



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Maritime Delimitation and Territorial Questions between Qatar and Bahrain (Qatar v. Bahrain)

Conclusion of the public hearings on the merits of the dispute

Court ready to consider its Judgment

THE HAGUE, 29 June 2000. The public hearings in the case concerning Maritime Delimitation and Territorial Questions between Qatar and Bahrain (Qatar v. Bahrain), the longest in the history of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), were concluded today. Members of the Court will now start their deliberations.

During the hearings, which started on 29 May 2000, the delegation of Qatar was led by H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Abdulatif Al-Muslemani, Secretary-General of the Cabinet, Agent and Counsel, and the delegation of Bahrain by H.E. Mr. Jawad Salim Al-Arayed, Minister of State, as Agent.

The Court's Judgment, binding and without appeal, will be delivered in four to six months' time. It will be read at a public hearing on a date to be announced in a forthcoming press release.

Parties' submissions

The Parties have presented the following submissions to the Court at the end of the oral proceedings.

For Qatar:

"The State of Qatar respectfully requests the Court, rejecting all contrary claims and submissions:

- I. To adjudge and declare in accordance with international law:
 - A. (1) that the State of Qatar has sovereignty over the Hawar Islands;
 - (2) that Dibal and Qit'at Jaradah shoals are low-tide elevations which are under Qatar's sovereignty;
 - B. (1) that the State of Bahrain has no sovereignty over the island of Janan;
 - (2) that the State of Bahrain has no sovereignty over Zubarah;
 - (3) that any claim by Bahrain concerning archipelagic baselines and areas for fishing for pearls and swimming fish would be irrelevant for the purpose of maritime delimitation in the present case;
- II. To draw a single maritime boundary between the maritime areas of seabed, subsoil and superjacent waters appertaining respectively to the State of Qatar and the State of Bahrain on the basis that Zubarah, the Hawar Islands and the island of Janan appertain to the State of Qatar and not to the State of Bahrain, that boundary

starting from point 2 of the delimitation agreement concluded between Bahrain and Iran in 1971 (51° 05' 54" E and 27° 02' 47" N), thence proceeding in a southerly direction up to BLV (50° 57' 30" E and 26° 33' 35" N), then following the line of the British decision of 23 December 1947 up to NSLB (50° 49' 48" E and 26° 21' 24" N) and up to point L (50° 43' 00" E and 25° 47' 27" N), thence proceeding to point S1 of the delimitation agreement concluded by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia in 1958 (50° 31' 45" E and 25° 35' 38" N)."

For Bahrain:

"*May it please the Court*, rejecting all contrary claims and submissions, to adjudge and declare that:

- (1) Bahrain is sovereign over Zubarah.
- (2) Bahrain is sovereign over the Hawar Islands, including Janan and Hadd Janan.

In view of Bahrain's sovereignty over all the insular and other features, including Fasht ad Dibal and Qit'at Jaradah, comprising the Bahraini archipelago, the maritime boundary between Bahrain and Qatar is as described in Part Two of Bahrain's Memorial."

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Internal Judicial Practice of the Court with respect to deliberations

In accordance with the Internal Judicial Practice of the Court with respect to deliberations, the judges will shortly hold a preliminary discussion, at which the President will outline the issues which require discussion and a decision by the Court.

Each judge will then prepare a written Note setting out his views on the case. Each Note will be distributed to the other judges. A full deliberation will be held afterwards, at the end of which, on the basis of the views expressed, a drafting committee will be chosen by secret ballot. That committee will consist of two judges holding the majority view of the Court, together with the President, if he shares that view.

The draft text will go through two readings during which amendments submitted by the judges will be considered. Meanwhile, judges who wish to do so may prepare a separate or dissenting opinion.

The final vote will be taken after adoption of the final text of the Judgment in the second reading.

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NOTE FOR THE PRESS

The full transcripts of the hearings of 29 May-29 June 2000 can be found on the Court's website at the following address: <http://www.icj-cij.org>

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