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Communique 60/7
(unofficial)

The following information from the Registry of the International Court of Justice is communicated to the Press:

The Court held a public sitting on Tuesday, 26 April 1960 at 10.30 a.m. at the Peace Palace at The Hague.

A recently elected Member of the Court, Dr. Ricardo J. Alfaro (Panama) made the solemn declaration provided for in Article 20 of the Statute of the Court and was duly installed.

The Court then began the hearing of oral statements in connection with a request for an Advisory Opinion submitted to it by the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization.

The President recalled that the opinion of the Court was sought on the following question :-

"Is the Maritime Safety Committee of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, which was elected on 15 January 1959, constituted in accordance with the Convention for the Establishment of the Organization?"

By an Order of 5 August 1959 a time limit expiring on 5 December 1959 had been fixed for the submission of written statements by States considered as likely to be able to furnish information on the question, namely the States members of the Organization. Written statements were received from France, Liberia, the United States of America, the Republic of China, Panama, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Norway, the Netherlands and India.

The desire to be heard by the Court having subsequently been expressed by the Governments of Italy, Liberia, the Netherlands, Norway, Panama, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, the President at the hearing called first upon the representative of Liberia and stated that the other representatives would be called upon in the following order : Panama, United States of America, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom.

The States participating in the oral proceedings are represented before the Court as follows :-

Italy:

Professor Riccardo Monaco, Chief of the Department of Contentious Matters of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Liberia:

The Honourable Rocheforte L. Weeks, (former Assistant Attorney-General of Liberia) now President of the University of Liberia.

The Honourable Edward R. Moore, Assistant Attorney-General of Liberia.

Netherlands.....

Netherlands:

Mr. W. Riphagen, Legal Adviser of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Norway:

Mr. Finn Seyersted, Director of Legal Affairs in the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Panama:

Dr. Octavio Fábrega, President of the National Council of Foreign Affairs, in the capacity of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary on Special Mission.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

Mr. F.A. Vallat, Deputy Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office, assisted by Mr. D. Johnson.

United States of America:

Mr. Eric H. Hager, Legal Adviser of the Department of State, assisted by Mrs. M.M. Fleming, Assistant to the Legal Adviser of the Department of State.

Mr. Rocheforte L. Weeks and Mr. Edward R. Moore began the statement on behalf of the Liberian Government. Mr. Weeks will continue this statement at the hearing to be held by the Court on Wednesday, 27 April at 10.30 a.m.

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Note for representatives of the Press with regard to
communiqués issued during the hearings in the matter of the
Constitution of the Maritime Safety Committee

Since representatives of the Press can be present at each sitting and obtain at the end of each day the verbatim record of the day's proceedings, the Registry does not propose to publish during the hearing, the customary communiqués which merely indicate the names of the speakers and the date of the next hearing. However, an exception will be made whenever the next hearing is fixed for a date other than the following day.

The Hague, 26 April 1960.