



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Pulp Mills on the River Uruguay
(Argentina v. Uruguay)

Fixing of time-limits for the filing of the initial pleadings

THE HAGUE, 17 July 2006. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has fixed time-limits for the filing of initial pleadings in the case concerning Pulp Mills on the River Uruguay (Argentina v. Uruguay).

In its Order dated 13 July 2006, the Court fixed 15 January 2007 as the time-limit for the filing of a Memorial by Argentina and 20 July 2007 as the time-limit for the filing of a Counter-Memorial by Uruguay.

The Court adopted the Order taking account of the views of the Parties as expressed by their Agents at a meeting which the President of the Court held with them on 13 July 2006.

The subsequent procedure has been reserved for further decision.

History of the proceedings

On 4 May 2006 Argentina filed an Application instituting proceedings against Uruguay concerning alleged breaches by Uruguay of obligations incumbent upon it under the Statute of the River Uruguay, a treaty signed by the two States on 26 February 1975 (hereinafter “the 1975 Statute”), with a view to establishing the joint machinery necessary for the optimum and rational utilization of that part of the river which constitutes their joint boundary.

In its Application Argentina charges Uruguay with having unilaterally authorized the construction of two pulp mills on the River Uruguay without complying with the obligatory prior notification and consultation procedure. Argentina claims that these mills will damage the environment of the river and areas affected by it.

As basis for the Court’s jurisdiction, Argentina cites the first paragraph of Article 60 of the 1975 Statute, which provides that any dispute concerning the interpretation or application of the Statute which cannot be settled by direct negotiations may be submitted by either party to the Court.

Argentina’s Application was accompanied by a request for the indication of provisional measures requiring Uruguay, first, to suspend forthwith the authorizations for the construction of the mills and halt building work on them pending a final decision by the Court and, second, to co-operate with Argentina in the protection and preservation of the aquatic environment of the

River Uruguay, to refrain from taking any further unilateral action with respect to the construction of the mills which does not comply with the 1975 Statute, as well as refraining from any other action which might aggravate the dispute or render its settlement more difficult.

Public hearings were held on 8 and 9 June 2006 on the request for the indication of provisional measures, and on 13 July 2006, at a public sitting, the President of the Court read the Order, in which the Court found, by 14 votes to 1, that the circumstances, as they currently presented themselves to the Court, were not such as to require the exercise of its power under Article 41 of the Statute to indicate provisional measures.

The full text of the Court's Order fixing time-limits will be available shortly on the Court's website.

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