



# INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Peace Palace, Carnegieplein 2, 2517 KJ The Hague, Netherlands

Tel.: +31 (0)70 302 2323 Fax: +31 (0)70 364 9928

[Website](#) [X](#) [YouTube](#) [LinkedIn](#)

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## Press Release

Unofficial

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### **Eightieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice**

#### **The Court will hold a solemn sitting on 17 April 2026 at the Peace Palace in the presence of His Majesty the King of the Netherlands and the Secretary-General of the United Nations**

THE HAGUE, 10 April 2026. The International Court of Justice will hold a solemn sitting on Friday 17 April 2026 at 3 p.m. in the Great Hall of Justice of the Peace Palace to celebrate the eightieth anniversary of its inaugural session.

The ceremony will take place in the presence of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, HE Mr António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, HE Ms Annalena Baerbock, President of the United Nations General Assembly, HE Mr Tom Berendsen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, and HE Mr Jamal Alrowaiei, President of the United Nations Security Council.

Speeches will be delivered by HE Judge Iwasawa Yuji, President of the Court, and by Their Excellencies Mr Guterres, Ms Baerbock, Mr Berendsen and Mr Alrowaiei.

Members of the diplomatic corps and the international judicial corps, representatives of the Dutch Government and other Dutch institutions, the Mayor of The Hague, Mr Jan van Zanen, and senior officials of international organizations will attend the ceremony.

The Court will hold a side event on the day of the ceremony to mark the launch of the Judicial Fellows Alumni Association. The [Judicial Fellowship Programme](#) was established in 1999 to enable recent law graduates to gain professional experience by working for the Court. Judicial fellows work on a full-time basis under the supervision of a Member of the Court, alongside the Member's primary legal assistant, for a period of approximately ten months. Since 1999, 291 judicial fellows from more than 75 countries have worked at the Court.

Admission to both the solemn sitting and the side event is strictly by invitation only.

The solemn sitting will be broadcast live (see the section below for further details).

It is recalled that the Charter of the United Nations and the Statute of the International Court of Justice, which forms an integral part of the Charter, were signed in San Francisco on 26 June 1945 and came into force on 24 October 1945. The first Members of the Court were elected on 6 February 1946 at the first session of the General Assembly, held in London. They convened for

the first time at the Peace Palace in The Hague on 3 April 1946. On 6 April 1946, the new Court elected its President, Vice-President and Registrar. Its inaugural sitting took place on 18 April 1946.

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### **Practical information and admission procedures for members of the media**

Media representatives who wish to cover the solemn sitting are requested to kindly fill out an [online accreditation form](#) by 12 noon (The Hague time) on Tuesday 14 April 2026. Requests submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

The Court's press room will be open from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. It can accommodate only a limited number of people and requests for accreditation will therefore be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis.

Detailed instructions on the procedure for covering the sitting will be communicated to accredited media representatives in due course.

The solemn sitting will be streamed live and on demand (VOD) in the two official languages of the Court, on the [Court's website](#), the section of the [Journal of the United Nations](#) dedicated to the ICJ and on [UN Web TV](#). High-resolution cover shots and still photos produced by the Registry during the sitting will be available free of charge and free of copyright for editorial, non-commercial use, on the Court's website and X feed (@CIJ\_ICJ).

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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 specialized agencies.

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#### Information Department:

Ms Monique Legerman, First Secretary of the Court, Head of Department: +31 (0)70 302 2336

Ms Joanne Moore, Information Officer: +31 (0)70 302 2337

Mr Avo Sevag Garabet, Associate Information Officer: +31 (0)70 302 2481

Email: [media@icj-cij.org](mailto:media@icj-cij.org)