise in order to protect legitimate public or private interests:
  - a. information and documents relating thereto provided by a High Contracting Party to the Committee of Ministers pursuant to Article 46, paragraph 2, of the Convention;
  - b. information and documents relating thereto provided to the Committee of Ministers, in accordance with the present Rules, by the injured party, by non-governmental organisations or by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights.
3. In reaching its decision under paragraph 2 of this Rule, the Committee shall take, inter alia, into account:
  - a. reasoned requests for confidentiality made, at the time the information is submitted, by the High Contracting Party, by the injured party, by non-governmental organisations or by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights submitting the information;
  - b. reasoned requests for confidentiality made by any other High Contracting Party concerned by the information without delay, or at the latest in time for the Committee's first examination of the information concerned;
  - c. the interest of an injured party or a third party not to have their identity, or anything allowing their identification, disclosed.
4. After each meeting of the Committee of Ministers, the annotated agenda presented for the Committee's supervision of execution shall also be accessible to the public and shall be published, together with the decisions taken, unless the Committee decides otherwise. As far as possible, other documents presented to the Committee which are accessible to the public shall be published, unless the Committee decides otherwise.

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<sup>1</sup>For instance, the striking out of an unjustified criminal conviction from the criminal records, the granting of a residence permit or the reopening of impugned domestic proceedings (see on this latter point Recommendation Rec(2000)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the re-examination or reopening of certain cases at domestic level following judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, adopted on 19 January 2000 at the 694th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

<sup>2</sup>For instance, legislative or regulatory amendments, changes of case-law or administrative practice or publication of the Court's judgment in the language of the respondent state and its dissemination to the authorities concerned.

5. In all cases, where an injured party has been granted anonymity in accordance with Rule 47, paragraph 3 of the Rules of Court; his/her anonymity shall be preserved during the execution process unless he/she expressly requests that anonymity be waived.

This rule was clarified by the Ministers' Deputies at 1100th meeting of the Committee of Ministers, as follows:

"decided that action plans and action reports, together with relevant information provided by applicants, non-governmental organisations and national human rights institutions under rules 9 and 15 of the Rules for the supervision of execution judgments and of the terms of friendly settlements will be promptly made public (taking into account Rule 9§ 3 of the Rules of supervision) and put on line except where a motivated request for confidentiality is made at the time of submitting the information;"

## Rule 9 - Communications to the Committee of Ministers

This rule was amended by the Ministers' Deputies at 1275th meeting of the Committee of Ministers. Paragraphs that have been added or modified are highlighted.

1. The Committee of Ministers shall consider any communication from the injured party with regard to payment of the just satisfaction or the taking of individual measures.
2. The Committee of Ministers shall be entitled to consider any communication from non-governmental organisations, as well as national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, with regard to the execution of judgments under Article 46, paragraph 2, of the Convention.
3. The Committee of Ministers shall also be entitled to consider any communication from an international intergovernmental organisation or its bodies or agencies whose aims and activities include the protection or the promotion of human rights, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with regard to the issues relating to the execution of judgments under Article 46, paragraph 2, of the Convention which fall within their competence.
4. The Committee of Ministers shall likewise be entitled to consider any communication from an institution or body allowed, whether as a matter of right or upon special invitation from the Court, to intervene in the procedure before the Court, with regard to the execution under Article 46, paragraph 2, of the Convention of the judgment either in all cases (in respect of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights) or in all those concerned by the Court's authorisation (in respect of any other institution or body).
5. The Secretariat shall bring, in an appropriate way, any communication received in reference to paragraph 1 of this Rule, to the attention of the Committee of Ministers.
6. The Secretariat shall bring any communication received under paragraphs 2, 3 or 4 of this Rule to the attention of the State concerned. When the State responds within five working days, both the communication and the response shall be brought to the attention of the Committee of Ministers and made public. If there has been no response within this time limit, the communication shall be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers but shall not be made public. It shall be published ten working days after notification, together with any response received within this time limit. A State response received after these ten working days shall be circulated and published separately upon receipt.

## Rule 10 - Referral to the Court for interpretation of a judgment

1. When, in accordance with Article 46, paragraph 3, of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers considers that the supervision of the execution of a final judgment is hindered by a problem of interpretation of the judgment, it may refer the matter to the Court for a ruling on the question of interpretation. A referral decision shall require a majority vote of two thirds of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee.
2. A referral decision may be taken at any time during the Committee of Ministers' supervision of the execution of the judgments.
3. A referral decision shall take the form of an interim resolution. It shall be reasoned and reflect the different views within the Committee of Ministers, in particular that of the High Contracting Party concerned.
4. If need be, the Committee of Ministers shall be represented before the Court by its Chair, unless the Committee decides upon another form of representation. This decision shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives casting a vote and a majority of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee.

