

Botnia: Mujica talks about a “Solomonic” verdict

The Uruguayan Government is saying that it believes that The International Court of Justice of The Hague will resolve the conflict around Botnia’s pulp mill with a “Solomonic” ruling. The hypothesis being handled by Tabaré Vazquez’s cabinet is that the pulp mill would receive an authorization to continue with its operations, but that the country (Uruguay) would be sanctioned because it committed a breach of the treaty of the River Uruguay.

That prediction – resulting from the analysis of professionals in Law that advise Tabaré Vazquez’s Government – is based on the idea that the highest Court of the UN will not leave neither of the governments in bad standing and that, in a way, will agree with both parties, reason why it will be necessary to dialogue with the Casa Rosada. Actually, these are all mere speculations, since The Hague’s Court will hardly anticipate its conclusions before giving a verdict, verdict which will possibly be known in the first quarter of 2010.

During the weekend, the candidate for the Frente Amplio, José Mujica, affirmed that were he to become president he will approach the authorities of the Finnish company Botnia so that they invest in tourism projects in Gualaguaychu.

«I think that we can get some help for Gualaguaychu with tourism projects. What I want to say is that we must turn conflicts into negotiations and the most intelligent negotiations at that, and capitalize on that. One of the things being discussed is to improve our relations”, pointed out the candidate during campaign activity at Maldonado.

The next presentation by Argentina before the International Court will take place during the oral hearings at The Hague convened between the 14th and 17th September. One week later will be Uruguay’s turn, and finally on 2nd October the veil will be lifted on the secrecy of the evidence collected on the assumed contamination by Botnia. From there on, The Hague will have around four months to resolve the question, verdict which is expected for March or April 2010.

On the possibility of Botnia investing in Gualaguaychú, as Mujica said, members of the Environmental Civic Assembly of that town spoke out against the sayings of the Uruguayan candidate and warned that under no circumstances would they accept “any Solomonic ruling” from the Court of The Hague, “nor money” from the Finnish company Botnia.

«We will accept no Solomonic ruling nor are we seeking to obtain money from Botnia. We only want the plant to go away from the River Uruguay because if not, the conflict will continue and, will even intensify”, pointed out assembly member Jorge Fritzler.