**EU court dismisses Czech lawsuit against a new directive restricting gun possession**

The directive, passed in reaction to terrorist attacks in Europe, bans selected types of semiautomatic firearms and magazines.

The European Court of Justice dismissed the lawsuit the Czech Republic had filed against the EU directive restricting arms possession, and said that the directive is neither discriminatory nor does it violate the EU principles, which the Czechs claimed.

The directive, passed in reaction to terrorist attacks in Europe, bans selected types of semiautomatic firearms and magazines.

The Czech Republic sharply protested against the directive still before the EU countries and the European Parliament passed it in 2017. Among others, Prague objected that the directive violated the rights of legal arms owners.

In its lawsuit, Czechia demanded the abolition of the directive. Its demand was supported by Poland and Hungary.

In its verdict today, the EU court called the Czech objections unsubstantiated.

By adopting the directive, the EU bodies neither acted beyond their powers nor did they interfere in the rights of arms owners and possessors, the court stated in a press release.

In reaction to the court verdict, Czech politicians spoke about the need to respect it, but most of them expressed disagreement with it.

Common sense has lost, as has freedom, said Jana Cernochova (opposition Civic Democrats, ODS), who heads the lower house’s defence committee. The loss came as a result of the Czech government’s failure to reach opt-outs for Czechia in the EU.

PM Andrej Babis (ANO) wrote to CTK that the verdict must be respected. He, same as Interior Minister Jan Hamacek (Social Democrats, CSSD) said a solution may be the adoption of a new Czech arms possession bill drafted by the Interior Ministry.

Hamacek said the vast majority of arms holders will not be affected in any way. He said the Czech Republic would meet the requirement on the implementation of the EU arms directive through the planned amendment.

 “Once again, the EU court showed that people’s interests mean nothing to it. This is a display of arrogance of power and vulgarity. I hope that people with patriotic thinking will unite, regardless of their political affiliation, and agree on ways to face the problem… Those who yield to evil, commit evil themselves,” Communist (KSCM) MP Zdenek Ondracek told CTK.

“It is a villainous decision, fully in accordance with the opinion of the Freedom and Direct Democracy (SPD) and its programme that clearly says the EU is heading towards restricting the rights of national states’ citizens,” said Radim Fiala, deputy chairman of the far-right anti-EU SPD.

SPD chairman Tomio Okamura called the directive and the EU Court verdict an unbelievable dictate of the EU.