



United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and
International Environmental and Scientific Affairs*

Washington, D.C. 20520

OCT 20 2006

Ms. Holly Koehler
Office of Marine Conservation
Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science
Department of State

Dear Ms. Koehler:

I am writing to you, as Coordinator of the UN General Assembly's resolution on fisheries, to convey the U.S. delegation's position on the section of the resolution addressing destructive fishing practices.

President Bush has clearly stated that our delegation should work with other countries and international organizations to eliminate destructive fishing practices that jeopardize fish stocks or the habitats that support them. Of particular concern are practices such as unregulated bottom trawling when they occur in areas of the high seas where there are no applicable conservation or management measures or in areas with no applicable international fishery management organization or agreement. We believe such practices should be prohibited until such time as conservation and management measures consistent with the goals of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, and other relevant instruments are adopted and implemented to regulate such vessels and fisheries. I am attaching the October 2 Memorandum from the President, which was circulated during the first round of negotiations, as well as the press statement that accompanied its release.

As you requested, we will be consulting with the other participants in the period before negotiations resume on November 17. We are sending all of them a copy of this letter, to ensure that everyone understands that the President's Memorandum supersedes the "non-paper" circulated earlier by the U.S. delegation.

We appreciate very much your efforts to reflect the views of all the participating States and your ideas for bridging differences among them in a manner that can achieve responsible regulation of high seas fisheries and the elimination of destructive fishing practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claudia A. McMurray for".

Claudia A. McMurray