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Reactions to the Judgment of 22 December 1986 in the case concerning
the Frontier Dispute (Burkina Faso/Republic of Mali)

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

Following the Judgment delivered on 22 December 1986 by the Chamber
which was constituted by the International Court of Justice in the case
concerning the Frontier Dispute (Burkina Faso/Republic of Mali), the
President of Burkina Faso, Captain Thomas Sankara, and the President of
the Republic of Mali, General Moussa Traoré, sent to the President of the
Chamber, Judge Mohammed Bedjaoui, messages which reiterate their
acceptance of the decision and which undertake to facilitate its
implementation on the ground.

The texts of the messages concerned, dated respectively
24 December 1986 and 10 January 1987, are annexed hereto.

Message sent on 24 December 1986 by Captain Thomas Sankara,
President of Burkina Faso, to Judge Mohammed Bedjaoui,
President of the Chamber constituted to deal with the
case concerning the Frontier Dispute between
Burkina Faso and Mali

[Translation]

Mr. President,

When the Governments of Burkina Faso and the Republic of Mali, in response to their peoples' earnest desire for peace and friendship, submitted to your distinguished institution the frontier dispute in which their two countries had become engaged, they were pinning more than hope on the deliberations of the International Court of Justice.

Although, of course, expecting that this international institution, to which both States had accorded their recognition and acceptance, would lay down the law in such a way as to decide between two opposing convictions that were apparently irreconcilable, in that each defended the sovereignty of a State, they were also fervently hoping that the Court would contribute to the reconciliation of two peoples linked by fraternal bonds, which history and geography have brought together but which international imperialism, by its sordid manoeuvres, had been able momentarily to put asunder.

Forty months have gone by since that time, and history has amply borne out the conviction that the two Governments were quite right to conclude the historic compromis of September 1983, as it offered new prospects of genuine peace to the peoples of Mali and Burkina Faso. The war of Christmas 1985 taught wisdom to the Parties and sharpened their hunger for friendship, fraternity and peace.

Mr. President,

The Chamber over which you have presided has not betrayed the trust and hope which the people of Burkina Faso placed in it, and its Judgment not only reflects the earnestness with which you took to heart the magnitude of the task entrusted to you, but also bears witness to your unwavering determination to assist two fraternal peoples to turn over a sad page in their history and engage themselves resolutely in the noble combat worthy to be waged - the struggle for the economic independence and welfare of peoples. At this historic moment, the entire people of Burkina Faso, its National Council of the Revolution and its Revolutionary Government join with me in offering their sincere thanks to all the judges of the International Court of Justice for their contribution to reconciliation between the peoples of Burkina Faso and the Republic of Mali.

I further avail myself of this opportunity to pay tribute to you personally, Mr. President, for the unstinting efforts you have put forth in order to bring the proceedings to this conclusion; the quality of the achievement redounds to your credit.

Mr. President,

I can assure you that, faithful to the commitments entered into at the time of the historic compromis of September 1983, my country, Burkina Faso, accepts the Judgment delivered by the Court and undertakes to facilitate all the procedures required for its implementation. I would ask you to be so good as to reassure the international community regarding our acceptance of that decision.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurance of my highest, fraternal consideration.

The Fatherland or Death - we shall overcome.

(Signed): Captain Thomas Sankara
President of the National Council of the Revolution
President of the Faso
Head of the Government

Message sent on 10 January 1987 to the President of the Chamber
by the President of the Republic of Mali

[Translation]

Dear President,

On 16 September 1983 the Governments of Burkina Faso and Mali freely chose, by a Special Agreement signed for the purpose, to submit to a Chamber of the International Court of Justice the frontier dispute between our two countries. In so doing the Malian people and its leaders, who were already aware of the relevant provisions of Article 94, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, stated expressly that they accepted the Chamber's Judgment as final and binding. That Judgment, delivered on 22 December 1986 by the Chamber of which you were President, has been greeted in Mali as a proclamation of the law and of the well-known adherence of the Malian people to the pacific settlement of all disputes. Hence the Government of Mali, in taking formal note of this verdict of the Chamber, bows to the decision of the International Court of Justice and assures you that, faithful to the ideals of the Malian people, it will observe this undertaking also. The Government of Mali will spare no effort to ensure that, through the force of law, the fraternal peoples of Burkina Faso and Mali, who have in common an abundant historical inheritance, may make of our frontier areas zones of development and peace. This course of action, which reflects the standing policy of the Malian people to forgo all or part of its sovereignty if African unity so requires, will place on record this Judgment of 22 December 1986 as a historical example for Africa and for the international community. This will be the most fitting recompense for the titanic and praiseworthy efforts which your colleagues of the Chamber, all those who have worked alongside you, and you yourself, Mr. President, have made over a period of more than 40 months. It will certainly also be the best way of thanking the Heads of State of friendly countries and the chief officials of international organizations - all these men of peace who have been unstinting in their efforts to ensure that this dispute is settled by law.

I assure you of the complete willingness of the Government of Mali to facilitate the task of the experts, and reiterate my thanks for your personal endeavours and our congratulations on the service rendered to Africa by one of its distinguished sons.

General Moussa Traoré