



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia v. Greece)

The Court to hold public hearings from Monday 21 to Wednesday 30 March 2011

THE HAGUE, 9 February 2011. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, will hold public hearings in the case concerning Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia v. Greece) from Monday 21 March to Wednesday 30 March 2011, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the seat of the Court.

Schedule for the hearings

— First round of oral argument

Monday 21 March 2011	3 p.m.-6 p.m.:	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Tuesday 22 March 2011	10 a.m.-1 p.m.:	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
	3 p.m.-4.30 p.m.:	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Thursday 24 March 2011	3 p.m.-6 p.m.:	Greece
Friday 25 March 2011	10 a.m.-1 p.m.:	Greece
	3 p.m.-4.30 p.m.:	Greece

— Second round of oral argument

Monday 28 March 2011	10 a.m.-1 p.m.:	the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Wednesday 30 March 2011	3 p.m.-6 p.m.:	Greece

History of the proceedings

On 17 November 2008, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia instituted proceedings against Greece for what it describes as “a flagrant violation of [Greece’s] obligations under Article 11” of the Interim Accord signed by the Parties on 13 September 1995.

In its Application, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia requests the Court “to protect its rights under the Interim Accord and to ensure that it is allowed to exercise its rights as an independent State acting in accordance with international law, including the right to pursue membership of relevant international organizations”.

The Applicant contends that in accordance with Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Interim Accord, Greece “has undertaken a binding obligation under international law” and that this provision lays down that Greece shall “not . . . object to the application by or the membership of [the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] in international, multilateral and regional organizations and institutions of which [Greece] is a member”; the text provides however that Greece “reserves the right to object to any membership referred to above if and to the extent [the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia] is to be referred to in such organization or institution differently than in paragraph 2 of the United Nations Security Council resolution 817 (1993)”, i.e., as “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia asserts in its Application that the Respondent violated its rights under the Interim Accord by objecting, in April 2008, to its application to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia contends, in particular, that Greece “veto[ed]” its application to join NATO because Greece desires “to resolve the difference between the Parties concerning the constitutional name of the Applicant as an essential precondition” for such membership.

The Applicant argues that it has “met its obligations under the Interim Accord not to seek to be designated as a member of NATO with any designation other than ‘the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’” and affirms that “[t]he subject of [the] dispute does not concern — either directly or indirectly — the difference [that has arisen between the Parties over its name]”.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia requests the Court to order Greece to “immediately take all necessary steps to comply with its obligations under Article 11, paragraph 1” and “to cease and desist from objecting in any way, whether directly or indirectly, to the Applicant’s membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and/or of any other ‘international, multilateral and regional organizations and institutions’ of which [Greece] is a member . . .”.

In its Application, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia invokes as a basis for the jurisdiction of the Court Article 21, paragraph 2, of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995, which provides that “[a]ny difference or dispute that arises between the Parties concerning the interpretation or implementation of this Interim Accord may be submitted by either of them to the International Court of Justice, except for the difference referred to in Article 5, paragraph 1”.

By an Order of 20 January 2009, the Court fixed 20 July 2009 as the time-limit for the filing of a Memorial by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and 20 January 2010 as the time-limit for the filing of a Counter-Memorial by Greece. Those pleadings were filed within the time-limits thus prescribed.

On 9 March 2010, the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia expressed a desire to be able to respond to the Counter-Memorial of Greece and the objections to jurisdiction and admissibility contained therein by means of a Reply, and to have available for that purpose a time-limit of approximately four and a half months as from the filing of the Counter-Memorial. The Government of Greece had no objection to the granting of this request, provided that it could in turn submit a Rejoinder and would have an identical time-limit available for doing so.

Taking account of the agreement of the Parties, by an Order of 12 March 2010, the Court authorized the submission of a Reply by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and a Rejoinder by Greece. It fixed 9 June 2010 and 27 October 2010 as the respective time-limits for the filing of those pleadings. The Reply and the Rejoinder were filed within the time-limits thus prescribed and the case became ready for hearing.

The written pleadings filed by the Parties (Memorial, Counter-Memorial, Reply and Rejoinder) are not yet publicly available. In accordance with Article 53, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Court, the Court “may, after ascertaining the views of the parties, decide that copies of the pleadings and documents annexed shall be made accessible to the public on or after the opening of the oral proceedings”.

The full text of the Application instituting proceedings filed by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and both Orders made by the Court in this case are available on the Court’s website (www.icj-cij.org).

NOTE TO THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

1. The public hearings will be held in the Great Hall of Justice of the Peace Palace. Mobile telephones and beepers are permitted in the courtroom provided they are switched off. Any offending device will be temporarily retained.

2. **Media representatives** are subject to an **online accreditation procedure**, details of which can be found in the Media Advisory accompanying this Press Release. **The accreditation procedure will close at midnight on Thursday 17 March 2011.**

3. **Individual visitors** (with the exception of members of the Diplomatic Corps) **and groups** are subject to an **online admission procedure**. They are required to submit an application on the Court’s website (click on “Attending a Hearing”) **by midnight on Thursday 17 March 2011.**

4. Verbatim records of the hearings will be published daily on the Court’s website, with translations to follow as soon as practicable thereafter. On the final day of the hearings, a Press Release presenting the final submissions of the Parties will be handed out and posted online.

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