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# news release

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Date August 2, 1989.

For release

## CANADA-UNITED STATES FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT TALKS

Officials from the United States and Canada met in Ottawa, August 2, 1989, to consider ways to reduce tensions over enforcement of fisheries jurisdiction, particularly in the Gulf of Maine maritime boundary area. They confirmed their commitment to ensure respect for the 1984 decision by the International Court of Justice establishing the single maritime boundary in the Gulf of Maine. Officials discussed the legislative and regulatory basis for enforcement action and cooperative measures for pursuit and enforcement purposes.

Officials agreed to establish working groups to examine ways to ensure that the sovereign rights of both states were maintained, and to lessen the risk of injury in the Gulf of Maine. These groups will meet in September and report their findings in the autumn, when representatives from the two governments will meet again.

The Canadian delegation, headed by Mr. Edward G. Lee, Q.C. Legal Advisor, Department of External Affairs, emphasized its commitment to protect the Canadian 200-mile zone from incursions by unauthorized foreign vessels. The United States delegation, headed by Ambassador Edward Wolfe, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and Fisheries, agreed that a coastal state was entitled to enforce its fisheries laws within its zone, and that Canada was exercising its rights as the United States would do under similar circumstances.

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With respect to the West Coast, Canadian officials requested that the civil action against the "Fonzie" and "Viscount" be dropped and that US procedures be revised to ensure that Canadian vessels are released quickly. The US side had no response as the matter is presently pending before US courts, but they confirmed that they had not changed their commitment to mutual restraint in the Dixon Entrance boundary area.

With regard to the East Coast, in response to a US inquiry concerning the possibility of Canadian Government assistance with legal fees and costs in the case of the "FV Mary Elizabeth", Canadian officials pointed out that as the case was under appeal they could make no comment.