



# INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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## Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2013/6  
11 April 2013

### **The Court adopts Practice Direction IX<sup>quater</sup> for use by States**

THE HAGUE, 11 April 2013. As part of the ongoing review of its procedures and working methods, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has adopted a new practice direction for use by States, Practice Direction IX<sup>quater</sup>, which reads as follows:

#### **“Practice Direction IX<sup>quater</sup>**

1. Having regard to Article 56 of the Rules of Court, any party wishing to present audio-visual or photographic material at the hearings which was not previously included in the case file of the written proceedings shall submit a request to that effect sufficiently in advance of the date on which that party wishes to present that material to permit the Court to take its decision after having obtained the views of the other party.
2. The party in question shall explain in its request why it wishes to present the audio-visual or photographic material at the hearings.
3. A party’s request to present audio-visual or photographic material must be accompanied by information as to the source of the material, the circumstances and date of its making and the extent to which it is available to the public. The party in question must also specify, wherever relevant, the geographic co-ordinates at which that material was taken.
4. The audio-visual or photographic material which the party in question is seeking to present shall be filed in the Registry in five copies. The Registrar shall communicate a copy to the other party and inform the Court accordingly.
5. It shall be for the Court to decide on the request, after considering any views expressed by the other party and taking account of any question relating to the sound administration of justice which might be raised by that request.”

The Court first adopted practice directions for use by States appearing before it in October 2001 (see Press Release No. 2001/32). In January 2009, it revised Practice Directions III and VI and adopted Practice Direction XIII (see Press Release No. 2009/8). Practice directions involve no alteration to the Rules of Court, but are additional thereto. All practice directions are published on the Court's website, under "Basic Documents".

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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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