

(b) Constitutional and Institutional Developments

Since 1 January 1996, the following information has been communicated to the press by the Registry of the International Court of Justice.

1. CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ICJ

On 18 April 1996, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen of The Netherlands held a Special Sitting to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of its inaugural session.

The United Nations Charter and the Statute of the International Court of Justice were signed in San Francisco on 26 June 1945 and came into force on 24 October 1945. The Members of the ICJ were elected on 6 February 1946 at the first session of the General Assembly. The Court elected its President, its Vice-President and its Registrar on 6 April 1946 and held its inaugural session on 18 April 1946.

Since 1946, the ICJ has delivered over 60 judgments on disputes between states concerning, *inter alia*, land frontiers and maritime boundaries, territorial sovereignty, the non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, diplomatic relations, hostage-taking, nationality, guardianship, and economic rights. In addition, the Court has given over 20 advisory opinions in advisory procedures, open solely to international organizations, concerning, *inter alia*, admission to UN membership, reparation for injuries suffered in the service of the United Nations, the territorial status of South-West Africa (Namibia) and Western Sahara, judgments rendered by international administrative tribunals, expenses of certain UN operations, and applicability of the UN Headquarters Agreement.