# ECHR to Hear Caster Semenya Case on Swiss Government's Role in Rights Protection



The Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) is set to hear a case involving South African middle-distance runner Caster Semenya on Wednesday before issuing a final ruling. Semenya, a two-time Olympic champion in the 800m, was born with differences of sexual development (DSD), a condition that leads to elevated testosterone levels. This condition led to a limitation on her ability to compete in female track events unless she takes testosterone-reducing medication, under current World Athletics rules.

The case under consideration by the ECHR pertains not directly to these athletics restrictions but to the Swiss government's role in the protection of Semenya's rights. The issue was initially addressed by the Swiss Supreme Court but was later referred to the ECHR Grand Chamber, which comprises 17 judges and makes decisions that are final and unappealable.

This is not Semenya’s first involvement with legal challenges related to athlete regulations on DSD individuals. Previous appeals in the sports legal system, including the Court of Arbitration for Sport and Swiss domestic courts, have upheld the testosterone regulations imposed by World Athletics, citing them as necessary to ensure fair competition. These rulings were followed by Semenya's application to the ECHR in 2021.

World Athletics has defended its regulations as essential for maintaining competitive integrity in women's sports. This ongoing legal struggle continues to highlight the complex balance between individual rights and competitive fairness in international athletics.