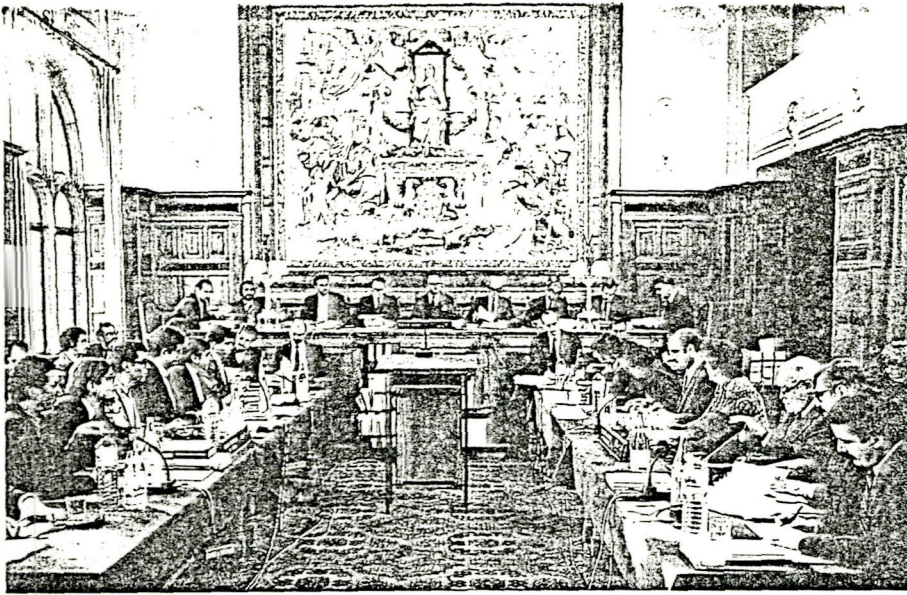




A meeting of the Iran-USA Claims Tribunal in the Small Court Room of the Palace in 1987.

nine months. The Court Room was transformed into a registry. During the occupation, the care of the archives and the protocols of the Court were so much affected that the Court had to move to the Small Court Room, but the Court continued to hear cases in the Small Court Room until the building was returned.

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tendency has been noticeable in past decades to politicize disputes: to this, incidentally, testify most recent cases before both Hague Courts. On the whole, settlement through judicial or arbitral means, if attempted at all, is preferably sought within legal frameworks such as the United Nations or the European Communities, which are often thought to serve better the States' interests.

Another handicap to the proper functioning of the Court may just be that, contrary to the American States, most African and Asian countries look upon it – and rightly so in the historical perspective – mainly as a Western and basically European institution. Few of them are members; they were parties to only two or three cases. Even when wishing to submit cases for arbitration they probably prefer the regional systems offered by the Arab League or the Organization for African Unity. These facilities, however, are not frequently applied to either.

