



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

Unofficial

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Certain Iranian Assets (Islamic Republic of Iran v. United States of America)

Fixing of the time-limit for the filing by the Islamic Republic of Iran of a written statement of its observations and submissions on the preliminary objections raised by the United States of America

THE HAGUE, 11 May 2017. By an Order dated 2 May 2017, the President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has fixed the time-limit within which the Islamic Republic of Iran (hereinafter “Iran”) may present a written statement of its observations and submissions on the preliminary objections raised by the United States of America (hereinafter the “United States”) in the case concerning Certain Iranian Assets (Islamic Republic of Iran v. United States of America).

In his Order, the President recalls that, on 1 May 2017, the United States filed preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the Court and the admissibility of the Application. In accordance with Article 79, paragraph 5, of the Rules of Court, the proceedings on the merits have therefore been suspended. Pursuant to that same provision, the President, by the said Order, has fixed 1 September 2017 as the time-limit within which Iran may present a written statement of its observations and submissions on the preliminary objections raised by the United States. It is explained in the Order that that date has been fixed taking account in particular of Practice Direction V, according to which the time-limit for the presentation of such a written statement shall generally not exceed four months from the date of the filing of preliminary objections.

The subsequent procedure has been reserved for further decision.

History of the proceedings

On 14 June 2016, Iran instituted proceedings before the Court against the United States with regard to a dispute concerning “violations by the Government of the United States of America of the Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights between Iran and the United States of America which was signed in Tehran on 15 August 1955 and entered into force on 16 June 1957” (see Press Release No. 2016/19 of 15 June 2016).

By an Order dated 1 July 2016, the Court fixed 1 February 2017 and 1 September 2017 as the respective time-limits for the filing of a Memorial by Iran and a Counter-Memorial by the United States (see Press Release No. 2016/24 of 14 July 2016).

The Memorial of Iran was filed within the time-limit thus fixed.

Note: The Court's press releases 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 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 Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY, an ad hoc court created by the Security Council), the International Criminal Court (ICC, the first permanent international criminal court, established by treaty, which 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), 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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