

I wish to welcome Ambassador Cutler and his delegation to Ottawa for this important meeting in our efforts to negotiate a long-term agreement on maritime boundaries and related resource issues. Our task has been made more urgent as a result of the suspension of the provisional implementation of the 1978 Interim Reciprocal Fisheries Agreement. While Canada took this decision with great reluctance nearly three weeks ago on June 2, both sides now have had an opportunity to reflect on the value to both countries of maintaining a reciprocal fishing relationship, and on the pressing need for a comprehensive agreement which includes institutional mechanisms for interpreting the agreement and for the settlement of differences.

On the Canadian side, we are prepared to devote as much time and energy as is required to develop a satisfactory framework for our future fisheries relations. In order to obtain the support of the fishing communities, the provinces, the states and the legislatures in both countries, an agreement must be fair and balanced and be seen to be fair and balanced: neither side can hope to attain the sum total of the objectives of all local and regional interests. Indeed, I believe our job as Special Negotiators is to determine our respective priority objectives and to try to achieve them in a manner which enhances the prospects for mutual acceptability.

I believe that in our negotiations from August