



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

Unofficial

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Sovereignty over Pulau Ligitan and Pulau Sipadan (Indonesia/Malaysia)

The Court will hold public hearings from 3 to 12 June 2002

THE HAGUE, 13 March 2002. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), principal judicial organ of the United Nations, will hold public hearings in the case concerning Sovereignty over Pulau Ligitan and Pulau Sipadan (Indonesia/Malaysia) from Monday 3 to Wednesday 12 June 2002, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, seat of the Court.

History of the proceedings

Indonesia and Malaysia jointly seized the Court on 2 November 1998 of their dispute concerning sovereignty over Pulau Ligitan and Pulau Sipadan, two islands in the Celebes Sea. They did so by notifying the Court of a Special Agreement, which was signed between them on 31 May 1997 at Kuala Lumpur and entered into force on 14 May 1998.

In the Special Agreement, the Parties request the Court “to determine on the basis of the treaties, agreements and any other evidence furnished by [them], whether sovereignty over Pulau Ligitan and Pulau Sipadan belong[s] to the Republic of Indonesia or to Malaysia”. In it, they express the wish to settle their dispute “in the spirit of friendly relations existing between [them] as enunciated in the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia” and declare in advance that they will “accept the Judgment of the Court . . . as final and binding upon them”.

Each of the Parties filed a Memorial, a Counter-Memorial and a Reply within the time-limits fixed by the Court or its President.

The Court rejected an application for permission to intervene filed by the Philippines (see the Judgment of 23 October 2001, Press Release No. 2001/28).

NOTE TO THE PRESS

1. The public hearings will be held in the Great Hall of Justice of the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands. Mobile telephones and beepers are allowed in the courtroom **provided they are turned off or set on silent mode**. Any offending device will be temporarily retained.

2. Members of the Press will be entitled to attend on presentation of a press card. The tables reserved for them are situated on the far left of the public entrance of the courtroom.

3. Photographs may be taken for a few minutes at the opening and at the end of the sittings. Television crews may film, but advance notice should be given to the Information Department (see paragraph 7).

4. In the Press Room, located on the ground floor of the Peace Palace (Room 5), the Court's proceedings will be relayed through a loudspeaker.

5. The verbatim records of the public sittings will be published daily on the Court's website (<http://www.icj-cij.org>).

6. Members of the Press who wish to make telephone calls may use the phone located in the Press Room for collect calls or the public telephones in the Post Office in the basement of the Peace Palace.

7. Mr. Arthur Witteveen, First Secretary of the Court (tel.: + 31 70 302 2336), and Mrs. Laurence Blairon and Mr. Boris Heim, Information Officers (tel.: + 31 70 302 2337), are available to deal with any requests for information and for making arrangements for television coverage.
