



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2018/7

1 February 2018

Event celebrating the contribution of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and the Mémorial de la Shoah (France) to the project to digitize the audio-visual material in the Nuremberg Trial Archives

THE HAGUE, 1 February 2018. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, held today an event to mark the important contribution the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) and the Mémorial de la Shoah (France) have made to the process of digitizing the audio-visual material in the Nuremberg Trial Archives.

Speeches were given by Judge Ronny Abraham, the President of the Court, Judge Caçado Trindade, the Chairman of the ICJ Library Committee, Mr. Philippe Couvreur, the Registrar of the Court, Mr. Radu Ioanid, the Director of the International Archival Programs Division of the USHMM, and Mr. Serge Klarsfeld of the Mémorial de la Shoah.

In their speeches on behalf of the Court, President Abraham, Judge Caçado Trindade and the Registrar emphasized the importance of this digitization project for the long-term preservation and enhancement of the Nuremberg Archives. They welcomed the two institutions' great contribution, which will allow the Court to fulfil its responsibility to conserve a vital piece of history and ensure greater public access to the archives.

In response, Mr. Ioanid and Mr. Klarsfeld expressed their gratitude for the full co-operation of the Court and thanked all those involved in the digitization process.

On behalf of the ICJ and the United Nations, President Abraham presented both institutions with letters of gratitude in appreciation of their invaluable contribution to this project.

A one minute segment from existing digitized material was played.

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

The Nuremberg Trial Archives, the official archives of the International Military Tribunal (IMT) of Nuremberg, were entrusted to the International Court of Justice by a decision of the Tribunal of 1 October 1946. The transfer of the archives to the Peace Palace was completed in 1950. The archives consist of original and certified copies of IMT documents and comprise items in four general categories: (1) approximately 250,000 pages of paper documents; (2) 1,942 gramophone discs; (3) 37 reels of film and 12 reels of microfilm used as evidence in the trial; and (4) objects used as evidence. All questions regarding consultation of the Nuremberg Trial Archives should be addressed to the Registrar of the International Court of Justice.

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 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 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 international judicial body with an independent legal personality, established by the United Nations Security Council upon the request of the Lebanese Government and composed of Lebanese and international judges), the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT, mandated to take over residual functions from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda), the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor’s Office (an ad hoc judicial institution which has its seat in The Hague), 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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