

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

October 16, 2009

The Honorable John F. Kerry, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Recognizing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's intention to consider the Convention on the Law of the Sea, I offer my strong support for U.S. accession to the convention.

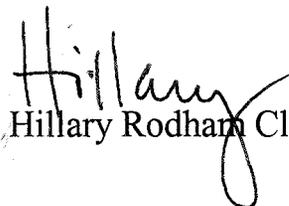
As you are aware, the convention protects and advances the national security, economic, and environmental interests of the United States. In particular, the convention codifies navigational rights and freedoms critical to U.S. military and commercial vessels and secures U.S. economic rights to natural resources off-shore. In addition, as a party, the United States would have access to procedures that would maximize international recognition and legal certainty for U.S. sovereign rights over offshore resources (including minerals) beyond 200 miles of our coastline.

The United States, as a major maritime power, the country with the largest exclusive economic zone, and one of the largest continental shelves, stands to gain more from this treaty in terms of economic and resource rights than any other country. Having a seat at the table as a party would allow the United States to participate more effectively in the interpretation and development of the convention and the ability to participate formally in its institutions.

As the committee proceeds toward hearings on the convention, the Department of State stands ready to facilitate the Senate's consideration of this treaty by providing witnesses, testimony, and overall support.

I appreciate your leadership in our efforts to gain the necessary support for advice and consent to accession of this vitally important treaty.

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

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The Honorable Richard G. Lugar
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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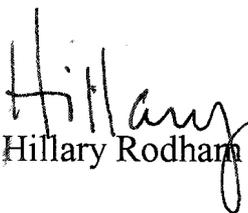
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