



United States Department of State

*Bureau of Oceans and International
Environmental and Scientific Affairs*

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 17, 2016

Mr. James Movick
Director General
Forum Fisheries Agency
Honiara, Solomon Islands

Dear James:

This is to inform you that on January 15, 2016, the Government of the United States forwarded to our Embassy in Port Moresby a Diplomatic Note for delivery to the Foreign Ministry of Papua New Guinea, in its capacity as depositary for the Multilateral Treaty on Fisheries between the Governments of Certain Pacific Island States and the Government of the United States of America, notifying the depositary that the Government of the United States is withdrawing from the Treaty. As a result, in accordance with Article 12.6, the Treaty will cease to have effect at the expiry of one year following the receipt by the depositary of such notification.

The United States has valued deeply the relationship with the Pacific Island Parties over the life of the Treaty. The Treaty has provided a strong foundation for cooperation, not solely on fisheries access, but a wide range of other matters including conservation and management of marine resources, efforts to combat illegal fishing, and capacity building in a range of management and technical areas.

Under current circumstances, however, the Treaty is no longer viable for the U.S. fleet. At present, rather than serving as a means of facilitating opportunities for the U.S. fleet to fish in the region, the Treaty itself prevents the fleet from doing so. In our view, the current situation serves neither the interests of the United States nor the interests of the Pacific Island Parties. The termination of the Treaty will allow U.S. vessels to negotiate in the future directly with various Pacific Island States on commercial terms.

Over the coming year, the United States stands ready to engage in discussions with the Pacific Island States to determine whether the Treaty can be restructured in a way that is mutually acceptable and that continues to provide benefits to both sides over the long term. We are prepared to engage actively and constructively toward that end. Because the outcome of any such discussions remains uncertain, filing a notice of withdrawal from the

Treaty will ensure that the U.S. fleet is not prohibited from negotiating future access to fish in the region.

Regardless of the outcome on the Treaty, the United States will look to maintain our strong cooperation with the Pacific Island States, including on marine conservation and combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, recognizing that we share common interests beyond the issue of fishing access.

Thank you for your consideration and your support for the Treaty over these past several years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Gibbons-Fly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "W" and a long, trailing "y".

William Gibbons-Fly

Director

Office of Marine Conservation