



S L O V A K I A

on behalf of the

Visegrad Group

(Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia)

STATEMENT

by

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Report of the International Court of Justice

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(check against delivery)

Madam President,

On behalf of the Visegrad Group, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and my own country, Slovakia, I thank the President of the International Court of Justice, Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, for presenting the report on the Court's work during the period from 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 (A/73/4). I would also like to congratulate Judge Yusuf on his election as the Court's President in February this year and to acknowledge the Court's achievements under his leadership.

Madam President,

I have the honor to present the common position of the Visegrad countries with respect to the Court's report. Let me begin by underlining the key and irreplaceable role of the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, in peaceful settlement of disputes between States. The increasing number of States submitting their differences to the Court's adjudication reflects their confidence in the Court. During the period under consideration, five new contentious proceedings have been instituted before the Court and four judgments and several orders have been delivered by the Court. They are testimony of both the trustfulness and efficiency of the Court in rendering international justice. The countries of the Visegrad Group are strong supporters of the Court and they appreciate the Court's remarkable long-term contribution to the prevention of conflicts and to the enhancement of good and friendly relations between States.

Madam President,

In respect of the Court's report, I would like to address two issues that are mutually inseparable. The first one concerns the broadening of acceptance of the Court's jurisdiction. The Statute of the Court offers to States various means of acceptance of the Court's jurisdiction. Currently, 73 States out of the 193 States Parties to the Court's Statute accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction under Article 36 para. 2 of the Statute. Special agreements on submission of differences between States to the Court offer another way for accepting the Court's jurisdiction. Their significance should not be underestimated. In addition, numerous treaties that are currently being negotiated, whether within or outside the United Nations, should routinely include, as one indispensable component, provisions on peaceful settlement of disputes, including clauses on the Court's jurisdiction in respect of the interpretation and

application of the treaty in question. States should be discouraged from making reservations to such clauses.

The willingness of States to subject their disputes to the Court must go hand in hand with their willingness to implement in good faith the Court's decisions. Only then will the Court's judgments and orders ensure that the system of international justice is truly effective.

The second issue I would like to highlight is the significant contribution by the Court to the strengthening of the rule of law at international level. The seventeen cases on the Court's agenda concern different subjects and areas of international law, including marine, territorial and environmental issues, human rights, State immunities, international responsibility or interpretation of treaties. The wide range of these issues currently before the Court, together with the variety of regions the parties to those disputes come from, is a manifestation of the Court's universal character and its indispensable role in the noble mission of the United Nations to maintain the international legal order.

The countries of the Visegrad Group highly appreciate the achievements of the Court in interpreting, clarifying and reinforcing international law and wish the Court every success in its future work.

I thank you, Madam President.