



# INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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## Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2018/31

2 July 2018

### **Arbitral Award of 3 October 1899 (Guyana v. Venezuela)**

#### **Fixing of time-limits for the filing of written pleadings on the question of the jurisdiction of the Court**

THE HAGUE, 2 July 2018. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has decided that the written pleadings in the case concerning the Arbitral Award of 3 October 1899 (Guyana v. Venezuela) must first address the question of the jurisdiction of the Court and fixed the time-limits for the filing of these pleadings.

By an Order dated 19 June 2018, the Court fixed 19 November 2018 and 18 April 2019 as the respective time-limits for the filing of a Memorial by the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and a Counter-Memorial by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Court issued this decision following a meeting held, pursuant to Article 31 of the Rules of Court, by its President, Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, with representatives of the Parties, on 18 June 2018.

At this meeting, Mr. Carl B. Greenidge, the Agent of Guyana, indicated that his Government wished to have at its disposal a period of nine months for the preparation of its Memorial.

Ms Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, Vice-President of Venezuela, stated that her Government “consider[ed] that the Court manifestly lack[ed] jurisdiction and that it ha[d] decided not to take part in the proceedings”. She handed to the President of the Court a letter, dated 18 June 2018, from Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros, President of Venezuela, in which he pointed out, in particular, that “there [was] no basis for the jurisdiction of the Court” and that Venezuela “[would] not participate in the proceedings”.

In response to the statement of the Vice-President of Venezuela, the representatives of Guyana reiterated that their Government wished to proceed with the case.

In its Order, the Court pointed out that, in the circumstances of the case, it must first resolve the question of its jurisdiction and that “this question should accordingly be separately determined before any proceedings on the merits”.

The Order notes that “the possibility for Venezuela of availing itself of its procedural rights as a Party to the case is preserved”.

The subsequent procedure has been reserved for further decision.

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### **History of the proceedings**

The history of the proceedings can be found in Press Release No. 2018/17, available on the Court's website.

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The full text of the Order made on 19 June 2018 will soon be available on the Court's website.

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Note: The Court's press releases do not constitute official 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 Court (ICC, the only permanent international criminal court, which was established by treaty and 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), the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT, mandated to take over residual functions from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda), the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office (an ad hoc judicial institution which has its seat in The Hague), 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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