



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2008/42

4 December 2008

**Application of the International Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
(Georgia v. Russian Federation)**

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

THE HAGUE, 4 December 2008. The President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, has fixed time-limits for the filing of the initial pleadings in the case concerning Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia v. Russian Federation).

By an Order of 2 December 2008, Judge Rosalyn Higgins fixed 2 September 2009 as the time-limit for the filing of a Memorial by Georgia and 2 July 2010 as the time-limit for the filing of a Counter-Memorial by the Russian Federation.

The President of the Court fixed these time-limits taking account of the agreement of the Parties. The subsequent procedure has been reserved for further decision.

History of the proceedings

On 12 August 2008, Georgia filed an Application instituting proceedings against the Russian Federation for “serious violations of its fundamental obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination” (hereinafter “CERD”). On 14 August 2008, Georgia, referring to Article 41 of the Statute of the Court and to Articles 73, 74 and 75 of the Rules of Court, submitted a request for the indication of provisional measures in order “to preserve [its] rights under CERD to protect its citizens against violent discriminatory acts by Russian armed forces, acting in concert with separatist militia and foreign mercenaries”.

On 15 August 2008, acting in accordance with the powers conferred upon her by Article 74, paragraph 4, of the Rules of Court, Judge Rosalyn Higgins, President of the International Court of Justice, addressed an urgent communication to the Parties calling upon them “to act in such a way as will enable any order the Court may take on the request for provisional measures to have its appropriate effects”.

On 25 August 2008, Georgia, referring to “the rapidly changing circumstances in Abkhazia and South Ossetia”, submitted an amended request for the indication of provisional measures. Public hearings, in the presence of both Parties, were held from 8 to 10 September 2008.

On 15 October 2008, the Court issued its Order on the request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by Georgia. In that Order, the Court indicated inter alia that both Parties should refrain from any act of racial discrimination and from sponsoring, defending or supporting such acts; that they should facilitate humanitarian assistance; and that they should refrain from any action which might prejudice the respective rights of the Parties or might aggravate or extend the dispute.

The full text of the Order by the President of the Court will be available shortly on the Court's website (www.icj-cij.org). However, written pleadings remain confidential until the Court decides to make them accessible to the public, generally at the opening of the oral proceedings.

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