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# news release

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For release

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## INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE RENDERS DECISION IN GULF OF MAINE CASE

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The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, the Honourable John Crosbie, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Honourable John Fraser, and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Honourable Pat Carney, commented today on the decision by a Chamber of the International Court of Justice in The Hague in the case between Canada and the United States concerning the maritime boundary in the Gulf of Maine area.

Although the full implications for Canada of the Court's decision are still being examined, the Ministers have noted with satisfaction that the boundary confirms Canadian jurisdiction over a substantial part of Georges Bank. In particular, it assures the maintenance of Canadian fisheries on which the livelihood of many communities in southwest Nova Scotia depends.

In accordance with the terms of the Special Agreement both Parties have accepted that the decision of the Court is final and binding.

In order to implement the Court's decision in a smooth and orderly manner the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States have agreed that fishing vessels will be given fourteen days from the date of the Court's decision, ending at 2400 hours on October 26, to leave the formerly disputed waters which now fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the other country. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans is currently notifying Canadian fishermen of the geographical coordinates of the new boundary.

The case centred on a dispute over the rich fishery resources and the potential hydrocarbon resources of Georges Bank, a large detached bank lying seaward of the Gulf of Maine off the coasts of Nova Scotia and Massachusetts.

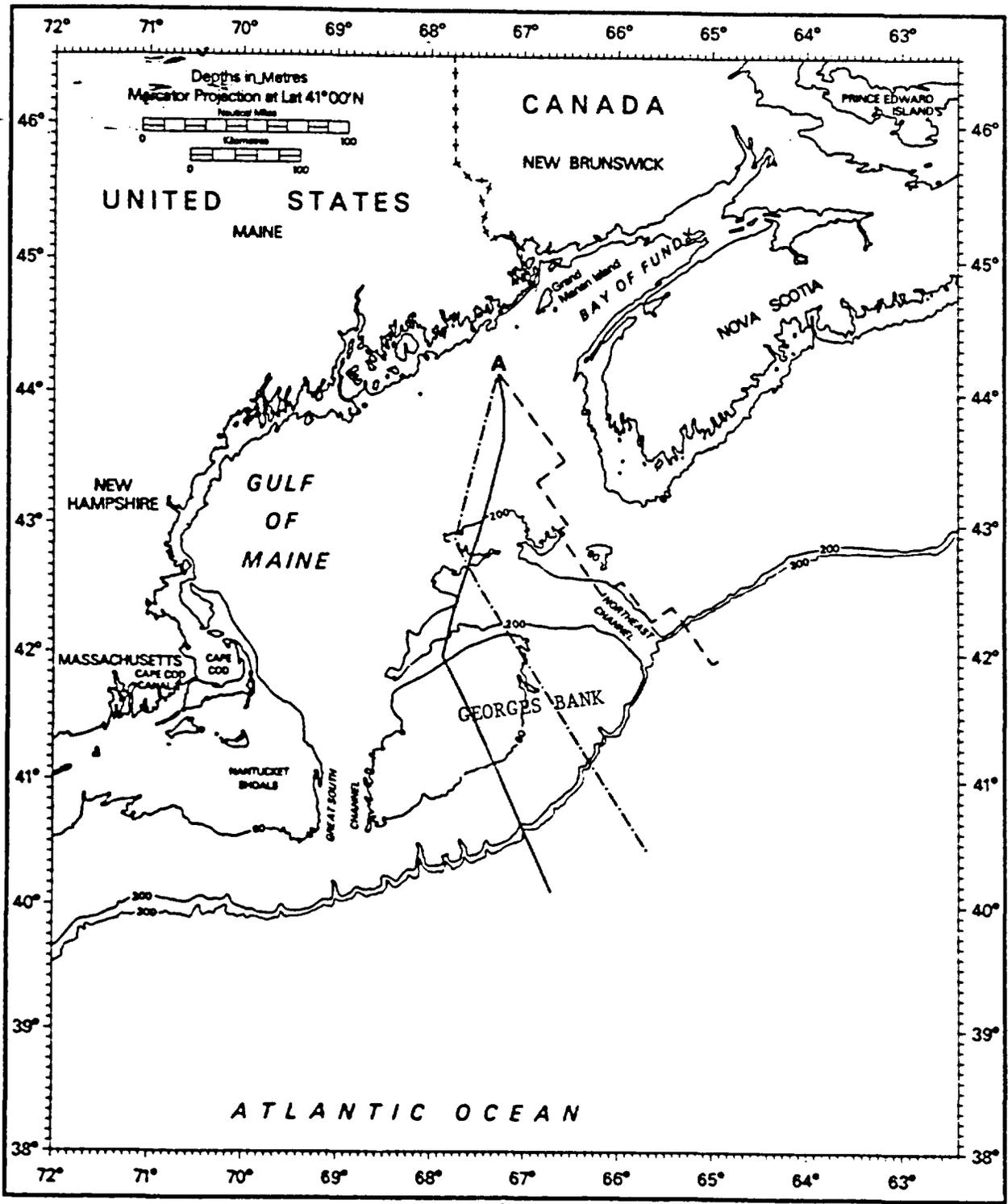
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The dispute began in 1969 when the United States protested Canada's issuance of oil and gas exploration permits on Georges Bank, and it was expanded in scope in 1977 when the two countries extended their fisheries jurisdiction to 200 nautical miles.

In 1979 the two Governments signed a Treaty to Submit to Binding Dispute Settlement the Delimitation of the Maritime Boundary in the Gulf of Maine Area. A Special Agreement annexed to the Treaty was notified to the International Court of Justice on November 25, 1981. It provided for the final determination of the maritime boundary by a five-member Chamber of the Court. The Chamber was composed as follows: Judge Roberto Ago of Italy (presiding), Judge André Gros of France, Judge Hermann Mosler of the Federal Republic of Germany, Judge Stephen Schwebel of the United States and Judge ad hoc Maxwell Cohen of Canada.

The decision is the culmination of several years of intensive work in both countries. Following the submission of three rounds of written pleadings by the two sides, hearings were conducted before the Chamber in The Hague, from April 2 to May 11, 1984. Ambassador L.H. Legault, Q.C., Legal Adviser to the Department of External Affairs, was the Agent for Canada and was responsible for the preparation and presentation of the Canadian case.

The boundary drawn by the International Court in today's decision divides both the fishing zones and the continental shelf in the Gulf of Maine area. The claims of the two Parties and the boundary line determined by the Court are illustrated on the attached map.



Depths in Metres  
 Mercator Projection at Lat 41°00'N  
 Nautical Miles  
 Kilometres

UNITED STATES  
 MAINE

CANADA  
 NEW BRUNSWICK

NOVA SCOTIA

NEW HAMPSHIRE

GULF OF MAINE

GEORGES BANK

MASSACHUSETTS  
 CAPE COD  
 CANALS

NANTUCKET SHOALS  
 GREAT SOUTH CHANNEL  
 CHANDEL

NORFOLK CHANNEL

ATLANTIC OCEAN

LEGEND

- Canadian Claim
- - - - - United States Claim
- · - · - Boundary Drawn by Court