



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Peace Palace, 2517 KJ The Hague. Tel: +31 (0)70 302 23 23. Cables: Intercourt,
The Hague. Fax: +31 (0)70 364 99 28. Telex: 32323. E-mail address:
mail@icj-cij.org. Internet address: <http://www.icj-cij.org>.

Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2006/40
29 November 2006

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

Uruguay submits a request for the indication of provisional measures

Public hearings to open on Monday 18 December 2006

THE HAGUE, 29 November 2006. Today, Uruguay submitted a request to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), principal judicial organ of the United Nations, for the indication of provisional measures in the case concerning Pulp Mills on the River Uruguay (Argentina v. Uruguay).

The hearings concerning this request will open on Monday 18 December 2006. They will be held in the Great Hall of Justice of the Peace Palace in The Hague, seat of the Court. The detailed schedule for the hearings will be published at a later date.

In its request for the indication of provisional measures, Uruguay states that since 20 November 2006, “[o]rganized groups of Argentine citizens have blockaded a vital international bridge over the Uruguay river, shutting off commercial and tourist travel from Argentina to Uruguay”, and intend to do so “through the end of February 2007”. Uruguay declares that these blockades “will deprive [it] of hundreds of millions of dollars in foregone trade and tourism revenue”.

Furthermore, Uruguay contends that the Government of Argentina “has not taken any action against the . . . blockade” and expresses fears that Argentina “has no intention to use the means at its disposal as a sovereign State to stop it”.

Uruguay asserts that “the stated purpose of the blockade is to compel [it] to accede to Argentina’s demand that it permanently ends construction of the Botnia cellulose plant . . . and to prevent the plant from ever coming into operation”. Uruguay argues that, by doing so, Argentina is trying to achieve the same objectives that it is pursuing before the Court in the case concerning Pulp Mills on the River Uruguay. Uruguay further claims that Argentina’s alleged lack of action “grievously and irreparably harms [its] rights” under the Statute of the River Uruguay (a treaty signed by Argentina and Uruguay in 1975) “to a judicial resolution of the Parties’ conflicting claims with regard to the Botnia plant”.

Uruguay also states that “Argentina’s conduct indisputably aggravates the existing dispute, and thus openly disregards the Order issued to the Parties by the Court on 13 July 2006 ‘to refrain from any actions which might render more difficult the resolution of the present dispute’”.

Uruguay indicates that it has “repeatedly protested the blockades in public statements and diplomatic correspondence”, but that “Argentina’s responses have been either to ignore or to reject Uruguay’s protests”. Uruguay submits that “the indication by the Court of provisional measures is therefore urgently needed ‘with a view to preventing the aggravation or extension of the dispute’”.

For these reasons Uruguay requests that the Court order the following provisional measures:

“While awaiting the final Judgment of the Court, Argentina:

- (i) Shall take all reasonable and appropriate steps at its disposal to prevent or end the interruption of transit between Uruguay and Argentina, including the blockading of bridges and roads between the two States;
- (ii) Shall abstain from any measure that might aggravate, extend or make more difficult the settlement of this dispute; and
- (iii) Shall abstain from any other measure that might prejudice the rights of Uruguay in dispute before the Court.”

In the final paragraph of its request for provisional measures Uruguay indicates its “strong preference that this matter be resolved diplomatically and amicably between the two Parties”. It concludes that it “would be pleased to withdraw [its] request”, if Argentina would commit itself “to end[ing] the current blockade and prevent any further blockades”.

History of the proceedings

The history of the proceedings can be found in Press Release No. 2006/29 dated 17 July 2006 available on the Court’s website at (www.icj-cij.org).

The full text of the request made by Uruguay for the indication of provisional measures will soon be available on the Court’s website at (www.icj-cij.org).

Information Department:

Mrs. Laurence Blairon, Secretary of the Court, Head of the Department (+31 70 302 23 36)

Messrs. Boris Heim and Maxime Schouppe, Information Officers (+31 70 302 23 37)

Ms Joanne Moore, Assistant Information Officer (+31 70 302 23 94)

E-mail address: information@icj-cij.org