
Omnia advises Albania in landmark climate change proceedings before the International Court of Justice

LONDON, 28 March 2024: Omnia Strategy LLP is privileged to advise longstanding client, the Government of Albania, in ground-breaking advisory proceedings before the International Court of Justice on States' obligations in respect of climate change.

Acting *pro bono*, Omnia assisted in the preparation of Albania's written statement submitted to the ICJ on behalf of the Government at the direction of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, in coordination with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy and the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. The submission was delivered to the ICJ Registrar on 21 March 2024 by Albania's Ambassador to The Netherlands in The Hague, His Excellency Artur Kuko.

Albania's commitment to the ICJ proceedings follows Prime Minister Rama's comments at COP28 that “for decades on end developing countries like ours have striven tirelessly to tackle development challenges while contending with the negative impact of climate change” and draws attention to the disproportionate burden placed on developing countries in confronting the climate emergency, despite their minimal contribution to its causes. Albania's statement urges developed countries to recognise and to be held to their distinct responsibility, and to support transformative actions, highlighting challenges in funding and access to technology. It further highlights the imperative to align international investment agreements and investor-State dispute settlement with global climate goals.

Albania's legal team was led by Omnia's [Cherie Blair CBE, KC](#), who said:

“We urgently need to tackle climate change with a clear international legal framework which offers clarity and promotes accountability. Albania has used its position on the United Nations Security Council to provide leadership on climate change, and Omnia is privileged to lend our support to Albania's engagement with these landmark advisory proceedings. I am grateful to the Government for their trust and to my team for their passion and commitment to addressing the climate emergency. Omnia's law+ approach, including our expertise in public international law, dispute resolution and human rights, is perfectly suited to this crucial task”.

The Omnia team includes [Adam Smith-Anthony](#), [Ben Wheadon](#), [James Palmer](#), [Jessica Sblendorio](#), [Lauren Lederle](#) and [Roberto Lupini](#) working alongside distinguished public international law specialists [Sir Daniel Bethlehem KCMG KC](#) of Twenty Essex and [Lucas Bastin KC](#) of Essex Court Chambers and leading human rights expert [Professor Gentian Zyberi](#) of the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (University of Oslo).

Background

On 29 March 2023, the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly (“UNGA”) adopted Resolution 77/276 requesting an advisory opinion from the ICJ on the obligations of States with respect to climate change. The resolution acknowledges that “climate change is an unprecedented challenge of civilizational proportions and that the well-being of present and future generations of humankind depends on our immediate and urgent response to it”. It also takes note of the scientific consensus and

underscores that anthropogenic emissions of anthropogenic greenhouse gases are “*the dominant cause of the global warming observed since the mid-20th century*” and that human-induced climate change “*has caused widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people*”.

UNGA’s request asks the Court to define:

- The obligations of States under international law to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment from anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases for States and for present and future generations; and
- The legal consequences under these obligations for States where they, by their acts and omissions, have caused significant harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment, with respect to States which, due to their geographical circumstances and level of development, are injured or specially affected by or are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change; and peoples and individuals of the present and future generations affected by the adverse effects of climate change.

Omnia

Omnia is an international law firm founded in 2011 by Cherie Blair CBE, KC, with a unique law+ approach that combines legal expertise with experience across policy, business and communications. Omnia is trusted by government, corporate and private clients to provide legal and strategic counsel on a broad spectrum of matters involving public international law, international human rights law, business and human rights, international arbitration and more unconventional problem-solving.