

FINAL MINUTE
OF THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN AGREEMENT
CONCERNING THE SHIPWRECKED VESSEL RMS *TITANIC*

Delegations representing the Governments of Canada, the Republic of France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America conducted negotiations between 1997 and 2000 in London and by video-conference to develop the text of an international agreement concerning the shipwrecked vessel RMS *Titanic*. Representatives of the Government of the French Republic joined representatives of the British Government in London for the video-conferences, while representatives of the Government of Canada were present in Washington and later in Ottawa and representatives of the United States Government were present in Washington. Discussions were held on September 29 and December 1, 1997; February 12, 1998; January 12, June 18, and December 2, 1999; and January 5, 2000. Respective Delegation lists are annexed to this Final Minute as Attachment A.

Negotiations for an international agreement for the protection of the RMS *Titanic* were undertaken in the awareness that, since its discovery, the wreck has been the object of a number of explorations and that over 5000 artifacts have been recovered. Delegations recognized RMS *Titanic* as a memorial to those who perished and its unique historic significance, symbolic value and international interest. They were concerned that further unregulated dives would risk disturbing human remains, and the integrity of the wreck and its remaining artifacts. An international agreement was deemed necessary to protect RMS *Titanic*.

These sessions were conducted in a cordial and constructive atmosphere that reflected the mutual respect and understanding of the Delegation members and made it possible to finalize the text of the Agreement Concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS *Titanic*, which is annexed to this Final Minute as Attachment B.

The Delegations concluded the negotiations on January 5, 2000, and expressed their mutual hope that the Agreement would achieve their shared objectives to protect RMS *Titanic* and ensure that further exploration would be undertaken in accordance with the international rules that form an integral part of the Agreement. The delegations joined in endorsing those rules which establish *in situ* preservation as the preferred policy for the preservation of RMS *Titanic* and its associated artifacts.

The Delegations stated their intention to initiate national procedures with a view to allowing for signature of the Agreement on behalf of their Governments at the earliest opportunity. In the same spirit a joint demarche would be undertaken to encourage other governments to take the steps necessary to become parties to the Agreement.

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Depositary, will expeditiously prepare, in collaboration with the other Delegations, an authentic text of the Agreement in a single original in the English and French languages, which will be open for signature by all States at London from__2000.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Heads of the respective Delegations have signed this Final Minute.

DONE at Ottawa on January , 2000, at Paris on January , 2000, at London on January , 2000, and at Washington on January , 2000, in quadruplicate in the English and French languages.

FOR THE DELEGATION OF CANADA:

FOR THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE:

FOR THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND:

FOR THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: