INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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

THE HAGUE, 29 October 2026. HE Judge Iwasawa Yuji, President of the International Court of Justice, today addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations to present the Court's Annual Report for the 2025-2026 judicial year.

President Iwasawa opened his address by expressing his gratitude to the General Assembly for its continued interest in the work of the Court and by congratulating His Excellency Dr Khalilur Rahman on his election as President of the eighty-first session of the Assembly.

The President pointed out that, this year, the Court was marking its eightieth anniversary, calling it an important milestone in the life of the institution and one that had inspired the Court to engage in self-reflection, to renew its commitment to progress and to redouble its outreach efforts aimed at disseminating information about its work and mandate. President Iwasawa informed the General Assembly that, in this spirit, the Court had held a solemn sitting on 17 April 2026 and launched the Judicial Fellows Alumni Association, that a special illustrated book entitled *The International Court of Justice: 80 Years in the Service of Peace and Justice* had been published, and that a second publication, entitled *The International Court of Justice at 80: An Inside View*, providing insights from current and former Members of the Court, judges *ad hoc* and Registry officials, would be officially launched at the Trusteeship Council later that day. Finally, the President mentioned that a dedicated photo exhibition, illustrating the Court's jurisprudence over the years, had been installed in the Visitors' Lobby of the General Assembly building.

President Iwasawa then proceeded to present a succinct review of the judicial activities of the Court over the past year. He observed that the number of cases on the Court's docket had remained at a record high, with 25 cases on the docket as of 1 August 2025 — the starting date of the period covered by the Court's annual report. The President stated that 24 contentious cases were currently pending before the Court, covering a wide range of legal issues. One new contentious case had been brought before the Court during the period under review.

The President informed the General Assembly that, since 1 August 2025, the Court had held hearings in five cases and had rendered one judgment on intervention and two advisory opinions. The Court had also issued one order on a request for the indication of provisional measures, one order on the admissibility of counter-claims, several orders on time-limits, and an order on discontinuance. He provided an overview of these judgments, advisory opinions and substantive orders. President Iwasawa stated that the Court was currently deliberating on the merits of two cases, namely the case concerning *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia* v. *Myanmar: 11 States intervening)* and the case concerning the

Arbitral Award of 3 October 1899 (Guyana v. *Venezuela)*, as well as on the preliminary objections raised in the case concerning *Alleged Breaches of Certain International Obligations in respect of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (Nicaragua* v. *Germany).*

President Iwasawa further stated that the Court took every care to periodically review its existing rules and practices and, in light of this, informed the General Assembly that it had recently adopted amendments to Articles 50 and 56 of its Rules and to several of its Practice Directions concerning the submission of documents in proceedings before the Court, with the primary aim of clarifying the framework governing the treatment of evidence. He mentioned that the amendments would enter into force on 1 February 2027 and that transitional provisions would apply for pending contentious cases.

President Iwasawa next 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. He informed the Assembly that, on average, the Fund had sponsored three or four judicial fellows each year since its inception. President Iwasawa noted that, "[t]hanks to this initiative and to the generosity of donors, the Trust Fund has enabled the participation of a total of 19 fellows to date", nominated by universities in Brazil, Chile, Congo, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia and Türkiye and that "[w]e have every confidence that this valuable scheme will continue to go from strength to strength".

The President also updated the General Assembly on the asbestos situation at the Court's seat at the Peace Palace in The Hague.

President Iwasawa ended his speech by touching on the budgetary situation of the Court. He reiterated the Court's deep appreciation to the General Assembly for approving an increase in its resources in recent years and informed delegates that, with its budget request for 2027, the Court had placed emphasis on improving its efficiency through technology. Indeed, the budget proposal provided for the implementation of a case management system, which was considered essential for the Court to manage its growing volume of case-related documentation in a secure, efficient and systematic manner. President Iwasawa emphasized that "[t]he Court trusts that Member States will support this forward-looking budget proposal, aimed at harnessing the advantages of new technologies with a view to streamlining the Court's judicial procedures".

The full text of the address by the President of the Court to the United Nations General Assembly and the Annual Report for the 2025-2026 judicial year are available on the Court's 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 (Kingdom of the 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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