



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

21 November 2017

Excellency,

Further to the 57th plenary meeting of the General Assembly held on 20 November 2017, I have the honour to transmit hereby a letter from H.E. Mr. Matthew John Rycroft, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations addressed to me concerning the election of members of the International Court of Justice.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Lajčák', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Miroslav Lajčák

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

20 November 2017

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák
President of the General Assembly
United Nations

Dear President,

I have the honour to write to you with regard to the elections taking place in the General Assembly and the Security Council to fill the fifth position of judge of the International Court of Justice.

As you are aware, following seven meetings of the Assembly and the Council, on 9 and 13 November, at which several rounds of voting took place, the position remains unfilled. Judge Christopher Greenwood obtained the required absolute majority of votes in the Security Council while Judge Dalveer Bhandari obtained the required absolute majority of votes in the General Assembly.

The current deadlock is unlikely to be broken by further rounds of voting. We have therefore consulted our candidate, Sir Christopher Greenwood, who has confirmed that his candidature for re-election to the International Court of Justice should be withdrawn. In taking this step, we have borne in mind the close relationship that the United Kingdom and India have always enjoyed and will continue to enjoy, and the fact that both candidates fulfil the requirements for election and have already served the Court diligently with impartiality and independence.

The United Kingdom thanks Sir Christopher for his service and pays tribute to his outstanding contribution to the working of the Court and to the development of international law.

As you are also aware, the Statute of the International Court of Justice provides, in its Article 12, that if, after the third meeting, one or more seats still remain unfilled, a joint conference may be formed any time at the request of either the General Assembly or the Security Council for the purpose of choosing one name for each seat still vacant to submit to the General Assembly and the Security Council for their respective acceptance.

This mechanism has not been used in relation to an election for the International Court of Justice. However, the fact that it has not been used does not mean that it should not

**The Permanent Representative,
Matthew Rycroft CBE**

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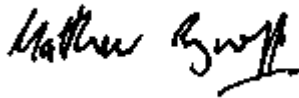
gov.uk/world/un-newyork

@MatthewRycroft1

be used when the need arises. It is the view of the United Kingdom that this election would have been an ideal opportunity to use the mechanism envisaged by the Court's own Statute to break the current deadlock. It is also the United Kingdom's view, as it is of other delegations, that some thought needs to be given to this procedure before the next ICJ election in order that it might be used when it is clearly needed.

The Government of the United Kingdom expresses its gratitude to the countries which supported the candidature of Judge Greenwood, both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council, during these elections.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Rycroft". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Matthew Rycroft