



The Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette, PC
Senator

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette
enthusiastically welcomes
the support of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
for the Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals
www.sealsonline.org

OTTAWA, May 1, 2009 – In a letter dated April 29, 2009, to the Honourable Céline Hervieux-Payette, Senator and Secretary General of the Permanent Secretariat of the Universal Declaration Committee, Newfoundland and Labrador's Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister, the Honourable Thomas J. Hedderson, has officially given his support to the Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals.

"Through international cooperation, such as your *We Care* initiative, we can ensure that the highest standards of animal welfare practices are upheld in the worldwide seal harvest," Mr Hedderson wrote.

The Government of Newfoundland is the first government to announce its official support for the Declaration. Senator Hervieux-Payette is currently working to mobilize the international community around the need for a dialogue to develop shared ethical standards for the seal hunt.

An official request has been submitted to Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans as well as to all the member countries of the European Union, all parliamentarians of countries belonging to the Union, and to the governments and parliaments of Norway and Iceland.

"I would also ask you to consider my request, in the spirit of openness and good relations between our peoples, not to vote in favour of a boycott of seal-based products or at least to delay the vote until the conclusion of our upcoming dialogue," Senator Hervieux-Payette wrote to the European parliamentarians.

Mr Hedderson's letter can be consulted on the Declaration's Internet site (www.sealsonline.org), which is the information clearing house for the seal-hunting communities. Successive versions of the Declaration will be posted on the site as discussions progress. Internet users are invited to sign the on-line petition.

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