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European court rejects Nicklinson 'right to die' case

A paralysed former builder and the widow of a man who had locked-in syndrome have had their "right to die" challenge thrown out by the European Court of Human Rights.

Paul Lamb and Jane Nicklinson, whose husband Tony died more than two years ago, had tried to challenge the Suicide Act 1961 under which assisting someone to take his or her life is a crime. Their case before the court in Strasbourg was the

culmination of a campaign arguing that those who are physically unable to take their own lives should have the right to be helped to die with dignity.

In a written judgment the court said it had "unanimously declared the applications inadmissible".

Saimo Chahal, QC, who acted for the Nicklinson family and Mr Lamb, said the judgment was disappointing but encouraged further attempts to change the law.