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ICJ: Chile 'Not Obligated' to Negotiate with Bolivia over Sea Access

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The International Court of Justice can present three different scenarios.

The International Court of Justice in The Hague Monday delivered its ruling on the dispute between Bolivia and neighbor Chile on access to the Pacific Ocean in which the court said that Chile "has no obligation to negotiate with Bolivia" over the matter.

With 12 votes against three, the United Nations court concluded that there is no such obligation.

Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, president of the ICJ, opened the session by reading the preliminary considerations of the ruling on the contentious "Obligation to negotiate" filed by Bolivia against Chile.

He also presented Bolivia's eight legal arguments as a basis for filing the claim at the court and also for Chile's defense.

A day ahead of the ruling, Bolivian President Evo Morales said Bolivia's return to the sea was "inevitable" ahead of a World Court ruling on Bolivia's claim that Chile has ducked a legal obligation to discuss the landlocked country's access to the sea.

Morales made the comments during a news conference on Saturday just moments before boarding a flight to The Hague where he attended the verdict declaration session.

The conflict over the maritime boundaries between Bolivia and Chile began in 1828 when the Chilean Constitution established that its territory reached the depopulated sector of Atacama, a

proclamation that ended with its invasion in 1879. Bolivia lost 400 kilometers of coast and 120,000 square kilometers of territory.

The lawsuit filed in April 2013 called for a sovereign exit to the Pacific Ocean that Bolivia lost by force 136 years ago when its port of Antofagasta was invaded. In September 2015, the Court of The Hague rejected the Chilean request to declare itself incompetent and kept analyzing the positions of the parties involved.

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