

Middle East 33. Heads of Government reviewed the serious situation in the Middle East with particular reference to the central question of Palestine. Recalling the relevant United Nations Resolutions they emphasised that a just and permanent peace can only be achieved on the basis of a fully comprehensive solution which upholds the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people including their right to a home land. In this respect the Commonwealth members of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People drew particular attention to the Committee's recommendations. Heads of Government expressed their grave concern that the Palestinian problem is still unresolved and that it continues to pose a serious threat to peace and security in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and throughout the world. Most Heads of Government recognised that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people struggling justifiably for an independent Palestinian State.

Mediterranean 34. Heads of Government emphasised that the security of Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East were interrelated and that Europe has a contribution to make to the search for just and durable solutions to conflicts in the region. In this respect, the further implementation of the Mediterranean Chapter agreed upon and incorporated in the Helsinki Final Act, four years ago, would enhance both European and Mediterranean security as well as Middle East peace, thus contributing to the development of security and co-operation throughout the area. Heads of Government agreed that greater stability in the Mediterranean would enable the countries of the Region and Europe to pursue freer and closer co-operation amongst themselves and also with Commonwealth members.

Indian Ocean 35. Heads of Government reviewed developments in the Indian Ocean region since their last Meeting. They noted, with regret, that not much progress had been made in implementing the United Nations Declaration of 1971 on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. They also noted that Great Power military presence in the Indian Ocean, instead of decreasing, had actually increased. They urged the Great Powers and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean to co-operate more actively with the littoral and hinterland States and with the Ad Hoc Committee of the United Nations for the implementing of this Declaration.