



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2022/21

22 June 2022

Tribute to Ricardo Joaquín Alfaro, former judge and former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice

THE HAGUE, 22 June 2022. On Tuesday 21 June 2022, an event was held in the Great Hall of Justice of the Peace Palace to pay tribute to Ricardo Joaquín Alfaro, former judge and former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice whose 140th birthday will be celebrated in August of this year.

The commemorative event was organized jointly by the Court and the Embassy of the Republic of Panama to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It was attended by ICJ judges, ambassadors of Latin American countries and high-level representatives of international organizations.

Speeches were delivered by H.E. Judge Kirill Gevorgian, Vice-President of the Court; H.E. Ms Elizabeth Ward Neiman, Ambassador of Panama to the Netherlands; H.E. Mr. Philippe Gautier, Registrar of the Court; H.E. Ms Erika Mouyens, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Panama (pre-recorded video message); Mr. Marcelo Kohen, Secretary-General of the Institute of International Law; and Mr. Ricardo Alfaro Arosemena, President of the Ricardo J. Alfaro Foundation and grandson of Dr. Alfaro (pre-recorded video message).

At the end of the ceremony, the Ambassador of Panama presented the Court with a sculpture of a harpy eagle (*águila arpía*), Panama's national bird, carved from cocobolo, a tropical rosewood.

Dr. Alfaro was born in Panama on 20 August 1882. He was awarded a Doctor of Laws and Political Sciences from the National Faculty of Panama and a Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* from the University of Southern California. He was elected Vice-President of the Republic of Panama in 1928, and later served as President of the Republic from 1931 to 1932 and as Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1945 to 1947. He headed missions for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration for ten Latin-American States, represented Panama at the 1945 San Francisco Conference and participated in the drafting of the Spanish text of the United Nations Charter. He became a Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 1929 and of the International Court of Justice in 1959. He also served as the ICJ's Vice-President from 1961 until his retirement in 1964. Ricardo Joaquín Alfaro passed away in February 1971, at the age of 88.

Note: The Court's press releases are prepared by its Registry for information purposes only and do not constitute official documents.

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 Court is composed of 15 judges elected for a nine-year term by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations. The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). The Court has a twofold role: first, to settle, in accordance with international law, through judgments which have binding force and are without appeal for the parties concerned, legal disputes submitted to it by States; and, second, to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by duly authorized United Nations organs and agencies of the system.

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