



# INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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## Press Release

Unofficial

No. 2023/57

27 October 2023

### **The President of the International Court of Justice addresses the General Assembly of the United Nations**

THE HAGUE, 27 October 2023. HE Judge Joan E. Donoghue, President of the International Court of Justice, yesterday addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations on the occasion of the presentation of the Court’s Annual Report for the 2022-2023 judicial year.

President Donoghue opened her speech by noting that, during the reporting period, “the Court’s docket has remained full and has continued to reflect a wide variety of legal disputes involving States from all regions of the world that present questions of international law . . . concern[ing] all of humanity”. She explained that there are currently 20 cases pending before the Court, seven of which had been brought during the reporting year — five contentious cases and two requests for an advisory opinion from the General Assembly.

The President informed the Assembly that, since 1 August 2022, the starting date of the period covered by the Annual Report, the Court had held hearings in nine cases, and had rendered three Judgments on the merits, one Judgment on a preliminary objection, two Orders relating to the indication of provisional measures, two Orders on requests for the modification of previously-imposed provisional measures, and one Order on the admissibility of declarations of intervention under Article 63 of the Statute of the Court, as well as numerous procedural orders. She further provided an overview of the judgments and substantive orders rendered by the Court during the period under review, and briefly touched upon the four cases currently under deliberation.

President Donoghue proceeded to announce that the Court had recently promulgated certain amendments to render the [Rules of Court](#), the [Resolution concerning the Internal Judicial Practice of the Court](#) and the Court’s [Practice Directions](#) gender inclusive. She underlined that “as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, it is incumbent on the Court to uphold the ideals of the United Nations in promoting gender equality and overcoming gender bias through the language it uses in its own official documents”.

The President then turned to the Trust Fund for the Court’s Judicial Fellowship Programme, established in 2021 by the Secretary-General at the request of the General Assembly. She informed the audience that three of the 15 judicial fellows of the 2023-2024 cohort were receiving a stipend through the Fund. She expressed the hope that “States, international organizations, individuals and other entities will continue the financial support of this excellent initiative”.

Before closing her address, President Donoghue provided the Assembly with an update on the asbestos-related situation at the Court’s seat. She described the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands, as “an iconic building which has come to symbolize peace in action”. She expressed

her gratitude to the Court's host country for its efforts in moving forward a project intended to remediate the presence of asbestos at the Peace Palace, and voiced her hope that the host country would ensure that the planned works did not hinder the Court's judicial activities.

The President concluded her speech by reflecting on the fact that the Court is experiencing one of the most dynamic periods in its history. President Donoghue stated that while the Court is honoured by the confidence that the international community continues to place in it, appropriate adjustments to the Court's budgetary resources would be needed "to ensure that it can continue to fulfil its mandate under the United Nations Charter".

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The full [text](#) of the address by the President of the Court to the United Nations General Assembly and the [Annual Report](#) for the 2022-2023 judicial year are available on the Court's website.

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

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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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