



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Frontier Dispute (Benin/Niger)

Conclusion of the public hearings; Chamber ready to begin its deliberation

THE HAGUE, 11 March 2005. The public hearings before the Chamber of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) formed to deal with the case concerning the Frontier Dispute (Benin/Niger) were concluded today, Friday 11 March 2005. The Chamber will now begin its deliberation.

At the hearings, which opened on Monday 7 March 2005 at the Peace Palace, seat of the Court, the delegation of Benin was led by H.E. Mr. Rogatien Biaou, Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration, as Agent. The delegation of Niger was led by H.E. Ms Aïchatou Mindaoudou, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Co-operation and African Integration, as Agent.

The Chamber's judgment will be delivered at a public sitting, the date of which will be announced in due course.

Final submissions of the Parties

At the conclusion of the oral proceedings the Parties presented the following final submissions to the Chamber of the Court:

For Benin:

“For the reasons set out in its written and oral pleadings, the Republic of Benin maintains its submissions and requests the Chamber of the International Court of Justice kindly to decide:

- (1) that the boundary between the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Niger takes the following course:
 - from the point having co-ordinates 11° 54' 15" latitude North and 02° 25' 10" longitude East, it follows the median line of the River Mekrou as far as the point having co-ordinates 12° 24' 29" latitude North and 02° 49' 38" longitude East;
 - from that point, the boundary follows the left bank of the River [Niger] as far as the point having co-ordinates 11° 41' 44" North and 03° 36' 44" East;
- (2) that sovereignty over all of the islands in the River [Niger], and in particular Lété Island, lies with the Republic of Benin.”

For Niger:

“The Republic of Niger requests the Court to adjudge and declare that:

- (1) The boundary between the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Niger, from latitude 12° 24' 27" North, longitude 2° 49' 36" East, as far as latitude 11° 41' 40.7" North, longitude 3° 36' 44" East, follows the line of deepest soundings in the River Niger, insofar as that line can be established as it was at the date of independence.
 - (2) That line determines which islands belong to each Party;
 - the islands between the line of deepest soundings and the right bank of the river, namely Pekinga, Tondi Kwaria Barou, Koki Barou, Sandi Tounga Barou, Gandégabi Barou Kaïna, Dan Koré Guirawa, Barou Elhadji Dan Djoda, Koundou Barou and Elhadji Chaïbou Barou Kaïna, belong to the Republic of Benin;
 - the islands located between the line of deepest soundings and the left bank of the river, namely Boumba Barou Béri, Boumba Barou Kaïna, Kouassi Barou, Sansan Goungou, Lété Goungou, Monboye Tounga Barou, Sini Goungou, Lama Barou, Kotcha Barou, Gagno Goungou, Kata Goungou, Gandégabi Barou Beri, Guirawa Barou, Elhadji Chaïbou Barou Béri, Goussou Barou, Beyo Barou and Dolé Barou, belong to the Republic of Niger.
 - (3) The attribution of islands to the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Niger according to the line of deepest soundings as determined at the date of independence shall be regarded as final.
 - (4) With regard to the Gaya-Malanville bridges, the boundary passes through the middle of each of those structures.
 - (5) The boundary between the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Niger in the River Mekrou sector follows a line comprising two parts:
 - the first part is a straight line joining the point of confluence of the River Mekrou with the River Niger to the point where the Paris meridian meets the Atacora mountain range, indicative coordinates of which are as follows: latitude: 11° 41' 50" North; longitude: 2° 20' 14" East;
 - the second part of the line joins this latter point to the point where the former boundary between the *cercles* of Say and Fada meets the former boundary between the *cercles* of Fada and Atacora, indicative coordinates of which are as follows: latitude: 11° 44' 37" North; longitude: 2° 18' 55" East.”
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History of the proceedings and full transcripts of the hearings

The history of the proceedings as well as the full transcripts of the hearings held from 7 to 11 March 2005 can be found on the Court's website (www.icj-cij.org). Click on "Docket" and then on the hyperlink bearing the name of the case concerning the Frontier Dispute (Benin/Niger).

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