



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Peace Palace, 2517 KJ The Hague. Tel: +31 (0)70 302 23 23. Cables: Intercourt,
The Hague. Fax: +31 (0)70 364 99 28. Telex: 32323. E-mail address:
mail@icj-cij.org. Internet address: <http://www.icj-cij.org>.

Press Release

Unofficial

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Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (request for advisory opinion)

Filing of written statements

THE HAGUE, 3 February 2004. The United Nations, 44 of its Member States, Palestine, the League of Arab States and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference have filed written statements within the time-limit fixed by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by an Order of 19 December 2004 in the case concerning Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (request for advisory opinion).

The time-limit fixed was 30 January 2004 (see Press Release 2003/44).

The United Nations Member States which have transmitted a written statement are the following (in order of receipt): Guinea, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Cameroon, the Russian Federation, Australia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Canada, Syria, Switzerland, Israel, Yemen, United States of America, Morocco, Indonesia, France, Italy, Sudan, South Africa, Germany, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, the Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland (on its own behalf and, separately, on behalf of the European Union), Cyprus, Brazil, Namibia, Malta, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Cuba, Sweden, Spain, Belgium, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Senegal and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

History of the proceedings

On 8 December 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution A/RES/ES-10/14 (A/ES-10/L.16) in which, referring to Article 65 of the Statute of the Court, it requested the International Court of Justice to "urgently render an advisory opinion on the following question:

What are the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, as described in the report of the Secretary-General, considering the rules and principles of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions?"

The request for an advisory opinion was transmitted to the Court by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in a letter dated 8 December 2003 which was received in the Registry on 10 December 2003.

On 19 December 2003 the Court made an Order organizing the proceedings (see Press Release 2003/44). It stated that the United Nations and its Member States, as well as Palestine, were likely to furnish information on all aspects raised by the question submitted to the Court and fixed 30 January 2004 as the time-limit within which they could submit written statements on the question. It further fixed 23 February 2004 as the date for the opening of those hearings, and invited the United Nations and its Member States, as well as Palestine, to inform the Court's Registry, by 13 February 2004 at the latest, if they intended to take part in the above-mentioned hearings.

By two separate letters of 15 January 2004 and 19 January 2004 respectively (see Press Releases 2004/1 and 2004/2), the Registry further informed the League of Arab States and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference that the Court had agreed to their request to participate in the proceedings and that accordingly they were authorized to submit to the Court a written statement within the time-limit of 30 January 2004 and to participate in the hearings.

The text of the written statements is confidential at this stage of the proceedings. Should the Court decide, pursuant to Article 106 of its Rules, to make the written statements accessible to the public, the text of these statements (without any documents annexed to them) will be placed on the Court's website (www.icj-cij.org) at the opening of the oral proceedings or at a later stage, depending on the circumstances.

Information Department:

Mr. Arthur Witteveen, First Secretary of the Court (tel: + 31 70 302 23 36)

Mrs. Laurence Blairon and Mr. Boris Heim, Information Officers (tel: + 31 70 302 23 37)

E-mail address: information@icj-cij.org