



The Law of the Sea

Current Developments in State Practice
No. IV



Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
Office of Legal Affairs
United Nations

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FOREWORD

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs has prepared the fourth volume¹ of the series Current Developments in State Practice in order to continue to disseminate widely relevant information relating to the practice of States following the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Convention, which entered into force on 16 November 1994, exerts an important influence on the development of national policy with respect to law of the sea matters. A growing number of States have adopted new legislation dealing with such matters as the determination of baselines, the breadth and status of the territorial sea, the establishment of exclusive economic zones, the definition of the continental shelf and the delimitation of maritime boundaries between States with opposite or adjacent coasts. As of February 1995, one hundred and eighteen States have claimed a 12-mile territorial sea limit. It is of importance to note that certain States that had earlier made territorial sea claims exceeding the 12-mile limit have modified their legislation to conform to the relevant provisions of the Convention. Ninety-four coastal States have proclaimed sovereign rights to explore, exploit, conserve and manage the natural resources, living or non-living, to be found in the exclusive economic zone. Fifteen States continue to exercise fishing rights in a zone of 200 miles.

It is hoped that the information provided in this publication will assist States in their efforts to implement the Convention and in so doing will promote a uniform and consistent application of the complex and comprehensive set of international norms embodied in the Convention. Included are legislations and communications from Governments as well as recently adopted treaties, multilateral as well as bilateral. The legislation reproduced deals mainly with the extent of maritime jurisdiction and the regime applicable to it, and is listed by State in alphabetical order.

The publication of information in this volume concerning developments in State practice does not imply that all those developments are necessarily consistent with the Convention, nor does it imply recognition by the United Nations of the validity or otherwise of the actions and decisions in question.

The contents of the present publication are partly drawn from previous issues of the series Law of the Sea Bulletin circulated in mimeographed form. This volume contains the material received by the Division mainly between 1992 and 1994.

¹ The first volume, Current Developments in State Practice (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.V.3), was published in March 1987; the second volume, Current Developments in State Practice II (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.V.7), was published in May 1989; the third volume, Current Developments in State Practice III (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.V.13), was published in May 1992.

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