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CANADA AND U.S. STRENGTHEN FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, John C. Crosbie, today announced that a Canada-United States Enforcement Agreement has come into force which makes it an offence under both Canadian and U.S. law for a fisherman of one country to fish without authorization in the waters of the other.

The Agreement also makes it an offence for a fisherman to resist fisheries enforcement efforts in the other country's waters.

"The flouting of fisheries laws is a major concern for fishing communities," said Mrs. McDougall. "This Agreement will help us to deter U.S. fishermen from fishing illegally in Canadian waters."

Canada and the United States signed the Enforcement Agreement on September 26, 1990, with the understanding that it would come into force after both countries had put the necessary regulations into place. Both Canadian and U.S. regulations are now in place, and either country can request enforcement action under the Agreement.

Under the Fisheries Act of Canada, fines for general fishing offences and obstruction of a fishery officer are now \$100,000 on summary conviction and \$500,000 on indictment. In the United States, violators face a fine of up to \$100,000. In addition to fines, courts in both countries may also order forfeiture of vessels, gear and catches.