



Spitsbergen: Legal Regime of Adjacent Marine Areas

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Annex 14: Note of Embassy of USSR in Norway (15 June 1977)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics conveys its respect to the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway and has the honor to state the following.

On 3 June 1977 the State Council of Norway adopted a decision to establish a 200 mile fisheries protection zone around Spitsbergen. In the text of the Royal Resolution received by the Embassy, attention is attracted by its clear failure to conform to the obligations assumed by Norway under the 1920 Treaty on Spitsbergen.

The decision adopted by the Norwegian Government unilaterally and based on internal legislation of Norway, although it concerns a special area which falls under the operation of the said Treaty. In plain contradiction with Article 3 of the 1920 Treaty consolidating the principle of free access of all States which are parties thereto for engaging in economic activity in the area of operation of this Treaty, the decision proceeds from the possibility of Norway to prohibit fishing by other States-parties to the Treaty in this area and even provide norms of punishment with respect to their citizens.

The Soviet side already twice has drawn attention to the fact that the measures planned by Norway with regard to the limitation of fishing around Spitsbergen directly would affect the rights and interests of the Soviet Union, which together with Norway traditionally engages in fishing in the waters of the Archipelago.

The Soviet Government assesses the decision adopted by 3 June 1977 was the next step of Norway directed towards the illegal expansion of its rights in the area of Spitsbergen contrary to the provisions of the 1920 Treaty, which goes beyond the framework of purely fishing problems.

Under these conditions the Soviet Government reserves the possibility to take respective measures ensuring the interests of the USSR.

City of Oslo

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