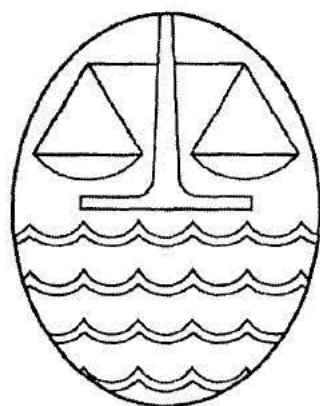


Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea  
Office of Legal Affairs

# ***Law of the Sea***



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NOTE

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### III. OTHER INFORMATION

#### A. Ukraine and the Russian Federation:

The Joint Statement by the President of Ukraine and the President of  
the Russian Federation on the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch,  
24 December 2003<sup>1</sup>

President of Ukraine L. Kuchma and President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, guided by the relations of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Ukraine and Russia, fraternal ties between them, which formed historically; proceeding from the regulations of the Agreement on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation of May 31, 1997 and the Agreement between Ukraine and the Russian Federation on the Ukrainian – Russian State Border of January 28, 2003; noting the importance of the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch for the economic development of Ukraine and Russia; convinced that all the matters relating to the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch should be solved only by peaceful means together or by agreement of Ukraine and Russia; confirm their common understanding that:

- the Azov - Kerch area of water is preserved as an integral economic and natural complex used in the interests of both states;
- historically the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch are inland waters of Ukraine and Russia, and settlement of matters relating to the said area of water is realized by agreement between the Ukraine and Russia in accordance with international law;
- Ukrainian and Russian military ships and trade boats enjoy the freedom of navigation in the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch;
- military ships under the flags of other states can enter the Sea of Azov and go through the Strait of Kerch only by an invitation of Ukraine or Russia agreed with the other state;
- the Ukrainian - Russian cooperation, including their common activity in the sphere of navigation, including its regulation and navigation and hydrographical provision, fishing, protection of the maritime environment, environmental safety, search and rescue operations in the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch are guaranteed by the implementation of existing agreements and the signing of new agreements in the relevant cases.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Russian Federation are commissioned to create a joint Ukrainian - Russian corporation for the purpose of cooperation in the Azov - Kerch area of water, including the exploitation of the Kerch-Yenikalskyi navigation channel.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the Government of the Russian Federation are also commissioned to work out proposals on the renewal and development of ferry services between Ukraine and Russia through the Strait of Kerch for transportation of passengers and cargoes.

Kerch, December 24, 2003

President of Ukraine  
L.Kuchma

President of the Russian Federation  
V.Putin

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Official website of the President of Ukraine: <http://www.president.gov.ua/eng/activity/zayavinterv/216844674.html>