

Article 31 - Exchanges of Views and Settlement of Disputes

1. If they think it useful, the central Authorities shall exchange views, orally or in writing, on the application or implementation of this Treaty, in general terms or in a particular case.

2. Any difference that is not resolved by the central Authorities may be the subject of consultations or negotiations between the Contracting States as to the interpretation, application or implementation of this Treaty.

3. Unless the Contracting States agree on another procedure for settlement, any difference that has not been resolved under paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be the subject of arbitration at the request of either Contracting State.

4. In the event of arbitration, each Contracting State shall appoint an arbitrator. The two arbitrators shall appoint a chairperson. If within three months of the date of the request for the submission of the difference to arbitration, one of the Contracting States has not appointed its arbitrator, the latter shall be appointed at the request of one of the two States by the President of the International Court of Justice. If within two months of their appointment both arbitrators have been unable to agree on the choice of a chairperson, the latter shall be appointed at the request of one of the two Contracting States by the President of the International Court of Justice. The decisions of the arbitral tribunal shall be binding on the Contracting States.

5. However, the settlement of a difference in accordance with paragraph 4 of this Article shall not affect the validity of the final decision taken by a governmental or judicial authority of one of the Contracting State as a consequence of the request from which the difference arose.