Case Concerning the Land and Maritime Boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria (Cameroon v. Nigeria: Equatorial Guinea Intervening), No. 94 (October 10, 2002)

Introduction
Cameroon and Nigeria had a long-standing dispute regarding the boundary between the two countries as set by the Colonial powers through various treaties. The dispute was over the boundary in lake Chad and the Bakassi Peninsula. This disputed region did not come into contest until 1994 when Nigeria had begun occupying various parts of the region. The government of Cameroon filed the case in the ICJ to try and further delineate the maritime boundary that was set forth in 1975.

Nigeria then filed with the ICJ arguments over jurisdiction that was based on the state sovereignty of Nigeria and freeing it from interference. Where the ICJ then turned was back to the various treaties between the former colonizers that set the boundaries. Because of the muddles history and often changing treaties it was difficult to grasp entirely the broad scope of the how the boundary was first established.

Both countries wanted control over the disputed region due to its oil rich mineral content, and who ever had control of it also was able to use its maritime control. Oil was what made this into a much more complex and difficult case involving the boundary. The court then rejected Cameroon’s claims of state responsibility and Nigeria’s. Thus why the case reverted back to the 1919 Franco-British declaration (Milner-Simon Declaration).

Importance
Much of this case shows the current situation in former colonies around the world. As nations struggle to grad natural resources and other pieces of land, they often run into a complex mire of issues. Since many of the boundaries were set prior the current governments existence, and by foreign colonizers, it tends to exacerbate the problems.

1. This case is a new beginning to long-standing boundary disputes since it used circumstantial and complex evidence to make claims of sovereignty.

2. It also disallows countries to seek compensation for other countries destruction and occupation of land during disputes.

Decisions and Reasoning

1. How to delineate the boundaries through the complex mire of Treaties, ICJ chose the 1919 treaty

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2 ibid
3 ibid
2. The Bakassi region was part of the Cameroon British protectorate as determined by the United Nations until 1961.

3. The court denied the existence of a precedence that allowed Nigeria to claim Bakassi since Cameroon had not been administrating it while Nigeria had.

4. The maritime boundary was set using the 1975 treaty between the two and the commonly accepted boundary between the two that had been used internationally.

**Conclusion**

This case is extremely complex in nature and uses a wholly different route to determination than most ICJ cases. It relied on various evidence that was extremely finite and often in dispute due to the complexity of the treaties involved. As well it set the precedence for non-compensation during border disputes. The final thing the case opened up was the non-removal of Nigerian citizens from Cameroon land, thus leaving them locked in place and with Cameroon now responsible for their administration.

**Bibliography:**


Precious little else could I find, this was an awful case to try and get sources for.