



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2016/14

4 May 2016

Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast (Nicaragua v. Colombia)

Fixing of new time-limits for the filing of pleadings on the merits

THE HAGUE, 4 May 2016. By an Order dated 28 April 2016, the President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has fixed 28 September 2016 and 28 September 2017 as the new respective time-limits for the filing of a Memorial by the Republic of Nicaragua and a Counter-Memorial by the Republic of Colombia in the case concerning Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast (Nicaragua v. Colombia).

It is explained in the Order that the Applicant had already had at its disposal a part of the period of 12 months initially given to each Party for the preparation of its written pleadings before the proceedings were suspended on the merits, and that therefore it would be proper to accord each of them a time-limit which takes into consideration that specific situation.

It is recalled that by its Order dated 9 December 2013, the Court fixed 9 December 2014 and 9 December 2015 as the time-limits for the filing, respectively, of a Memorial of Nicaragua and a Counter-Memorial of Colombia. However, the filing by Colombia, on 14 August 2014, of preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the Court and to the admissibility of Nicaragua's Application had the effect of suspending the proceedings on the merits.

It is further recalled that, by a Judgment dated 17 March 2016, the Court found that it had jurisdiction, on the basis of Article XXXI of the Pact of Bogotá, to entertain the First Request put forward by Nicaragua in its Application and that that Request was admissible.

The history of the proceedings may be found in the Annual Report of the Court for 2014-2015 (paras. 150-161), and in press releases Nos. 2015/26 of 9 October 2015 and 2016/9 of 17 March 2016, which are available on the Court's website (www.icj-cij.org).

The full text of the Order of 28 April 2016 will be available shortly in the case file on the Court's website (under "Cases/Contentious Cases").

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 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), 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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