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Oceans and the law of the sea: oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 16 May 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the note verbale dated 18 March 2024 from the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General concerning the Al Yasat Reserve ([A/78/824](#)).

On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a note verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates dated 16 May 2024 (see annex) in response to the note verbale from the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated to Member States and issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 75 (a), and published in the next issue of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

(Signed) Mohamed **Abushahab**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 16 May 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic and English]

16 May 2024

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations.

With reference to the Note Verbale dated 18 March 2024 (A/78/824) from the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates would like to state the following:

(1) Al Yasat Reserve is located in the territorial sea of the United Arab Emirates. The Ministry reiterates its previous assertion that the Government of the United Arab Emirates does not recognize for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia any maritime zones, sovereign rights or jurisdiction beyond the median line separating the territorial sea of the United Arab Emirates and the territorial sea of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia opposite Al Udeid Province. Moreover, parts of the 1974 Agreement are no longer enforceable and should be amended. This has already been expressed as follows, for example:

- Note No. 3/6/1085-2 (Classified) of 12/11/2009 to the Secretariat of the United Nations.
- Note No. 3/6/1140-2 of 8/12/2009 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Note No. 3/6/2-276 of 21 March 2010 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Note No. 4/3/4-200 of 27 February 2011 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Note No. 3/6/1-146 (Classified) of 24 July 2011 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(2) This Ministry's Note No. 3/6/2-1177 of 27 December 2009 to the Secretariat of the United Nations states that "since 1975, the Government of the United Arab Emirates has been informing the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by messages that parts of the 1974 Agreement cannot be implemented in its current form and has requested the amendment thereof. These included, for example, the letter conveyed by His Excellency Mana Saeed Al Otaiba on October 16, 1975 to King Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and the letters of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan to King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, dated 3 November, 1993 and 7 November, 1998.

(3) The Minutes signed on 5 July 2008 between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar are inconsistent with the Agreement on the Settlement of Maritime Boundaries and Island Ownership between the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Qatar signed on 20 March 1969 and registered by the parties thereto with the Secretariat of the United Nations on 14 December 2006. They also violate part of the territorial sea of the UAE's Makasib Island. Moreover, the Minutes created a new legal status that did not exist at the time of the conclusion of the 1974 Agreement, with Saudi Arabia's replacing Qatar in UAE's maritime adjacency. The United Arab Emirates has put on the record its position on the Minutes in a Note to the United Nations Secretariat: No 3/6/2-487 (Classified) of 16 June 2009.

The United Arab Emirates considers the present Note to be an official document and asks the Secretariat to publish and circulate it, in accordance with United Nations procedures.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates takes this opportunity to convey to the Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration.
