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# news release

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## CANADA EXPRESSES CONCERN AT UNITED NATIONS ABOUT OVERFISHING

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, John C. Crosbie, announced that Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Yves Fortier, today raised Canada's concerns about overfishing on the high seas (outside 200 miles) in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly.

"Overfishing by certain distant-water fishing fleets off Canada's Atlantic coast, on the Grand Bank of Newfoundland, has caused serious depletion of stocks. It has resulted in a reduction of quotas for Canadians and contributed to the closure of 75 fish processing plants and the loss of more than 5,000 fishing jobs in the last two years," said Mr. Fortier.

Mr. Fortier noted that the UN General Assembly has addressed some of Canada's concerns in a Resolution regarding the Law of the Sea Convention. The Resolution calls on states to prohibit fishing methods and practices designed to evade controls, to take the measures required to give full effect to the Law of the Sea Convention and to comply with the regimes established by regional fisheries organizations like the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).

"If we really want to preserve fish stocks for later generations, reflagging and other disruptive practices must end. We must develop principles and measures that fully and effectively implement the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention," said Mrs. McDougall.

"Canada will vigorously seek the support of the international community for our initiative aimed at ending overfishing by European Community vessels and non-NAFO fleets outside 200 miles. Ambassador Fortier's ongoing efforts at the United Nations are an important part of the government's actions toward this end," said Mr. Crosbie.

Canada plans to take the issue of high seas fisheries conservation to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992. Canada will use the Conference to call again for the adoption of principles and measures to conserve the living resources of the high seas and to give full effect to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. "UNCED offers a unique opportunity to galvanize the international community to this end," Mr. Fortier concluded.

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