

*-Unofficial Translation from French*

FRENCH REPUBLIC

Prime Minister

Paris, 18 July 2007

Secretariat of the Sea

Secretary-General of the Sea

No. 547/ SGMER

Re: Extension of the continental shelf in New Caledonia/disputed by Vanuatu

Sir:

I refer to the partial submission by France, on behalf of the Territorial Collectivity of New Caledonia and the Overseas Department of French Guiana, with regard to the extension of the continental shelf. This submission was received by the United Nations Secretariat on 22 May and an executive summary of it was published on the United Nations website on 24 May, in accordance with the rules of procedures of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

The partial submission by France consists of two distinct parts, one on behalf of French Guiana and the other on behalf of New Caledonia.

In the case of New Caledonia, the submission draws attention to two regions — in the southwest and the southeast of this Territorial Collectivity, respectively.

France had taken the initiative of giving Vanuatu advance notice that the French partial submission would be filed, just as it had done with the other neighbouring States in that zone, namely, Australia and New Zealand.

In a letter dated 3 July 2007 from the Prime Minister of Vanuatu addressed to the President of the French Republic, Vanuatu raised an objection to consideration of the French submission regarding the extension of the New Caledonian continental shelf. This objection was made official on 13 July when Vanuatu took its case directly to the United Nations Secretariat.

Although it has not examined the arguments and rationale put forward by Vanuatu, which pertain to Matthew Island and Hunter Island, France takes note of this objection.

Chairperson of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf  
c/o Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea  
United Nations Secretariat  
United Nations Plaza, DC2  
New York, NY 10017

Accordingly, it requests the Commission to refrain from consideration of the portion of the submission relating to the area in the southeastern part of New Caledonia. Consistent with annex 1 of the Commission's rules of procedure, this action by France should not be construed by Vanuatu or by any other State as recognition of the legitimacy of Vanuatu's position.

France therefore requests the Commission to consider its partial submission with regard to the extension of the continental shelf consisting of the offshore part of French Guiana, on the one hand, and the southwestern region of New Caledonia on the other.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

*(Signed)* **Xavier de la Gorce**

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