



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Official visit of the Under-Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, Ms Patricia O'Brien, to the International Court of Justice

THE HAGUE, 26 January 2010. Ms Patricia O'Brien, the Under-Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, paid an official visit today to the seat of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, at the Peace Palace in The Hague. The visit took place at the invitation of the President of the Court, Judge Hisashi Owada.

Ms O'Brien was welcomed upon her arrival by the Registrar of the Court, Mr. Philippe Couvreur, who gave her a short tour of the stately rooms of the Peace Palace, before introducing her to members of the Registry's Legal Department.

She then met privately with President Owada and the Registrar, before being introduced to Members of the Court, with whom views were exchanged regarding co-operation between the Court and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the role of international law in the modern world, the jurisprudence of the ICJ and other issues of mutual interest.

Ms O'Brien underlined the importance of the relationship between the Court and her Office, emphasizing that this relationship "has always been excellent". She assured Members of the Court of the respect her Office and the United Nations Secretariat had "not only for the Court's crucial role in the peaceful settlement of international disputes between States, but also for its major contribution to the development of international law".

A working lunch with Members of the Court, the Registrar and senior Registry officials, was held in Ms. O'Brien's honour.

Ms O'Brien's visit to the ICJ is part of a three-day working tour of international legal organizations based in The Hague, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL). During her visit to The Hague, Ms O'Brien will also meet with officials of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Mayor of the city.

Photographs of the event will be made available free of charge on the website of the Court (www.icj-cij.org).

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