



news release

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ARBITRATION OF THE "LA BRETAGNE" DISPUTE

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable John Crosbie, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of Canada, and the Honourable John Fraser, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, today announced that Canada and France have agreed to submit to binding arbitration their dispute arising out of the condition attached to the fishing licence issued to "La Bretagne", a French factory-freezer trawler registered in Saint-Pierre and Miquelon. Under the terms of this licence, "La Bretagne" may fish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence but may not use its filleting equipment there. This condition is in accordance with the prohibition imposed upon Canadian fishing vessels, with which vessels registered in Saint-Pierre and Miquelon are entitled to fish on an "equal footing" under Article 4 of the 1972 Canada-France Fisheries Agreement.

Under Article 10 of this agreement, any dispute over its application may be submitted by either party to a Commission consisting of a national expert nominated by each of the parties and of a third expert nominated by agreement.

The three ministers also announced that Canada has nominated Professor Donat Pharand of the Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa, as its expert. France has nominated Professor Jean-Pierre Quéneudec of the Faculty of Law, University of Paris, as its expert. Canadian and French officials met on May 16 and 17 to discuss a number of procedural questions, including the nomination of the third expert.