



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Alleged Violations of Sovereign Rights and Maritime Spaces in the Caribbean Sea (Nicaragua v. Colombia)

Fixing of time-limit for the filing by Nicaragua of a written statement of its observations and submissions on the preliminary objections raised by Colombia

THE HAGUE, 22 December 2014. By an Order of 19 December 2014, Judge Peter Tomka, President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has fixed 20 April 2015 as the time-limit within which the Republic of Nicaragua may present a written statement of its observations and submissions on the preliminary objections raised by the Republic of Colombia on 19 December 2014 in the case concerning Alleged Violations of Sovereign Rights and Maritime Spaces in the Caribbean Sea (Nicaragua v. Colombia).

The subsequent procedure has been reserved for further decision.

The full text of the Order will be available shortly on the Court's website (www.icj-cij.org). However, written pleadings remain confidential until the Court decides to make them accessible to the public, generally at the opening of the oral proceedings.

History of the proceedings

On 26 November 2013, the Republic of Nicaragua instituted proceedings against the Republic of Colombia concerning a dispute in relation to “the violations of Nicaragua’s sovereign rights and maritime zones declared by the Court’s Judgment of 19 November 2012 [in the case concerning Territorial and Maritime Dispute (Nicaragua v. Colombia)] and the threat of the use of force by Colombia in order to implement these violations” (for further details, see paragraphs 166 to 175 of the Court’s latest Annual Report, available online at “The Court/Annual Reports”). By an Order of 9 December 2013, the Court fixed 9 December 2014 and 9 December 2015 as respective time-limits for the filing of Nicaragua’s Memorial and Colombia’s Counter-Memorial. Nicaragua’s Memorial was filed within the time-limit thus fixed.

Note: The Court's press releases do not constitute official documents.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It was established by the United Nations Charter in June 1945 and began its activities in April 1946. The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York. The Court has a twofold role: first, to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States (its judgments have binding force and are without appeal for the parties concerned); and, second, to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by duly authorized United Nations organs and agencies of the system. The Court is composed of 15 judges elected for a nine-year term by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations. Independent of the United Nations Secretariat, it is assisted by a Registry, its own international secretariat, whose activities are both judicial and diplomatic, as well as administrative. The official languages of the Court are French and English. Also known as the "World Court", it is the only court of a universal character with general jurisdiction.

The ICJ, a court open only to States for contentious proceedings, and to certain organs and institutions of the United Nations system for advisory proceedings, should not be confused with the other — mostly criminal — judicial institutions based in The Hague and adjacent areas, such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY, an ad hoc court created by the Security Council), the International Criminal Court (ICC, the first permanent international criminal court, established by treaty, which does not belong to the United Nations system), the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL, an independent judicial body composed of Lebanese and international judges, which is not a United Nations tribunal and does not form part of the Lebanese judicial system), or the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA, an independent institution which assists in the establishment of arbitral tribunals and facilitates their work, in accordance with the Hague Convention of 1899).

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