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Barbara Khol

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Peruvian Government Fines Soviet Fishing Company, Demands Modification In Bilateral Agreement

by Barbara Khol

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On March 27 in Lima, Fisheries Minister Felix Canal told reporters that the Peruvian Fishing Services Enterprise (EPSEP) plans to demand payment of \$20 million from the Soviet firm Sebriva as a type of fine for the firm's failure to meet contract obligations. Canal said discussions to modify a bilateral contract signed in December 1988 are to be complete by June 1. He added that modifications are necessary because the contract "is not favorable to the EPSEP." Under the contract, according to Canal, the EPSEP has paid "millions of dollars in authorizations for port entry and departure and fines incurred by Soviet vessels for operating in prohibited areas...Domestic entrepreneurs do not enjoy such privileges." If the complaints are ignored by Sebriva "we will seek appropriate legal measures," said Canal. Next, if the Soviets refuse to modify contract terms, the contract will be annulled for failure to comply, he added. Under the bilateral agreement, Soviet ships are permitted an annual fish catch in Peruvian territorial waters of up to 400,000 metric tons, and are obligated to pay 17.5% of sales revenues from the fish catch to EPSEP. (Basic data from AFP, 03/27/91)

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