
SLOVENIA MAY TURN TO EU OVER CROATIA BORDER DISPUTE

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Slovenia said on Wednesday it may turn to the European Commission for help in implementing an international ruling on its border with Croatia.

The Hague Permanent Court of Arbitration ruled last month that Slovenia should have "uninterrupted access" to the international waters in the Adriatic Sea.

"We are likely to turn to the European Commission for advice, cooperation, but only if we (Slovenia and Croatia) fail to find a common path to a solution," Prime Minister Miro Cerar told a news conference after a meeting with Croatian counterpart Andrej Plenkovic.

The issue goes back to 1991 when Slovenia and Croatia both declared independence from the former Yugoslavia but differed over their land and sea borders.

The court's ruling is final and binding but Plenkovic said Croatia does not consider it valid since the country withdrew from the arbitration process in 2015 after a leaked tape showed Slovenian judge on the panel improperly exchanging confidential information with the Ljubljana government.

Plenkovic said Croatia was ready to hold bilateral talks to reach a bilateral agreement on the border line between the two countries.

According to the court the two countries have six months to implement the ruling. It is not clear what action the European Commission, which had said it expected the ruling to be implemented, could take to facilitate the process.

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<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-slovenia-croatia-idUSKBN19X1YX>

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