



Press Release

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European Court to Deliver Landmark Judgment in Environmental Pollution Case

The European Court of Human Rights will publish its judgment on Thursday 9 June¹ in the case of a Russian woman, Mrs Nadezhda Fadeyeva, who claims the right to be re-housed because of environmental pollution caused by a nearby privately-operated steel works². The applicant is represented by lawyers from the London-based European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC)³ together with lawyers at the Russian human rights organisation *Memorial*⁴.

Mrs Fadeyeva and her family live in the city of Cherepovets (to the north east of Moscow) in a council flat situated within the “sanitary security zone” around the *Severstal* steel plant. The zone is the area where pollution from the steel plant is considered by the authorities to be excessive.

Together with other residents, Mrs Fadeyeva brought court proceedings in Russia seeking resettlement outside the zone. The eventual outcome was a court finding that the local authorities were obliged to resettle all the residents of the zone, but had failed to do so. However, there was no specific order for resettlement, the courts instead finding that it was sufficient for the local authority simply to place Mrs Fadeyeva on a general waiting list for re-housing.

Mrs Fadeyeva has argued before the European Court of Human Rights that her rights under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights have been violated (the right to respect for private, family life and home).

The case raises important questions as to what steps Governments should be required to take to prevent environmental pollution or to regulate private companies which are polluting the environment.

¹ Judgment will be published on the Court’s website (www.echr.coe.int) at 2.30pm (local time in Strasbourg); 1.30pm UK time.

² *Fadeyeva v Russia* (No. 55723/00).

³ Based at London Metropolitan University, EHRAC provides expert advice and assistance to NGOs and lawyers in Russia in bringing international human rights cases. EHRAC is funded by the European Commission and the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. See www.londonmet.ac.uk/ehrac.

⁴ Memorial is one of the foremost human rights organisations in the Russian Federation, devoted to investigating and publicising human rights abuses. See www.memo.ru.