

Forthcoming hearing in May 2024

The European Court of Human Rights will be holding a Grand Chamber hearing on **15 May 2024 at 9.15 a.m.** in the case of **Semenya v. Switzerland** (application no. 10934/21).

The case concerns an international-level athlete, specialising in middle-distance races, who complains about certain regulations of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF – now called World Athletics) requiring her to decrease her natural testosterone level in order to be able to take part in international competitions in the female category.

After the hearing the Court will begin its deliberations, which will be held in private. Its ruling in the case will, however, be made at a later stage. A limited number of seats are available for the press in the hearing room. To be sure of a place, you need to book in advance by contacting the Press Unit at echrpess@echr.coe.int. If you wish to attend a hearing, we recommend reading the document [How to attend a hearing](#).

Semenya v. Switzerland (application no. 10934/21)

The applicant, Mokgadi Caster Semenya, is a South African national who was born in 1991 and lives in South Africa. She is an international-level athlete.

Before the Court, the applicant complains about certain regulations of the IAAF (now called World Athletics) requiring her to decrease her natural testosterone level in order to be able to take part in international competitions in the female category. Her legal actions challenging the regulations in question before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (in 2019) and the Swiss Federal Supreme Court (in 2020) were rejected. She relies on Articles 6 (right to a fair hearing), 8 (right to respect for private life), 13 (right to an effective remedy) and 14 (prohibition of discrimination) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The application was lodged with the European Court of Human Rights on 18 February 2021.

In its [judgment](#) of 11 July 2023, a Chamber of the Court held, by a majority, that there had been a violation of Article 14 taken together with Article 8. The Court also held, by a majority, that there had been a violation of Article 13 in relation to Article 14 taken together with Article 8 of the Convention.

On 6 November 2023 the case was referred to the Grand Chamber at the Swiss Government's request¹.

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1. Under Article 43 of the European Convention on Human Rights, within three months from the date of a Chamber judgment, any party to the case may, in exceptional cases, request that the case be referred to the 17-judges Grand Chamber of the Court. In that event, a panel of five judges considers whether the case raises a serious question affecting the interpretation or application of the Convention or its protocols, or a serious issue of general importance, in which case the Grand Chamber will deliver a final judgment. If no such question or issue arises, the panel will reject the request, at which point the judgment becomes final. Otherwise Chamber judgments become final on the expiry of the three-month period or earlier if the parties declare that they do not intend to make a request to refer.

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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.