



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Telex 32323

Communiqué

*unofficial
for immediate release*

No. 80/7
10 June 1980

The World Health Organization requests an advisory opinion
of the International Court of Justice

The following information is made available to the Press by the Registry of the International Court of Justice:

On 28 May 1980 the Court received from the Assembly of the World Health Organization a request for an advisory opinion on the following questions, relating to the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean:

1. Are the negotiation and notice provisions of section 37 of the Agreement of 25 March 1951 between the World Health Organization and Egypt applicable in the event that either party to the agreement wishes to have the regional office transferred from the territory of Egypt?

2. If so, what would be the legal responsibilities of both the World Health Organization and Egypt, with regard to the regional office in Alexandria, during the two-year period between notice and termination of the Agreement?

On 6 June 1980 the President of the Court made an Order fixing 1 September 1980 as the time-limit for the submission of written statements by any State or international organization considered as likely to be able to furnish information on these questions.

The World Health Organization and the States members of the WHO which are entitled to appear before the Court have been informed that, in the event of their being able to provide relevant information, the Court will be prepared to receive their written statements within the above-mentioned time-limit.

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This is the first occasion on which the WHO has requested the Court to give an advisory opinion.

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The text of Section 37 of the Agreement of 25 March 1951 between the WHO and Egypt is as follows:

Section 37. The present Agreement may be revised at the request of either party. In this event the two parties shall consult each other concerning the modifications to be made in its provisions. If the negotiations do not result in an understanding within one year, the present Agreement may be denounced by either party giving two years' notice."

The following is the text of the two main articles of the Court's Statute governing the procedure on requests for advisory opinions:

"Article 65

1. The Court may give an advisory opinion on any legal question at the request of whatever body may be authorized by or in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to make such a request.

2. Questions upon which the advisory opinion of the Court is asked shall be laid before the Court by means of a written request containing an exact statement of the question upon which an opinion is required, and accompanied by all documents likely to throw light upon the question.

Article 66

1. The Registrar shall forthwith give notice of the request for an advisory opinion to all States entitled to appear before the Court.

2. The Registrar shall also, by means of a special and direct communication, notify any State entitled to appear before the Court or international organization considered by the Court, or, should it not be sitting, by the President, as likely to be able to furnish information on the question, that the Court will be prepared to receive, within a time-limit to be fixed by the President, written statements, or to hear, at a public sitting to be held for the purpose, oral statements relating to the question.

3. Should any such State entitled to appear before the Court have failed to receive the special communication referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article, such State may express a desire to submit a written statement or to be heard; and the Court will decide.

4. States and organizations having presented written or oral statements or both shall be permitted to comment on the statements made by other States or organizations in the form, to the extent, and within the time-limits which the Court, or, should it not be sitting, the President, shall decide in each particular case. Accordingly, the Registrar shall in due time communicate any such written statements to States and organizations having submitted similar statements."