



news release

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OPENING OF THE ORAL PROCEEDINGS IN THE DISPUTE
BETWEEN CANADA AND FRANCE CONCERNING FILLETING
WITHIN THE GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE BY FRENCH TRAWLERS
REGISTERED IN SAINT-PIERRE-ET-MIQUELON

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, and the Honourable John Crosbie, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, announced that the oral proceedings in the "La Bretagne" arbitration will begin today in Geneva. This case deals with the fishery conducted in the Gulf of St. Lawrence by French trawlers registered in Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon. It arose out of the application by Canada to the factory freezer trawler "La Bretagne" of the prohibition against filleting at sea in the Gulf of St. Lawrence imposed on Canadian trawlers. This prohibition was imposed on "La Bretagne" in accordance with the principle of "equal footing" embodied in Article 4(b) of the 1972 Canada-France Fisheries Agreement.

The arbitral tribunal established to hear the case will be chaired by Professor Paul de Visscher of the Faculty of Law, University of Louvain, the other two members being Professors Donat Pharand of the Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa, and Jean-Pierre Queneudec of the Faculty of Law, University of Paris. Under the terms of the arbitration agreement between Canada and France, the tribunal is to render its award within thirty days of the conclusion of the oral proceedings, which is expected on June 13.

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