

MASTER  
OPS

For Pol: Law of the Sea: Pk2.

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PRIME MINISTER'S



PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL NO. T 210/84

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

12 December 1984

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your letter of 2 November about the UN Law of the Sea Convention.

We weighed the points you made very carefully. I agree with you about the importance of the provision of the Convention dealing with navigation.

Our main difficulty has, as you know, long been with the deep seabed mining regime. This was not acceptable to us in its present form. We went to considerable efforts at the Preparatory Commission to secure improvements. But there has only been a limited response to a few of the technical proposals we put forward.

In these circumstances we decided that we could not sign the Convention. This decision was announced to Parliament on 6 December. At the same time we made clear that we would agree to signature by the Community which only has limited competence in the subjects covered by the Convention.

We would still like to see a maritime regime which could be accepted by consensus. We hope that as the difficulties of the mining regime become clear to a wider range of countries it may still be possible to achieve such

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a Convention. There remains a considerable amount of time for further negotiations before commercial deep seabed mining becomes viable. I hope that our two countries can continue to work together in pressing for the improvements we both consider necessary in the seabed mining regime.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely  
Raymond Shalton

The Honourable Mr. R.J.L. Hawke, AC, MP



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 December 1984

Dear Charles,

UN Law of Sea Convention

I enclose draft letters from the Prime Minister to the Irish and Australian Prime Ministers, who wrote on 12 and 8 November respectively in support of UK signature of the Convention.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Prime Minister

Secret

AUSTRALIA

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

..... In Confidence

Thank you for your letter of 8 November about the UN Law of the Sea Convention.

CAVEAT.....

We weighed the points you made very carefully. I agree with you about the importance of the provisions of the Convention dealing with navigation.

Our main difficulty has, as you know, long been with the deep seabed mining regime. This was not acceptable to us in its present form. We went to considerable efforts at the Preparatory Commission to secure improvements. But there has only been a limited response to a few of the technical proposals we put forward.

In these circumstances we decided that we could not sign the Convention. This decision was announced to Parliament on 6 December. At the same time we made clear that we would agree to signature by the Community which only has limited competence in the subjects covered by the Convention.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

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to achieve such a Convention. There remains a  
considerable amount of time for further negotiations  
before commercial deep seabed mining becomes viable.  
I hope that our two countries can continue to work  
together in pressing for the improvements we both  
consider necessary in the seabed mining regime.

*EM.*

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BF



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

9 November 1984

UNLOSC

Thank you for your letter of 9 November enclosing a draft reply to Mr. Hawke's letter to the Prime Minister about the signature of UNLOSC.

BF | Since our decision is imminent, I think it would be better to wait and let Mr. Hawke have a substantive reply. I am therefore suspending your draft. I should be grateful for a further draft in due course.

(C.D. Powell)

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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cc PC



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

9 November, 1984

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 2 November with which you enclosed a copy of a message to the Prime Minister received from the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Hawke.

/ I enclose a draft reply to Mr Hawke with a covering  
/ letter to the Australian High Commissioner.

Yours ever,

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

Peter Ricketts

David Barclay Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

DSR 11 (Revised)

**DRAFT:** minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

**TYPE:** Draft/Final 1+

**FROM:** Private Secretary,  
Number Ten, Downing St

Reference

**DEPARTMENT:**

**TEL. NO:**

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

**TO:** His Excellency  
Mr A R Parsons  
High Commissioner for Australia  
Australia House  
Strand  
LONDON WC2 B4LA

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

**SUBJECT:**

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your letter of 2 November with which you passed to the Prime Minister a cabled message from the Prime Minister of Australia about the UN Law of the Sea Convention.

I should be most grateful if you would send to Mr Hawke the enclosed reply from Mrs Thatcher.

Enclosures—flag(s).....



DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:  
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr R Hawke  
Prime Minister of Australia

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your message about the UN Law of the Sea Convention which your High Commissioner in London passed to me on 2 November.

CAVEAT.....

You urged<sup>it</sup> that the UK should sign the Convention before the final date for signature. You<sup>adm</sup> draw attention to the advantages offered<sup>s</sup> by ~~it~~ in areas other than deep seabed mining. We recognise that much in the Convention is helpful. But, as you noted, the regime presently envisaged for deep seabed mining causes us considerable concern.

We are aware of the significance of the final date for signature and are reviewing the work carried out by the Preparatory Commission during the last two years with its implications for the future. I shall take fully into account the points which you have made and your concerns and ~~will~~<sup>shall</sup> let you know once we have made a decision.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Foragi PPT: Law of the Sea Pt 2

9 NOV 1984

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