

LATE ITEMS

MULTILATERAL FISHERIES TALKS, PORT MORESBY : JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The following joint communique was issued at the conclusion of the third round of negotiations between States of the Forum Fisheries Agency and the USA on a multilateral fisheries treaty, 8 March 1985.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND OF 13 SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY STATES (AUSTRALIA, FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA, FIJI, KIRIBATI, NAURU, NEW ZEALAND, PALAU, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SOLOMON ISLANDS, TONGA, TUVALU, VANUATU AND WESTERN SAMOA) HAVE CONCLUDED A THIRD ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ON A FISHERIES TREATY, UNDER WHICH UNITED STATES TUNA VESSELS MAY FISH IN THE FISHING ZONES OF SOUTH PACIFIC STATES. THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE HELD IN PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, FROM 4 TO 8 MARCH 1985.

A SUBSTANTIAL STUMBLING BLOCK IN THE WAY OF POSITIVE TALKS WAS OVERCOME AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THIS ROUND WHEN THE UNITED STATES FORMALLY ADVISED THAT AN EMBARGO AGAINST THE IMPORTATION OF TUNA FROM SOLOMON ISLANDS INTO THE UNITED STATES WAS TO BE LIFTED, AND THAT THIS DECISION WAS 'IRREVOCABLE'.

THE TALKS WERE MOST FRUITFUL, WITH MANY OF THE AREAS OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY STATES BEING REMOVED, AND OTHERS CLARIFIED. THE WAY IS NOW CLEAR FOR DISCUSSION OF MORE TECHNICAL ISSUES IN THE NEXT ROUND, WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT A REGION-WIDE AGREEMENT WILL BE FINALIZED SOON.