

The International Court of Justice

A.K.A. the World Court



General Information about the Court

- Founded in 1945 by a UN Charter
- Located in The Hague in The Netherlands
- Official languages of the Court are French and English



Меѓународен Суд на Правдата, Хаг



The Judges

- 15 Judges
- Elected by the General Assembly and Security Council
 - 9 year terms
 - 5 judges every 3 years elected



Who can become a Judge?

- Judges must be elected from among persons of high moral character, who possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices, or are jurisconsults of recognized competence in international law.



Job of the ICJ

- The Court's role is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized United Nations organs and specialized agencies.

International Law

- Laws established by the UN to help dictate the relationships between countries.
 - Only dictates relationships between countries
 - NOT PRIVATE CITIZENS



Example of International Law

- The Geneva Convention 1929
 - Banned the use of chemical devices in warfare
 - Protected Medics and red cross officials in battle zones
 - Made provisions for the treatment of civilians in war zones (1949)



The ICJ's role in International Law

- Helps advisor member states on matters of legal issues
 - Deals with two types of Cases
 - Contentious Cases
 - Advisory Proceedings



Contentious Cases

- Legal disputes between states
 - Ex. Violating terms of a treaty
- Written Phase – Both sides provide written arguments
- Oral Phase – Public hearings where members can plead their cases
- Deliberation – Judges render a decision
- All decisions are Final!

Advisory Proceedings

- Requested by member states for opinions on legal questions
 - Ex. Would it be ok for Israel to build a wall in Palestinian territory?
- Must be submitted by a UN organ or UN specialized agency
- Case information given to court
- Court able to collect information from members
- Decisions are not binding!

Example of an ICJ Case

- Friday, November 21, 2008
- [Macedonia vs. Greece in ICJ](#)
- Macedonian Request: The International Court of Justice should bring a decision whether our southern neighbor had broken the [Interim Accord](#), signed by Greece and Macedonia in 1995. In the application which was delivered to Hague a few days ago, Macedonia asks the court to formally confirm that Greece broke the Article 11 of the interim agreement, according to which Greece abides not to interfere with Macedonia's membership in international organizations, as long as it uses the provisional reference "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

The Problem

- In 2008 Greece vetoed Macedonia's application for NATO membership in Bucharest.
- Breaking a formal treaty between the two countries and preventing Macedonia from joining NATO



Case

- As a result of this, the Government of Republic of Macedonia decided to institute proceedings against Greece in the International Court of Justice in Hague, for a violation of Article 11 of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995. This act has a purpose of protecting the Interim Accord from further violations"

Result

- May 15, 2012
 - The ICJ Ruled in Macedonia's favor that Greece broke the provisions of the agreement
 - In the ruling Greece is not allowed to object to Macedonia's international affairs
 - This clears the way for Macedonia's entrance to NATO and the EU

