

The following information from the Registry of the International Court has been communicated to the Press:

To-day, May 10th, 1954, the International Court of Justice held two public sittings to commence its examination of the preliminary question raised by the Italian Government in the case concerning Monetary Gold looted from Rome in 1943. This case was instituted by the Italian Government against the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The sitting was opened under the Presidency of Sir Arnold McNair, President, who announced that one of the Members of the Court, M. Alvarez, was prevented by ill-health from taking part, at that moment, in the proceedings of the Court.

He then called on M. Feodor Ivanovitch Kojevnikov, who was elected as a Member of the Court in November, 1953, to make the solemn declaration prescribed by the Rules of Court. When M. Kojevnikov had made this solemn declaration, the President placed it on record and declared him duly installed as a Judge of the Court.

The President then delivered an obituary oration in memory of the late Sir Benegal Narsing Rau, who was elected as a Member of the Court in February, 1952, and died on November 30th, 1953. The text of this obituary oration, on termination of which the Court and the public stood up as a solemn tribute to the deceased Judge, is reproduced in the minutes of the sitting.

The President then transferred the Presidency to M. Guerrero, Vice-President of the Court, who assumed the functions of President in the Monetary Gold case, owing to the fact that the President is a national of one of the Parties in the case.

The Vice-President, Acting President, referred to the case which the Court was about to examine, and observed that the discussion would be confined to the preliminary question raised by the Italian Government. He noted that as the Court did not include on the Bench a Judge of its own nationality, this Government had designated M. Gaetano Morelli, Professor of International Law in the University of Rome, as a Judge ad hoc.

M. Morelli was brought into the Hall of Justice, and took his seat, after making the solemn declaration prescribed by the Rules of Court.

The Vice-President noted that the representatives of the Parties were present in the Court, namely:

For the ...

For the Government of the Italian Republic:

Agent: H.E. M. Casto Caruso, Italian Ambassador at The Hague.

Counsel: M. Tomaso Perassi, Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Rome.

For the Government of the French Republic:

Agent: M. André Gros, Legal Adviser to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Counsel: M. Philippe Monod, Minister Plenipotentiary.

For the Government of the United Kingdom:

Agent: Sir Gerald Fitzmaurice, K.C.M.G., Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office.

Counsel: Mr. J. E. C. Fawcett, D.S.C., Member of the English Bar.

The Agent of the United States Government had stated that he would not take part in the oral proceedings, though he would remain at the Court's disposal.

The Vice-President called on the Agent of the Italian Government, who made a short statement, after which he gave place to the Italian Government's Counsel.

The latter delivered an address, which he concluded at the public sitting in the afternoon of the same day.

When closing the afternoon sitting, the Vice-President announced that the next public sitting would be held on Tuesday, May 11th, 1954, at 4 p.m., when the Agents and Counsel of the French Government and of the United Kingdom Government, defendants, would be heard.

The Hague, May 10th, 1954.

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