

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 18, 1975

This special meeting of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries takes up the most difficult problem in the Commission's twenty-five year history. I send my warmest greetings and good wishes to the participants.

It is imperative that the Commission succeed in establishing adequate conservation measures and enforcement procedures to rebuild the important fishery stocks of the Northwest Atlantic. If agreement cannot be reached on reasonable conservation and enforcement measures, the ability of the Commission to fulfill its stated purposes will be called into question. For our part, I pledge the full support of the United States to sound fisheries management and conservation practices, based on scientific evidence and implemented within the framework of internationally negotiated agreements.

I am strongly opposed to unilateral claims by nations to jurisdiction on the high seas. However, pressures for unilateral measures do exist, and will continue to mount, if international arrangements do not prove to be effective.

It is my earnest hope that the Commission will vindicate the trust we place in it and fully justify our mutual efforts to find cooperative approaches to fisheries conservation and management for the benefit of all mankind. In this spirit, I send you best wishes for a productive and rewarding session.

Gerald R. Ford