

necessary. By an Order of May 8, 1996, the Court considering that it was "sufficiently informed, at this stage, of the contentions of fact and law on which the Parties rely with respect to its jurisdiction in the case and whereas the presentation, by them, of other written pleadings on that question therefore does not appear necessary", decided, by fifteen votes to two (Vereshchetin and Torres Bernárdez dissenting), not to authorize the filing of a Reply by the Applicant and a Rejoinder by the Respondent on the question of jurisdiction.

The written proceedings in the jurisdictional phase have thus come to an end. The Registry of the Court has indicated informally that, given the other cases on the Court's list, this case (jurisdictional phase) may not come up for hearing until late 1997, at the earliest.

The NAFO conservation and enforcement measures agreed in 1995 have been working well and recently saw the Spanish fishing vessel "Frieremar Uno" inspected at sea by Canadian officials and ordered back to port for a full inspection on suspicion of breaching NAFO regulations. Canada is nonetheless continuing its efforts to reform and strengthen NAFO.

The September 1996 NAFO meeting took place in St. Petersburg. A significant outcome of the meeting from Canada's point of view was the recognition by NAFO of the Canadian right to set the TAC for Northern cod, a straddling fish stock. In return, other NAFO Contracting Parties can harvest a small share, five percent, outside of Canada's 200 mile fishing zone. This resolves for the future a dispute that contributed to the depletion of Northern cod from 1986 to 1992.

As a result of a Canadian initiative, NAFO also agreed to establish a working group on dispute settlement to examine, inter alia, ways to institute a binding dispute settlement procedure with respect to NAFO's objection procedure. This procedure has been used in the past by some NAFO Contracting Parties to overfish quotas set for them by NAFO. Canada intends to take the lead in the working group in the coming months to ensure that any dispute settlement mechanism recommended to the NAFO Parties is practical, relevant, and capable of resolving the real problems faced by Canada and other countries concerned with effective conservation of NAFO stocks.