



DECISION TO STRIKE OUT

Case no. CH/99/2439

Anđelko and Dragana VUKOJE

against

THE FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The Human Rights Chamber for Bosnia and Herzegovina, sitting as the First Panel on 7 November 2002 with the following members present:

Ms. Michèle PICARD, President
Mr. Rona AYBAY, Vice-President
Mr. Dietrich RAUSCHNING
Mr. Hasan BALIĆ
Mr. Želimir JUKA
Mr. Miodrag PAJIĆ
Mr. Andrew GROTRIAN

Mr. Ulrich GARMS, Registrar
Ms. Olga KAPIĆ, Deputy Registrar

Having considered the aforementioned application introduced pursuant to Article VIII(1) of the Human Rights Agreement ("the Agreement") set out in Annex 6 to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

Adopts the following decision pursuant to Article VIII(3)(c) of the Agreement and Rules 49(2) and 52 of the Chamber's Rules of Procedure:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The case concerns the attempts of the applicants to regain possession of an apartment, located at Bosanska Street in Travnik, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
2. By a procedural decision of the Municipal Assembly, dated 30 January 1984, the occupancy right over the apartment in question was transferred from Mr. Anđelko Vukoje to his daughter, Ms. Dragana Vukoje.
3. On 14 August 2002, the Service for Housing-Utility Affairs, Municipality Travnik, issued a procedural decision recognising Dragana Vukoje as the pre-war occupancy right holder of the apartment in question and terminating the right of the temporary occupant to use it.
4. On 23 August 2002, the applicant Dragana Vukoje entered into possession of her pre-war apartment.

II. PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE CHAMBER

5. The application was introduced on 24 November 1999 and registered on the same day.
6. On 28 April 2000, the Chamber transmitted the application to the respondent Party for its observations on the admissibility and merits under Articles 8 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights (“the Convention”) and Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 to the Convention.
7. On 9 September 2002, the respondent Party provided information to the Chamber that the applicant Dragana Vukoje had regained possession of her apartment. The applicant confirmed that she entered into possession of her apartment on 23 August 2002. The applicant noted that while she withdraws her complaints in this respect, she would like to maintain her claim for compensation.

III. OPINION OF THE CHAMBER

8. In accordance with Article VIII(3) of the Agreement, “the Chamber may decide at any point in its proceedings to suspend consideration of, reject or strike out, an application on the ground that ... (c) for any other reason established by the Chamber, it is no longer justified to continue the examination of the application; provided that such a result is consistent with the objective of respect for human rights.”
9. The Chamber notes that the applicants lodged the application with a view to regaining possession of the apartment, and while the case was still pending before the Chamber, the applicant Dragana Vukoje regained such possession. The Chamber further notes that although the applicant has been reinstated, she understandably asks the Chamber to find a violation of her rights protected by the Agreement due to the time that elapsed between her request for reinstatement into possession of her pre-war apartment and the actual repossession. She also asks the Chamber to order the respondent Party to pay compensation to her in recognition of the damage, both pecuniary and non-pecuniary, suffered by her during the course of that time.
10. The Chamber recalls that under Article VIII(2)(e) of the Agreement, “the Chamber shall endeavour to give particular priority to allegations of especially severe or systematic violations and those founded on alleged discrimination on prohibited grounds”. As the Chamber has explained in the case of *Vujičić v. the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (case no. CH/99/2198, decision to strike out of 10 October 2002, Decisions July–December 2002), there are presently thousands of undecided applications pending before the Chamber, and this number is growing month by month. Moreover, significant progress in the return and property law implementation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina has occurred (*id.* at paragraphs 15-16).

11. Taking into account that the applicant Dragana Vukoje has been reinstated into possession of her apartment, the Chamber considers that the ongoing alleged human rights violation has been brought to an end and the main issue of the application has been resolved. The Chamber recognises that valid reasons may underlie the applicant's request to nonetheless maintain her claim for compensation. However, in the light of the considerations discussed above, the Chamber finds that "it is no longer justified to continue the examination of the application" within the meaning of Article VIII(3)(c) of the Agreement. The Chamber moreover finds that this result is "consistent with the objective of respect for human rights", as this "objective" must be understood to embrace not only the individual applicant's human rights, but also the Chamber's more general mandate to assist the Parties in securing to all persons within their jurisdiction the highest level of internationally recognised human rights (Articles I and II of the Agreement).

12. The Chamber, therefore, decides to strike out the application, pursuant to Article VIII(3)(c) of the Agreement.

IV. CONCLUSION

13. For these reasons, the Chamber, unanimously

STRIKES OUT THE APPLICATION.

(signed)
Ulrich GARMS
Registrar of the Chamber

(signed)
Michèle PICARD
President of the First Panel