

# Press Releases: U.S. Signs Agreement To Prevent Unregulated Commercial Fishing on the High Seas of the Central Arctic Ocean

Media Note  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
October 1, 2018

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The United States is pleased to be a signatory of the agreement to prevent unregulated commercial fishing on the high seas of the central Arctic Ocean. This is the first multilateral agreement of its kind to take a legally binding, precautionary approach to protect an area from commercial fishing before that fishing has begun. The signing ceremony will take place October 3 in Ilulissat, Greenland. Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and Fisheries William Gibbons-Fly will head the U.S. delegation from the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

Ice has traditionally covered the high seas of the central Arctic Ocean year-round. Recently, the melting of Arctic sea ice has left large areas of the high seas uncovered for much of the year. As a result, commercial fisheries in the central Arctic Ocean may become viable in areas where such activity was previously not possible. Prior to this agreement, no legally binding international agreement existed to manage potential fishing in the high seas of this region.

In 2009, the United States closed the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) north of Alaska to commercial fishing until such time as domestic fisheries managers have sufficient information about the ecosystem to allow fishing to proceed on a well-regulated basis. U.S. stakeholders, including the Alaska-based fishing industry, have been concerned foreign fishing vessels could begin fishing here in the foreseeable future. At a time when U.S. vessels cannot fish within the U.S. EEZ, the United States has negotiated this new fisheries agreement for the central Arctic Ocean that reduces the chance that foreign vessels will fish just beyond the U.S. EEZ.

Initial negotiations among the five coastal parties of the central Arctic Ocean—Canada, Denmark (for Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Norway, Russia, and the United States—resulted in the non-legally binding Oslo Declaration

signed on July 16, 2015. The Oslo Declaration recognized other governments may have an interest in potential Arctic fisheries. In December 2015 ten parties, including the five Oslo Declaration signatories, as well as China, Iceland, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the European Union, entered into negotiations towards a legally-binding agreement. The negotiations toward this legally binding agreement concluded November 30, 2017.

For press inquiries, please contact [OES-PA-DG@state.gov](mailto:OES-PA-DG@state.gov).

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## **Press Releases: Macedonia's Referendum on the Prespa Agreement**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
September 30, 2018

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The United States welcomes the results of the Republic of Macedonia's September 30 referendum, in which citizens expressed their support for NATO and European Union (EU) membership by accepting the Prespa Agreement between Macedonia and Greece. The United States strongly supports the Agreement's full implementation, which will allow Macedonia to take its rightful place in NATO and the EU, contributing to regional stability, security, and prosperity.

As Macedonia's parliament now begins deliberation on constitutional changes, we urge leaders to rise above partisan politics and seize this historic opportunity to secure a brighter future for the country as a full participant

in Western institutions.

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## **Press Releases: Earthquake and Tsunami in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia**

Press Statement  
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
September 30, 2018

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The United States conveys its condolences and support to all of those in Indonesia affected by the earthquake and tsunami that struck Central Sulawesi on September 28. U.S. Mission Indonesia is closely monitoring the situation, and has not received reports of U.S. citizens affected. The United States and Indonesia are Strategic Partners and friends, and we stand ready to assist in the relief effort.

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## [Press Releases: Secretary Pompeo's Meeting With Lithuanian President Grybauskaite and Norwegian Prime Minister Solberg](#)

Readout  
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC  
September 29, 2018

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo met yesterday with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite and Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. They agreed upon the importance of enhanced regional security coordination, including on air defense and energy security. Additionally, they discussed plans to refine collaboration on energy security, particularly within NATO, building upon the 2018 Brussels NATO Summit Declaration.

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## [Press Releases: Botswana National Day](#)

Press Statement  
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Washington, DC  
September 29, 2018

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On behalf of the United States, I congratulate the people of Botswana on the 52nd anniversary of independence. Botswana remains one of our most reliable partners in southern Africa. Our shared democratic values and tradition, reinforced by deep mutual respect, form the bedrock of our relationship. United States-Botswana cooperation in health programming, in particular, has improved the lives of thousands of people in Botswana, and the United States looks forward to continuing this partnership.

As all the people of Botswana celebrate this special day, Americans across the United States celebrate it with you.

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