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

Press Release
Unofficial

No. 2025/58
23 December 2025

Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. *Israel)*

Belgium files a declaration of intervention in the proceedings under Article 63 of the Statute of the Court

THE HAGUE, 23 December 2025. Today, Belgium, invoking Article 63 of the Statute of the Court, filed in the Registry of the Court a declaration of intervention in the case concerning *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa* v. *Israel)*.

Pursuant to Article 63 of the Statute, whenever the construction of a convention to which States other than those concerned in the case are parties is in question, each of these States has the right to intervene in the proceedings. If a State exercises this right, the construction given by the judgment of the Court will be equally binding upon it.

In availing itself of the right of intervention conferred by Article 63, Belgium relies on its status as a party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948 (the "Genocide Convention"). Belgium contends that the construction of Articles I, II, III, IV, V and VI appears to be in question in the case. It focuses its intervention on Article II and, in particular, on the interpretation of the specific intent required under that provision (*dolus specialis* or genocidal intent).

In accordance with Article 83 of the Rules of Court, South Africa and Israel have been invited to furnish written observations on the declaration of intervention.

The full text of Belgium's declaration of intervention is available on the Court's website.

History of the proceedings

On 29 December 2023, South Africa filed an Application instituting proceedings against Israel concerning alleged violations by Israel of its obligations under the Genocide Convention in relation to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Provisional measures

The Application also contained a request for the indication of provisional measures, pursuant to Article 41 of the Statute of the Court and Articles 73, 74 and 75 of the Rules of Court. On 26 January 2024, the Court delivered its Order on South Africa's request.

On 6 March 2024, South Africa submitted a request for the indication of additional provisional measures and/or the modification of the Court's Order of 26 January 2024. On 28 March 2024, the Court indicated additional provisional measures.

On 10 May 2024, South Africa submitted a further request for the modification and the indication of provisional measures. By an Order dated 24 May 2024, the Court reaffirmed its previous provisional measures and indicated new provisional measures.

Intervention proceedings

Article 62 of the Statute allows a State to seek permission to intervene in a case between other States, and thereby participate in the proceedings, when it considers that it has an interest of a legal nature which may be affected by the decision of the Court in that case. Article 63 affords States not parties to a dispute the right to intervene in a case when that case concerns the construction of a convention to which they are also parties; the interpretation of the relevant parts of that convention given by the Court in its decision in the case will then be equally binding on those States.

To date, the following States have filed an application for permission to intervene under Article 62 of the Statute or a declaration of intervention under Article 63 of the Statute: Colombia (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 5 April 2024); Libya (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 10 May 2024); Mexico (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 24 May 2024); Palestine (under Articles 62 and 63 of the Statute, on 31 May 2024); Spain (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 28 June 2024); Türkiye (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 7 August 2024); Chile (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 12 September 2024); the Maldives (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 1 October 2024); Bolivia (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 8 October 2024); Ireland (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 6 January 2025); Cuba (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 13 January 2025); Belize (under Articles 62 and 63 of the Statute, on 30 January 2025); Brazil (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 17 September 2025); and the Comoros (under Article 63 of the Statute, on 29 October 2025).

Earlier press releases relating to this case 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 (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.

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