



BANGLADESH

Statement under Agenda Item 76:

**Report of the International Court of Justice at the Plenary of the 73rd Session
of the UN General Assembly**

Statement by: H E Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative

Date and venue: Thursday, 25 October 2018, General Assembly Hall

Mr. President,

Bangladesh thanks the President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for his report providing a summary of the Court's extensive judicial activities over the reporting period, involving a number of contentious as well as new cases.

We wish to take this opportunity to once again felicitate ICJ for its crucial role in promoting pacific settlement of international disputes, upholding the rule of law at the international level and thus, contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security, as stipulated by the UN Charter.

We underscore the importance of upholding ICJ's standing as the principal judicial organ of the UN, and of making enhanced use of its competence to de-escalate tension and prevent conflicts among Member States. The pending contentious cases before the Court involve Member States from different parts of the world, thereby reaffirming the universal character of the Court's jurisdiction. We remain mindful of the General Assembly's call upon Member States to accept the Court's jurisdiction in accordance with its Statute.

It is also incumbent upon the General Assembly, the Security Council and other UN organs to utilize the Court's competence, and seek its advisory opinion on legal questions arising under the remit of their respective activities. The judicious and authoritative character of the Court's decisions in the past should enhance confidence in its ability to provide sound advisory opinion and interpretation on relevant norms of international law. Settling international disputes peacefully through recourse to ICJ is certainly a cost-effective option, not least for the attention given by the Court to avoid unwarranted lapse of time. We appreciate the Court addressing incidental proceedings brought before it with urgency despite its otherwise busy schedule.

Mr. President,

As a nation with unequivocal commitment to peaceful settlement of disputes, including through recourse to international law, Bangladesh duly acknowledges ICJ's judgments, advisory opinions and ongoing work concerning territorial integrity and sovereignty, unlawful use of force, and interference in domestic affairs of State, among other issues.

With our precedent in resolving outstanding maritime boundary delimitation issues with our neighbouring countries through legal and peaceful means, we continue to follow with interest the Court's work on territorial and maritime disputes as well as conservation of natural and living resources. As an Indian Ocean Rim country, we shall have particular interest in the request for an advisory opinion made to the Court by the General Assembly on the question of the Chagos Archipelago.

Bangladesh attaches great importance to ICJ's advisory opinion in 2004 concerning the illegality of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which continue to pose a formidable obstacle to meaningful resumption of the Middle East Peace Process. We reaffirm our unwavering support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to an independent and viable State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Bangladesh co-sponsors every year the General Assembly Resolution titled "Follow-up to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons". Pursuant to the Court's conclusions, we continue to underscore the importance of negotiating in the Conference on Disarmament a comprehensive convention addressing all aspects of nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control. We consider the recently adopted Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to be a critical building block in our efforts towards having a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh would continue to encourage the Court to give due consideration to developing country candidates as part of its internship and university trainee programmes. We appreciate the Court's redesigned, user-friendly website. We underscore the need for addressing the reported uncertainty over the temporary relocation of the Court from its current premises.

Finally, we thank Switzerland for its voluntary contributions this year to the Secretary General's Trust Fund to assist States in bearing expenses incurred during settlement of disputes through the Court.

I thank you.