



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2004/038

Geneva, 30 April 2004

CONCERNING:

Secretary-General's Certificate of Commendation

1. In Notification to the Parties No. 2002/014 of 6 March 2002, the Secretariat advised the Parties of the introduction of certificates of commendation that would be issued, at the Secretary-General's discretion, to recognize exemplary enforcement actions.
2. The third such certificate was awarded by the Secretary-General on 15 March 2004 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Law Enforcement and the U.S. Department of Justice, Wildlife and Marine Resources Section.
3. The certificate was awarded in recognition of their combined efforts to combat illicit trade in caviar, especially those illegal activities that involved sophisticated smuggling and fraudulent actions by individuals and organized networks based in the United States of America, caviar producing States and countries of transit. This required the coordination of work by the Service's Special Agents, Wildlife Inspectors and Forensic Laboratory staff, and by the Department's Prosecutors in preparing cases for criminal prosecution. Since January 2000, over 25 prosecutions have taken place, the majority resulting in sentences of imprisonment. Many of the investigations involved liaison with a variety of United States federal and state law enforcement agencies and with international and national law enforcement organizations elsewhere in the world. This work by the Service and the Department demonstrated exemplary commitment to uncovering violations of the Convention and bringing offenders to justice.