



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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Press Release

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Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Azerbaijan v. Armenia)

Preliminary objections raised by Armenia

Conclusion of the public hearings held from Monday 22 to Friday 26 April 2024

THE HAGUE, 26 April 2024. The public hearings on the preliminary objections raised by Armenia in the case concerning *Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Azerbaijan v. Armenia)* concluded today.

During the hearings, which opened on Monday 22 April 2024, the delegation of Armenia was led by HE Mr Yeghishe Kirakosyan, Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters, as Agent. The delegation of Azerbaijan was led by HE Mr Elnur Mammadov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as Agent.

At the end of the hearings, the following submissions were read out to the Court:

For Armenia:

“On the basis of its written and oral submissions, the Republic of Armenia respectfully requests that the Court:

- a. Uphold the preliminary objection raised by the Republic of Armenia concerning the jurisdiction *ratione temporis* of the Court, and adjudge and declare that it lacks jurisdiction with respect to Azerbaijan’s claims and contentions concerning events that transpired prior to the entry into force of the CERD as between the Parties on 15 September 1996;
- b. In the alternative, uphold the preliminary objection raised by the Republic of Armenia concerning the admissibility of the claims, and adjudge and declare that Azerbaijan’s claims and contentions concerning events that transpired prior to the entry into force of the CERD as between the Parties on 15 September 1996 are inadmissible;
- c. Uphold the preliminary objection raised by the Republic of Armenia concerning the jurisdiction *ratione materiae* of the Court, and adjudge and declare that it lacks

jurisdiction with respect to Azerbaijan’s claims and contentions concerning the alleged placement of landmines and booby traps; and

- d. Uphold the preliminary objection raised by the Republic of Armenia concerning the jurisdiction *ratione materiae* of the Court, and adjudge and declare that it lacks jurisdiction with respect to Azerbaijan’s claims and contentions concerning alleged environmental harm.”

For Azerbaijan:

“The Republic of Azerbaijan requests that the Court:

1. dismiss each of the preliminary objections that Armenia sets forth in its final submission of 24 April 2024 on the ground that none of them is a valid objection to the Court’s jurisdiction or to the admissibility of Azerbaijan’s claims; and
2. in the alternative, dismiss each of those preliminary objections on the ground that each raises issues that should be deferred to the hearing on the merits.”

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The Court will now begin its deliberation.

The Court’s decision on the preliminary objections will be delivered at a public sitting, the date of which will be announced in due course.

History of the proceedings

On 23 September 2021, Azerbaijan instituted proceedings against Armenia concerning alleged violations of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (see press release No. [2021/21](#)). On 21 April 2023, Armenia raised preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the Court and the admissibility of the Application and, in accordance with Article 79*bis*, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Court, the proceedings on the merits were therefore suspended, pending a decision of the Court on those objections (see press release No. [2023/23](#)).

By an [Order](#) dated 25 April 2023, the President of the Court fixed 21 August 2023 as the time-limit within which Azerbaijan might present a written statement of its observations and submissions on the preliminary objections. Azerbaijan submitted its statement within that time-limit.

Pursuant to Article 53, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Court, after ascertaining the views of the Parties, the Court decided that the texts of the preliminary objections of Armenia and the written observations of Azerbaijan would be made accessible to the public (on the [case page](#) on the website of the Court).

Earlier [press releases](#) relating to this case are available on the Court’s website.

The verbatim records of the hearings, including the lists of participating delegations, are also available on the [case page](#) on the Court's website. High-resolution video clips and still photos produced by the Registry during the hearings are available free of charge and free of copyright for editorial, non-commercial use, on the [Multimedia page](#) of the website.

Note: The Court's press releases are prepared by its Registry for information purposes only and do not constitute official documents.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. It was established by the United Nations Charter in June 1945 and began its activities in April 1946. The Court is composed of 15 judges elected for a nine-year term by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations. The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). The Court has a twofold role: first, to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States; and, second, to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by duly authorized United Nations organs and agencies of the system.

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