## Rule 11 - Infringement proceedings

1. When, in accordance with Article 46, paragraph 4, of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers considers that a High Contracting Party refuses to abide by a final judgment in a case to which it is party, it may, after serving formal notice on that Party and by decision adopted by a majority vote of two-thirds of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee, refer to the Court the question whether that Party has failed to fulfil its obligation.
2. Infringement proceedings should be brought only in exceptional circumstances. They shall not be initiated unless formal notice of the Committee's intention to bring such proceedings has been given to the High Contracting Party concerned. Such formal notice shall be given ultimately six months before the lodging of proceedings, unless the Committee decides otherwise, and shall take the form of an interim resolution. This Resolution shall be adopted by a majority vote of two-thirds of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee.
3. The referral decision of the matter to the Court shall take the form of an interim resolution. It shall be reasoned and concisely reflect the views of the High Contracting Party concerned.
4. The Committee of Ministers shall be represented before the Court by its Chair unless the Committee decides upon another form of representation. This decision shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives casting a vote and a majority of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee.

## II. Supervision of the execution of the terms of friendly settlements

### Rule 12 - Information to the Committee of Ministers on the execution of the terms of the friendly settlement

1. When a decision is transmitted to the Committee of Ministers in accordance with Article 39, paragraph 4, of the Convention, the Committee shall invite the High Contracting Party concerned to inform it on the execution of the terms of the friendly settlement.
2. The Committee of Ministers shall examine whether the terms of the friendly settlement, as set out in the Court's decision, have been executed.

### Rule 13 - Control intervals

Until the High Contracting Party concerned has provided information on the execution of the terms of the friendly settlement as set out in the decision of the Court, the case shall be placed on the agenda of each human rights meeting of the Committee of Ministers, or, where appropriate,<sup>3</sup> on the agenda of a meeting of the Committee of Ministers taking place no more than six months later, unless the Committee decides otherwise.

### Rule 14 - Access to information

1. The provisions of this Rule are without prejudice to the confidential nature of the Committee of Ministers' deliberations in accordance with Article 21 of the Statute of the Council of Europe.
2. The following information shall be accessible to the public unless the Committee decides otherwise in order to protect legitimate public or private interests:
  - a. information and documents relating thereto provided by a High Contracting Party to the Committee of Ministers pursuant to Article 39, paragraph 4, of the Convention;
  - b. information and documents relating thereto provided to the Committee of Ministers in accordance with the present Rules by the applicant, by non-governmental organisations or by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights.
3. In reaching its decision under paragraph 2 of this Rule, the Committee shall take, inter alia, into account:
  - a. reasoned requests for confidentiality made, at the time the information is submitted, by the High Contracting Party, by the applicant, by non-governmental organisations or by national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights submitting the information;

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<sup>3</sup>In particular where the terms of the friendly settlement include undertakings which, by their nature, cannot be fulfilled within a short time span, such as the adoption of new legislation.

- b. reasoned requests for confidentiality made by any other High Contracting Party concerned by the information without delay, or at the latest in time for the Committee's first examination of the information concerned;
  - c. the interest of an applicant or a third party not to have their identity, or anything allowing their identification, disclosed.
4. After each meeting of the Committee of Ministers, the annotated agenda presented for the Committee's supervision of execution shall also be accessible to the public and shall be published, together with the decisions taken, unless the Committee decides otherwise. As far as possible, other documents presented to the Committee which are accessible to the public shall be published, unless the Committee decides otherwise.
  5. In all cases, where an applicant has been granted anonymity in accordance with Rule 47, paragraph 3 of the Rules of Court; his/her anonymity shall be preserved during the execution process unless he/she expressly requests that anonymity be waived.

#### Rule 15 - Communications to the Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers shall consider any communication from the applicant with regard to the execution of the terms of friendly settlements.
2. The Committee of Ministers shall be entitled to consider any communication from non-governmental organisations, as well as national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, with regard to the execution of the terms of friendly settlements.
3. The Secretariat shall bring, in an appropriate way, any communication received in reference to paragraph 1 of this Rule, to the attention of the Committee of Ministers. It shall do so in respect of any communication received in reference to paragraph 2 of this Rule, together with any observations of the delegation(s) concerned provided that the latter are transmitted to the Secretariat within five working days of having been notified of such communication.

### III. Resolutions

#### Rule 16 - Interim resolutions

In the course of its supervision of the execution of a judgment or of the terms of a friendly settlement, the Committee of Ministers may adopt interim resolutions, notably in order to provide information on the state of progress of the execution or, where appropriate, to express concern and/or to make suggestions with respect to the execution.

#### Rule 17 - Final resolution

After having established that the High Contracting Party concerned has taken all the necessary measures to abide by the judgment or that the terms of the friendly settlement have been executed, the Committee of Ministers shall adopt a Resolution concluding that its functions under Article 46, paragraph 2, or Article 39 paragraph 4, of the Convention have been exercised.