

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and the Francophonie

No. 130AE/131.2/373/2013

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and the Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to inform him that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has taken note of the summary of the communication from the Republic of Gabon, entitled “Submission by the Gabonese Republic for the extension of its continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles”, which was submitted to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf on 10 April 2012, in accordance with article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

A State party to the above-mentioned Convention since 17 February 1989, the Democratic Republic of the Congo wishes to inform the Secretary-General that it does not yet have access to the high seas. Consequently, in order to prevent an overlapping of maritime zones in the Gulf of Guinea region, the Democratic Republic of the Congo advocates the establishment of lateral limits which ensure that it has access to the high seas, in accordance with article 7, paragraph 6, of the Convention, and the general pattern of limits already established in this region.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo also wishes to point out that:

1. It has not signed any international agreements with neighbouring countries establishing limits that overlap with the maritime zones of other countries.
2. The international agreement that it signed with the Republic of Angola on 30 July 2007 created a common interest zone for the exploration and production of hydrocarbons, in accordance with article 77, paragraph 2, of the Convention, given that the zone is situated within Angolan maritime territory (southern part of block 14).
3. Under the agreement, the common interest zone is confined to the north of block 1, to the south of block 14, to the north of block 15 and to the north of block 31 of Angolan oil concessions, and does not extend beyond those blocks.

4. The Democratic Republic of the Congo does not plan to seek access to the high seas through the above-mentioned agreement, to avoid encroaching on the maritime zones of the Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Gabon. However, it does plan to seek such access under article 83, paragraph 1, of the above-mentioned Convention.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has no objection to the request submitted by the Republic of Gabon on 10 April 2012 for the extension of its continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo requests the Secretary-General to transmit the present communication to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and to have it published in accordance with the internal procedures of the United Nations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and the Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo thanks the Secretary-General for his prompt action and takes this opportunity to convey to him the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.

Kinshasa, 30 August 2013

To the United Nations Secretariat, New York

---