



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Project (Hungary/Slovakia)

The Court places on record the discontinuance by Slovakia of the procedure begun by means of its Request for an additional judgment

THE HAGUE, 21 July 2017. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, placed on record the discontinuance by the Slovak Republic of the procedure begun by means of its Request for an additional judgment filed on 3 September 1998 in the case concerning the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Project (Hungary/Slovakia).

It is recalled that, on 2 July 1993, Hungary and Slovakia jointly notified the Court of a Special Agreement, signed on 7 April 1993, for the submission to the Court of certain issues arising out of differences regarding the implementation and the termination of the Treaty of 16 September 1977 on the construction and operation of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros barrage system (see ICJ Annual Report 1992-1993 on the Court's website, paras. 136 to 139).

In its Judgment of 25 September 1997, the Court, having ruled on the issues submitted by the Parties, called upon both States to negotiate in good faith in order to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the 1977 Treaty, which it declared was still in force, while taking account of the factual situation that had developed since 1989.

On 3 September 1998, Slovakia filed in the Registry of the Court a Request for an additional judgment in the case. Such an additional judgment was necessary, according to Slovakia, because of the unwillingness of Hungary to implement the Judgment delivered by the Court in that case on 25 September 1997 (see Press Release No. 98/28 of 3 September 1998). Hungary filed a written statement of its position on the Request for an additional judgment made by Slovakia within the time-limit of 7 December 1998 fixed by the President of the Court (see Press Release No. 98/31 of 7 October 1998). The Parties have subsequently resumed negotiations and have informed the Court on a regular basis of the progress made.

By a letter from the Agent of Slovakia dated 30 June 2017, the Slovak Government requested that the Court “place on record the discontinuance of the proceedings [instituted by means of the Request for an additional judgment in the case] and . . . direct the removal of the case from the List”. In a letter dated 12 July 2017, the Agent of Hungary stated that his Government “d[id] not oppose the discontinuance of the proceedings instituted by means of the Request of Slovakia of 3 September 1998 for an additional judgment”.

By a letter to both Agents dated 18 July 2017, the Court communicated its decision to place on record the discontinuance of the procedure begun by means of Slovakia's Request and informed them that it had taken note that both Parties reserved their respective right under Article 5, paragraph 3, of the Special Agreement of 7 April 1993 between Hungary and Slovakia to request the Court to render an additional judgment to determine the modalities for executing its Judgment of 25 September 1997.

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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