



# INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Peace Palace, 2517 KJ The Hague. Tel.(31-70-302 23 23). Cables: Intercourt, The Hague.  
Telefax (31-70-364 99 28). Telex 32323. Internet address : [http:// www.icj-cij.org](http://www.icj-cij.org)

**Communiqué**  
unofficial  
for immediate release

No. 99/52  
8 December 1999

**Nicaragua institutes proceedings against Honduras with regard to  
"legal issues subsisting" between the two States "concerning  
maritime delimitation" in the Caribbean Sea**

THE HAGUE, 8 December 1999. Today, Nicaragua instituted proceedings against Honduras with regard to "legal issues subsisting" between the two States "concerning maritime delimitation" in the Caribbean Sea.

In its Application, Nicaragua states *inter alia* that it has for decades "maintained the position that its maritime Caribbean border with Honduras has not been determined", while Honduras' position is said to be that "there in fact exists a delimitation line that runs straight easterly on the parallel of latitude from the point fixed in [an Arbitral Award of 23 December 1906 made by the King of Spain concerning the land boundary between Nicaragua and Honduras, which was found valid and binding by the International Court of Justice on 18 November 1960] on the mouth of the Coco river". According to Nicaragua, "the position adopted by Honduras . . . has brought repeated confrontations and mutual capture of vessels of both nations in and around the general border area". Nicaragua further states that "diplomatic negotiations have failed".

Nicaragua therefore requests the Court "to determine the course of the single maritime boundary between areas of territorial sea, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone appertaining respectively to Nicaragua and Honduras, in accordance with equitable principles and relevant circumstances recognized by general international law as applicable to such a delimitation of a single maritime boundary".

Nicaragua further indicates that it "reserves the right to claim compensation for interference with fishing vessels of Nicaraguan nationality or vessels licensed by Nicaragua, found to the north of the parallel of latitude 14°59' 08" claimed by Honduras to be the course of the delimitation line". It also reserves "the right to claim compensation for any natural resources that may have been extracted or may be extracted in the future to the south of the line of delimitation that will be fixed by the Judgment of the Court".

As a basis for the Court's jurisdiction, Nicaragua invokes Article XXXI of the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (officially known as the "Pact of Bogotá"), signed on 30 April 1948, to which both Nicaragua and Honduras are parties, as well as the declarations under Article 36, paragraph 2, of the Statute of the Court, by which both States have accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court.

---

The full text of Nicaragua's Application will shortly be available on the Court's website at the following address: <http://www.icj-cij.org>

---

Information Department:

Mr. Arthur Th. Witteveen, First Secretary of the Court (+ 31 70 302 23 36)

Mrs. Laurence Blairon, Information Officer (+ 31 70 302 23 37)

Email address: [information@icj-cij.org](mailto:information@icj-cij.org)