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Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 9 April 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a note verbale dated 9 April 2024 from the Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt addressed to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (see annex), in reference to the note verbale dated 5 December 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations and its attachments ([A/78/672](#)).

I would highly appreciate the circulation of the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 75, in addition to their publication on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and in the next issue of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

(Signed) Osama Abdelkhalek **Mahmoud**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 9 April 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Note verbale from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations in New York presents its compliments to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat. We write in reference to the note verbale dated 5 December 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and its annexes ([A/78/672](#)). The Arab Republic of Egypt would like to note the following:

I. The Arab Republic of Egypt rejects the contiguous maritime zone coordinates and boundaries contained in the lists of coordinates enclosed with Decision No. 727 (2023) of the Council of Ministers of the outgoing Government of National Unity concerning the declaration of the contiguous maritime zone of the State of Libya, which overlap with the western maritime boundary of the Arab Republic of Egypt in the Mediterranean Sea, and to the map attached to the Decision. Specifically, it does not recognize the following:

- In the table of coordinates of the contiguous zone in the Mediterranean Sea to the north: points 46, 47 and 48;
- In the table of coordinates of the contiguous zone in the Mediterranean Sea to the east: points 1–7.

II. The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt objects to the maritime points mentioned above and appearing on the attached map because they are located entirely within the maritime zone of the Arab Republic of Egypt. That constitutes a violation of the sovereignty of the Arab Republic of Egypt over its territorial sea and an infringement of its contiguous zone, and disregards the inherent and inalienable sovereign rights of Egypt within its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf in the Mediterranean Sea. Egypt reserves all its rights in this connection, and stresses its determination to protect those rights, which are guaranteed by international law, and to challenge any attempt to prejudice them.

III. The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt stresses that the above-mentioned maritime points and attached map are incompatible with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and contrary to the provisions of international law and international practice. Any effects resulting from these points are unacceptable.

IV. The Arab Republic of Egypt also objects to article 2 of the above-mentioned Council of Ministers decision, which contravenes international norms as reflected in article 33 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. That article recognizes the exclusive right of a coastal State to exercise the control necessary to prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations within its territory or territorial waters in the area adjacent to its territorial sea. That has also been established by rulings of the International Court of Justice.

V. Egypt also reaffirms its deposit on 12 January 2023 of Decree of the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt No. 595 (2022) concerning the delimitation of the western maritime boundaries of the Arab Republic of Egypt in the

Mediterranean Sea and the list of geographical coordinates contained therein (MZN 162.2023.LOS), as well as its previous correspondence, including the note verbale dated 23 December 2019 from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/74/628) and the note verbale dated 10 April 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/77/858).

VI. The Arab Republic of Egypt wishes to reaffirm its openness and commitment to cooperate, consult and negotiate with neighbouring States in good faith, when conditions are conducive, to reach agreement on the delimitation of maritime boundaries on the basis of the principles of international law and fair and just solutions in a manner that achieves common interests.

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations in New York would be grateful if the present note verbale could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 75, and published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as in the forthcoming edition of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.
