

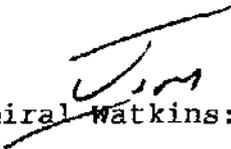
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**THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON**

2001 DEC 12 P 9:59 December 12, 2001

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Dear Admiral Watkins:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the unanimous resolution urging accession of the United States to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, adopted by the Commission on Ocean Policy at its second meeting November 13-14, 2001.

The Commission's distinguished members were charged with developing a national ocean policy to promote objectives that include preserving the United States' role as a leader in ocean and coastal activities. The resolution conveys a real sense of urgency, both through its words and through its timing, as the Commission's first policy pronouncement.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Mary Beth West testified before your Commission on November 14, explaining the detrimental effects of our non-party status. You may be aware that Ambassador Sichan Siv, two weeks later, announced at the UN General Assembly that the Bush Administration supports U.S. accession to the Convention.

I am aware of the elections scheduled for April 2002 for members of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and for judges of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and the benefits the United States could expect from representation on those bodies. Please be assured that we share your views on the importance of this Convention and are working actively on it.

Admiral James D. Watkins, USN (Retired),
Chairman, Commission on Ocean Policy,
1120 20th Street NW, Suite 200 North,
Washington, DC 20036.

I extend best wishes as you undertake leadership of this important Commission, whose report in the spring of 2003 will help to shape national ocean and coastal policy for the 21st century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Colin L. Powell', written over a faint, illegible typed name.

Colin L. Powell