

G8 STATEMENT ON REGIONAL ISSUES

(OKINAWA, 21 JULY 2000)

SOUTH ASIA

The level of tension between India and Pakistan remains a cause of international concern. We call on the two countries to resume dialogue as soon as possible in the spirit of Lahore in order to realise a sustainable peace in the region.

We call on both India and Pakistan to join international efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. While welcoming those positive statements and steps that have been made, we reiterate our call for them to carry out fully the concrete measures set out in the UNSCR 1172, including signing and ratifying the CTBT.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

In the Middle East, there is a real opportunity for the achievement of a comprehensive peace based on the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the agreements of Madrid and Oslo. We reaffirm our strong support for the efforts by the parties concerned to advance the peace process toward this end. We reiterate the importance we attach to a continuing commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes.

In the light of the trilateral Summit Meeting on a peace between Israel and the Palestinians, we applaud the intensive efforts by President Arafat and Prime Minister Barak, with the facilitation of President Clinton, to reach agreement on all permanent status issues. We welcome their courageous decision to continue negotiations, and confirm our support for their endeavours. We confirm too our commitment to assist the implementation of a peace agreement, and invite the international community to participate in the efforts to help the parties implement such an agreement when it is reached.

We underline the importance of resuming the activities of the multilateral working groups, recognising that progress in the multilateral tracks is related to and supports the bilateral tracks.

We condemn any violent attempts by extremists and terrorists to interfere with the Middle East peace process, and call for a cessation of support for such violence.

We welcome the recent withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanon, in accordance with the UNSCR 425, as verified by the UN Secretary General and confirmed by the UN Security Council. It is the responsibility of the Government of Lebanon to ensure the return of its effective authority to maintain peace and security in southern Lebanon.

Being aware that attaining these goals will also depend on the government's ability to meet the infrastructure and development needs of this region, we are committed to supporting its efforts to this end.

BALKANS

The G8 remains committed to supporting peace, stability, foreign and national investment, and development in South Eastern Europe. Towards this goal, we call upon all parties concerned in the region to refrain from violence and to promote further their mutual co-operation, and we reiterate the importance of promoting harmony among ethnic groups and creating the conditions for co-existence among all communities. We welcome contributions supporting South Eastern Europe made by states and international organisations, in particular by the EU, which plans a Summit with the western Balkan countries. We commend the co-ordination provided by the Stability Pact which is contributing to enhanced regional political and economic co-operation in South Eastern Europe. We also welcome the 2.4 billion Euro in pledges for quick-start projects in the fields of democratisation, economic development and security under the Stability Pact. We will meet our financial commitments, and urge countries in the region to intensify their efforts for reform. We give our strong support to the projects being implemented by the World Bank, European Commission, European Investment Bank, and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development within the framework of the Stability Pact.

We reaffirm our commitment to the full implementation of the UNSCR 1244 and underline our support for the efforts made by the UN, the EU, KFOR and the OSCE. Successful and carefully prepared municipal elections in Kosovo will be an important step in the establishment of a democratic and multi-ethnic society, and we urge all communities in Kosovo to refrain from violence and to help build such a society.

We look forward to a democratic Federal Republic of Yugoslavia so that it can be reintegrated in the international community and play its rightful part in contributing to the stability of the entire region. We are very concerned by the motivation for and the possible consequences of the revision of the FRY Constitution. We call on the government in Belgrade to refrain from any action which could contribute to the further escalation of violence. We also call on the opposition to contribute to the peaceful democratic development of the FRY. We strongly oppose the recent restrictions on the free press in the FRY. We welcome the continued consolidation of democracy in Montenegro, reiterate our support for its democratically elected authorities, and urge them to continue to practice restraint.

AFRICA

We are deeply concerned about the growth of armed conflict in the continent of Africa. Africa must mobilise the political will to prevent and resolve armed conflicts. We stress that the rule of law, good governance and democracy are indispensable elements to achieve that goal. We reaffirm our strong commitment to help. We also reaffirm our commitment to support Africa's quest for peace and stability.

CYPRUS

We recall the declaration issued at our last meeting in Cologne calling for a resumption of comprehensive negotiations under the UN auspices on a Cyprus settlement. We commend the UN Secretary General for convening proximity talks between the parties to the Cyprus dispute to prepare the ground for meaningful negotiations leading to a comprehensive settlement. The failure of the two parties to resolve their differences and end the division of Cyprus remains a matter of serious concern to us. We call upon the parties to take the historic opportunity that now exists to intensify the negotiations in an effort to strike the compromises needed to reach a just and lasting settlement that protects the fundamental interests of both parties in an undivided Cyprus giving full consideration to relevant Security Council resolutions. We express the hope that decisive progress will be made in the current round and in the months ahead.

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